



INCLUSIVE UNIVERSITY POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, the number of persons with disabilities (PWDs) who are admitted to institutions of higher education has been increasing with every passing year. As the premier public institute of higher learning in the country, University of Malaya (UM) recognizes the rights and needs of the disabled to pursue their studies to the highest level. The university, from the top management level to the support staff, are committed to provide the disabled with equal opportunities in education as is available for non-disabled persons. Thus, UM has attempted to provide an environment that is capable of supporting disabled students in order for them to move freely and independently both socially and emotionally, and in the physical environment. It is hoped that these efforts will enable disabled students to experience life in the best way possible throughout their sojourn on campus.

The provisions made to meet the needs of the disabled which include facilities, equipment, and services are no longer a choice or charity-based action. It is a right of the disabled which must be fulfilled and maintained, as has been enjoyed by non-disabled students. These efforts are not works of charity or a corporate social responsibility (CSR) merely carried out when an institution has a surplus of funds or spare workforce. This is in line with the Disabilities Act 2008 and the United Nation Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) which require all institutions of education in the country to provide equal opportunity to the disabled and to make it fully accessible to them.

In line with Malaysia's development and UM's intention to become a PWD Inclusive University, and in tandem with the stipulations of the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 and the UNCRPD, UM has formulated a special policy pertaining to disabled students. The Inclusive University Policy is expected to ensure the rights and needs of disabled students and to strengthen the level of education in the country, in addition to promoting the university's reputation in the global arena.

2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

This policy aims to:

- i. Fulfill and protect the rights of disabled students so that they can gain full access to the system of learning and life on campus.
- ii. Empower disabled students with the ability to compete holistically.
- iii. Coordinate the management of disabled students at all levels of administration in the university.
- iv. Raise awareness about the rights of the disabled amongst the entire campus community.

3.0 REFERENCE OF TERMS

- i. The term '**PWD student or disabled student**' refers to all students enrolled at every level of study in University of Malaya who have a deficiency or disability which may be physical, sensorial, mental or cognitive. A 'disabled student' is one who has been certified as a PWD and possesses a registration card issued by the Social Welfare Department. This term also applies to international students who have been certified as a disabled person by a medical officer.
- ii. Inclusive University Development Committee, or its abbreviation **JPINK**, is a committee of the highest level in the organizational structure of the administration and management of disabled student affairs in UM. JPINK was set up to replace the Advisory Committee for PWD Student Welfare in University Malaya.

iii. **The PWD Student Management Unit or UPSOKU** is a unit within the organizational structure of the administration and management of disabled student affairs in UM. This unit organizes and carries out the all of the plans laid out by UM, as well as serves as a reference point in matters relating to disabled students in this university.

iv. **The Disability Liaison Officer (DLO)** is a staff of UM who will be selected by each responsibility centre (RC) and will receive a letter of appointment from JPINK.

v. The use of other terms such as **disability, accessibility, and reasonable accommodation** carries the same meaning as defined in the Persons with Disabilities Act, 2008 (Act 685).

4.0 INCLUSIVE UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (JPINK)

Inclusive University Development Committee or JPINK is a high-level committee which handles all matters related to disabled students and the development of UM as an inclusive university.

The members of JPINK must consist of:

- i. The Vice-Chancellor of University Malaya as the Chairperson of JPINK
- ii. Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and Alumni UM as the Deputy Chairperson of JPINK.
- iii. Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academic and International
- iv. Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research & Innovation
- v. Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Development
- vi. Head of Counselling, Career & OKU UM
- vii. Head of UPSOKU as the Secretary of JPINK

viii. The President of the Association of Special-Needs Students of University Malaya (PERMIUM) as the permanent representative of disabled students at the undergraduate level in UM.

ix. A permanent representative of disabled students at the postgraduate level who will be appointed by the Vice-Chancellor.

For the purpose of paragraph ix above, the term of appointment is as stated in the letter of appointment.

