

People of Determination Policy

Policy Owner(s)	Chancellor	Responsible Office	Office of the Chancellor
Approved By	Chancellor	Effective Date	Oct. 2023
		Next Review Date	Oct. 2026

Purpose

Ajman University (AU), in line with its values and in compliance with the “National Policy for Empowering People with Special Needs” has established this policy to ensure that all those with special needs or People of Determination among its students, faculty, staff and visitors are treated in fair and equitable manner.

Definition

People of Determination (POD): Under the provision of the United Arab Emirates Federal Law No. 29 of 2006 and the Federal Law No. 14 of 2009, the law defines a person of determination as “every person suffering from a temporary or permanent, full or partial deficiency or infirmity in his/her physical, sensory, mental, communicational, educational or psychological abilities to an extent that limits his/her possibility of performing the ordinary requirements”.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff and visitors at AU that are known as People of Determination.

Policy

AU is committed to providing equal access to academic programs, and a supportive environment where students with special needs or with disability, referred to as “People of Determination”, are encouraged to join AU Community and fully participate in its academic experience without barriers or discrimination.

Similarly, AU provides a fair and equitable workplace and offers all individuals full opportunity to develop their potential. Accordingly, AU will identify and eliminate any discriminatory barriers, and shall advance the interests of all individuals regardless of their differences to ensure that fair and equal opportunity is afforded to all who seek employment at the University, regardless of their special needs or disability, nationality and gender.

In line with Article 12 of Federal Law No. 14 of 2009, AU is committed to undertaking all necessary steps to welcome applications from students, faculty, staff, and visits of people with special needs and provide them with access to equal opportunities in education, employment and other services, as appropriate.

Ajman University is committed to ensuring a safe and appropriate environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors with special needs, by providing support and facilities for people of determination.

Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of the students, faculty, staff and visitors to choose to either disclose or not disclose their disability.
- In case of non-disclosure during the registration, hiring, visit period, the University is not responsible for the provision of any reasonable possible adjustments, which might comprise the provision of specific exam adjustments, learning support, housing adjustments, scholarship/ discounts according to Scholarships and Discounts Policy, and/or parking pass.
- The students should report any disability by the beginning of each semester, or during the academic year, if any.
- The University will take into consideration cases where students, faculty and staff health situation changes during the course of their academic studies or employment at AU.

Provisions for Students

To encourage the inclusion of “People of Determination” in education, AU may provide scholarship/ discount and/or a reasonable adjustment to students with a documented disability that makes them fall under one of the “People of Determination” categories recognized by the UAE Ministry of Education.

Recognized disability categories are as follows:

- Auditory Impairment
- Visual Impairment
- Physical Disability
- Speech and Language Disorders
- Autism Spectrum Disorders

A. Student of Determination Disclosure and Scholarship Grant

1. It is up to students to disclose their disabilities if they so desire; to request accommodations and services related to their disabilities; to provide the necessary documentation of their disabilities as required by the institution
2. The POD medical file and documents are submitted to Office of Medical Services for validation, assessment and approval and eventual recommendations for further student support.
3. The office of medical service shall send the approved medical document to the students with disability (SD) committee. The SD committee shall communicate with the student to further inform him/her about the services offered to the student.
- 4- It is the responsibility of the student to declare the type of service s/he wishes to apply to, for instance, if the student wishes to apply for the PoD scholarship, s/he shall send an email to the SD committee declaring that desire.
- 5- Once receiving the student’s request, the SD committee shall submit a scholarship request for the student.
6. Scholarship eligibility and/or a reasonable adjustment for students enrolled on full-time or part-time basis in any Undergraduate or Graduate program, may be set and determined by the Chancellor based on the assessment report submitted by the student or his/her family and once approved by the Office of Medical Services.

The supporting documents should include:

- Disability Card (an exception can be given by the Chancellor).
- A current medical report (not older than 3 years) from an accredited health professional that describes the health condition/impairment, its academic impact, and mentions whether it is permanent or temporary.

7. For some cases, a psychological assessment is required besides the submitted documents; where a referral to AU Counseling Unit is required to have a full picture of the student's needs. The recommendations are shared with the concerned deans to set the needful support for the student.

8. The office of the scholarship shall follow up with the student regarding the status of the student's request for a scholarship and will inform the student of the final decision.

AU POD Scholarship Grant

Scholarships for People of Determination (POD):

- Students of Determination shall be entitled to a scholarship throughout their study at the University according to Scholarships and Discounts Policy, as per a recommendation from a specialized committee formed for this particular reason. The recommended percentage of scholarship shall be approved by the Chancellor.
- The discount applies to all undergraduate programs.
- The student must maintain a CGPA of 2.00 or higher.
- The student must visit the University clinic and have his/her case approved.
- The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid shall reflect the scholarship percentage on its system and convey the decision to the concerned student.
- The Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid and the Office of Medical Services may ask the student to submit reports from time to time that justify the continuity of the support.
- The Chancellor may at any time, for any reason, cancel the scholarship given to the student.

B. Student Services for People of Determination

Ajman University provides reasonable accommodation and equal access to cocurricular activities, events, programs and services for People of Determination with documented disabilities. Cocurricular activities that are provided to People of Determination are based on their condition's limitations and specialist's recommendations. People of Determination have equitable access to recreation and sport facilities on campus as far as feasible and affordable. AU Student Housing provides safe and specially equipped accommodations designed for People of Determination. In addition, an Emergency Plan has been established that takes into consideration the requirements for People of Determination; providing them with evacuation wheelchairs, specially designed ramps and wheelchair access slope at the entrance. Moreover, AU is welcoming all students of determination, and the Counseling Unit is keen on providing them with inclusive and sustainable academic and psychological needed support on campus and virtually.

The Deanship of Student Services (DSS) offers students and applicants an opportunity for confidential disclosure of personal information relating to mental health. For those with a documented mental health condition, the DSS relevant office assesses the support needed and arranges for reasonable adjustments to be made. The type of support may vary among students. These needs may include, but not limited to:

- Behavioral, social, or emotional support.
- Sensory.
- Physical Disability.
- Speech and Language Disorders.
- Communication and Interaction.
- Dyslexia –reading.
- Dysgraphia - writing/spelling.
- Developmental coordination disorder.

The Counseling Unit shall define a mechanism by which academic needs of students with special needs could be fulfilled. Accommodations may include specific examination arrangements. The provision of accommodations will be made within the parameters of the following factors:

- The nature of student circumstances and needs following consultation with the student and examination of available evidence and relevant assessments.
- The nature of the academic program of study.
- The likely effectiveness of the adjustment in removing the disadvantage.
- The practicality of the adjustment, taking into account: disruption, health and safety issues, the reasonable expectations of others and external factors (for example, factors in relation to student placements).

Student accommodations are designed to support students with learning challenges so they can achieve their academic potential. These accommodations vary according to each case. Additional information is available in the Counseling Unit.

Emergency Procedures

The following Emergency Procedures for Persons with Disability are available in the Office of Medical Services:

- Refer to AU Emergency Plan and Procedures (November 2020)
- Fact Sheets: Emergency Procedures for Persons with a Disability
- Assisting individuals with disabilities in an emergency:
 - Individuals Who Are Blind or Have Low Vision
 - Individuals Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
 - Individuals with Mobility Limitations – (non-wheelchair user)
 - Individuals with Mobility Limitations - (wheelchair user)
 - Individuals with Psychological Disabilities.

Miscellaneous

1. This Policy supersedes any other old related policies, procedures, minutes of meeting, manuals, handbooks, and bylaws.

2. The Chancellor is responsible for handling any issues that might arise and are not covered in this Policy.
3. In case of conflict between the Arabic and English versions of the Policy, the English one prevails.
4. Any exceptions to this Policy must be well justified and raised to the Chancellor for a final decision.

Document History

<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Update Information</i>	<i>Author/ Reviewer</i>
V 1.0	20/04/2021	Initial policy	Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs
V 1.1	07/03/2023	This policy is updated to include faculty, staff and visitors that are categorized as POD.	Office of the Chancellor
V 1.2	10/10/2023	Minor update on workflow of students with disability registration and applying for the services provided to them.	Counseling Unit