JPINK can from time to time invite any individual or representative of other institutions to provide input or as an advisor for a particular issue. These individuals or representatives will not have the power to vote at JPINK meetings.

In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs and Alumni UM will preside over the JPINK meeting as deputy chairperson.

JPINK's main functions include:

- x. Holding at least one (1) meeting every three (3) months as the need arises to discuss matters arising and to get feedback as well as an update on issues that have been discussed in the previous meeting.
- xi. Planning and approving any development projects/programmes and applications pertaining to disabled students.

5.0 MANAGEMENT UNIT FOR DISABLED STUDENTS (UPSOKU)

The Management Unit for Disabled Students or UPSOKU functions under the Section for Counselling, Career & PWD UM and is directly responsible to JPINK.

UPSOKU's functions are as follows:

- i. Collect and process information on disabled students.
- ii. Serve as the main place of reference for any type of issue related to disabled students, particularly when it involves academic matters and provision of facilities.

- iii. Serve as the intermediary in development and research programmes involving disabled students.
- iv. Train and coordinate the functions of the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) appointed by each responsibility centre (RC).
- v. Develop and implement programmes for the enablement, development, and empowerment of disabled students in UM.
- vi. Process all requests and complaints from disabled students.

A special officer (not necessarily a disabled person) who is trained, that is, one who has the knowledge and experience in dealing with matters relating to PWDs should be appointed as the Head of UPSOKU. Recruitment of additional staff can be done based on the requirements and provisions for assisting the Head of UPSOKU in executing the functions of this unit.

6.0 DISABILITY LIAISON OFFICER (DLO)

The Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) is a UM staff selected by each responsibility centre (RC) and who has received a letter of appointment from JPINK.

The roles and duties of the DLO are as follows:

- i. Serve as a source of reference to staff and students on disabled students in their respective RCs.
- ii. Act as a liaison between RCs and UPSOKU and vice versa in the sharing of information regarding disabled students.
- iii. Help disabled students to enroll in their respective RCs.
- iv. Recommend the best methods and approaches for reasonable adjustments to be made based on the scope and affordability of each RC.

v. Manage facilities and support services for disabled students in their respective RC.

Duration of an individual holding the position of a DLO is determined by the CR. JPINK will send a letter of renewal of appointment once (1) every year.

7.0 ACCOUNTABILITY FOR THE INCLUSIVE POLICY AND DISABLED STUDENT ISSUES

The accountability for the Inclusive University Policy and issues relating to disabled students in UM are as follows:

- i. UM via all the RCs under it should always be **ready** to meet all the objectives and matters stated in this policy as well as what has been decided upon by JPINK.
- ii. All RCs which are directly or indirectly involved in the system of teaching and learning in UM have a **shared responsibility** to fulfill the rights and needs of disabled students as well as to provide support services to them as stipulated in this policy.
- iii. All RCs must **work together** to meet all the objectives and matters stated in this policy in accordance with the functions entrusted to them.
- iv. All students and staff have a **shared responsibility** to ensure that UM becomes a university that is inclusive. All students and staff must also use appropriate methods and channels to raise issues related to disabled students or an inclusive university environment.

8.0 STEPS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INCLUSIVE POLICY FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

Implementation of the Inclusive University Policy for a PWD who wants to be a student of UM begins from the admission of the disabled student until the completion of the student's study. The implementation comprises the following steps:

8.1 Registration of the Disabled Student with UPSOKU

All disabled students must be registered with UPSOKU in order for their rights and needs to be effectively attended to and supervised. If required, disabled students must submit a medical report, an assessment of the type and degree of the handicap, and the level of disability they face so that their needs can be addressed by the parties involved.

8.2 Adjustments of Disabled Students on Campus

UPSOKU is responsible for coordinating a support system which includes services and equipment and for organising activities to help disabled students to adjust to the life on campus.

8.3 Provision of Facilities for Disabled Students

All disabled students in UM are entitled to obtain facilities that are suitable for them to live comfortably on campus on par with other students. The provision of facilities for disabled students need to be disability-oriented and related to disability issues faced by them. Parties involved in providing the facilities must make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of a disabled student.

8.4 Teaching and Learning Process of Disabled Students

All academic staff need to provide assistance and support as maximally as possible to disabled students during teaching and learning sessions so that they can fully participate in them. This includes the provision of alternative materials that can be accessed (e.g. a soft copy format for blind students), permission to record lectures / tutorials (for blind students), the choice of a lecture room or hall that can be accessed (for wheel-chair bound students) etc. The responsibility centre can consult UPSOKU and the students involved to obtain information and their opinions in relation to the provision of such support systems.

8.5 Requirements During Examination

The academic division and the responsibility centre where the disabled students are registered for their academic programme should provide them with the necessary equipment and services so that they can sit for their examinations in a conducive environment. The format and contents of the exam paper, including diagrams, citations, tables etc should be provided in a form that is accessible to disabled students based on their needs and requests. Disabled students are entitled to extra time based on the examination procedures and, conditions and terms set by UM.

8.6 Assessment Methods

The lecturers need to put in place suitable evaluation methods according to a disabled student's level of disability (for e.g. learning solutions require questions in graphic form and not in the form of words)

8.7 Plan for Development

University of Malaya will put forth its efforts in infrastructure development on campus based on the concept of a universal design as stated in the PWD Act of 2008. All buildings and new facilities that are to be built must comply with the MS1184, MS1331 and MS2015 standards. The existing buildings will be upgraded in stages to comply with the same standards.

8.8 Development and Organization of Activities for Disabled Students

UPSOKU should monitor the holistic progress of all disabled students that is in terms of the academic, social and emotional aspect, and soft skills. UPSOKU can consider any approach and method that works best to achieve this goal. All the planning and implementation of activities on campus also must be universal in terms of content and presentation. The activities must be held in locations which are accessible and which provide an appropriate support system. Special activities for disabled students must be recommended by UPSOKU in order that the activities are relevant to the target group and the programme objectives are achieved.

8.9 Technology and Tools

Any tools and technology needed for the use and convenience of disabled students can requested by the students themselves or by the responsibility centre concerned. The procurement and setting-up of the technology and tools must be done via UPSOKU and JPINK. The status of the ownership of the tools requested by the disabled students is subject to JPINK's decision, while the tools and technology that the responsibility centre has applied for is the property of UM. The benefits of using the tools and technology in any responsibility centre should be enjoyed by all disabled students.

8.10 Award and Certification

Disabled students must not be denied the right to receive an award or certification awarded by the University on the reason of their disability.

9.0 SAFETY OF DISABLED STUDENTS

Disabled students are responsible for their own safety. At the same time, the responsibility centre should ensure that its environment is safe. It should also formulate and provide a plan for a safety route or passage and Standard Operating Procedures (Standard Operation Procedure (SOP)) in the case of situations of risk, such as fires, accidents, and natural disasters.

10.0 PUBLIC SPEECHES AND MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENTS

All messages conveyed through any form of public speaking and media announcements should not contain elements of discrimination against or segregation of disabled students, whether overtly or covertly, that can disrupt the establishment of an inclusive environment and the image of the university. In addition, all messages for the benefit of the campus community should also be made accessible to disabled students in a variety of formats and at the same time that the messages are made accessible to non-disabled students.

11.0 STUDY ON DISABLED STUDENTS

Researchers who want to conduct research on disabled students or involve them (as respondent or samples for research) should first consult UPSOKU. Researchers must comply with all research ethics in addition to using methods and approaches suggested during the consultation with UPSOKU. Each researcher must also provide a copy of their findings to UPSOKU so that the information will benefit both parties.

12.0 AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS TO THE POLICY

Amendments to any matter within the policy and /or addition of a matter to the policy can only be made after approval by the members of JPINK. All amendments and / or additions to the policy should be communicated to all parties in UM, whether through the print or electronic medium.