



# TU Dublin Policy

Supporting Staff  
with Disabilities Policy

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## 1. Document Control Summary

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Author	Mary Malone
Owner	Head of Human Resources
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## 2. Introduction / Context

This policy outlines the commitment and support for staff with disabilities in Technological University Dublin.

TU Dublin is committed to supporting an inclusive working environment where all staff are treated with dignity and respect and supported to reach their full potential. The University will ensure that staff with a disability will have equal access to every aspect of the University including employment, training, promotion, and career development and that their safety, health, and welfare is appropriately supported.

In accordance with the University's Strategic Plan by 2030; *the University will be recognised as exemplar in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), where people are proud to be part of a connected community and their talents, aptitude, and agility will create real impact on the global stage.*

## 3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to create an inclusive University by providing guidance about the employment, training, promotion and career development, and support of staff with a disability. In this regard, the University will:

- ensure that staff with a disability will be supported to reach their full potential, and will not be disadvantaged because of having a disability;
- proactively encourage applications for employment from people with disabilities;
- increase the proportion of staff with a disability to a minimum of 6% by 2024 in line with Government Strategy and UN Sustainable Development Goal 10. reduce inequality, and support staff to explore their abilities and reach their full potential;
- provide reasonable accommodations in relation to appropriate technical, environmental/structural and organisational supports to ensure that staff with disabilities can remain in the workplace and reach their full potential;
- support a requirement that staff and managers undergo training which will be provided on “*reasonable accommodation*” to create an understanding of disability and how to support staff with a disability. Managers Guidance will be developed with information on the different kinds of disabilities and the different supports required, to ensure there is extensive understanding across the University on how to support staff (Procedural Document - Supporting Staff with Disabilities in TU Dublin – “Reasonable Accommodation Request Form”);
- ensure that staff with disabilities have the same opportunities to contribute and participate in every aspect of the University; and make every reasonable effort to enable staff who acquire a disability during their employment with the University to

remain within employment, be supported, and reach their full potential.

## 4. Scope

- 4.1 TU Dublin is committed to attracting, recruiting, developing, and retaining the highest calibre of staff to build a diverse, supportive, innovative, and inclusive workforce reflective of the wider community. We will create an inclusive culture by providing the necessary support for employees with disabilities to reach their full potential.
- 4.2 TU Dublin is committed to equality of opportunity in the recruitment, employment, and promotion of staff.
- 4.3 TU Dublin is committed to providing an environment that supports the safety, health, and welfare of all staff including equal access and egress in the event of an evacuation. This will include the provision of Fire Evacuation lifts in all new buildings and all buildings undergoing refurbishment, assuming Statutory Compliance and existing building circumstances permit this.
- 4.4 TU Dublin will actively encourage applications from people with disabilities,
- Job descriptions, person specifications, and advertisements will not include unnecessary requirements which could unfairly exclude applicants with disabilities.
  - All advertisements will explicitly state that the University is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity in employment; and
  - Information relating to vacancies will be provided in a clear and accessible format, and in alternative formats upon request.

We welcome all reasonable requests to provide necessary supports to enable applicants with disabilities to participate in recruitment competitions.

## 5. Definitions

This policy is underpinned by the *Employment Equality Acts (1998 – 2015)*, the *Disability Act (2005)*, the *Equal Status Act (2004)*, the *Safety Health and Welfare at Work Act (2005)*, and the *Data Protection Act (1988-2018)*.

*Under the Disability Act (2005) “disability”, concerning a person, means a substantial restriction in the capacity of the person to carry on a profession, business, or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment’;*

*The Employment Equality Acts (1998 – 2015), Section 16 (3) of the Act provides that:*

- a) a person who has disability shall not be regarded as other than fully competent to undertake, and fully capable of undertaking, any duties if, with the assistance of a*

*reasonable accommodation, such person would be fully competent to undertake, and be fully capable of undertaking those duties.*

- b) an employer shall do all that is reasonable to accommodate the needs of a person who has a disability by providing suitable technical and organisational supports.*
- c) a refusal or failure to provide suitable technical and organisational support shall not be deemed reasonable unless such provision would impose a disproportionate financial burden on the employer.*

For further information please see links to relevant legislation below:

- [Employment Equality Acts \(1998 – 2015\)](#)
- [Disability Act \(2005\)](#)
- [Equal Status Act \(2004\)](#)
- [Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act \(2005\)](#)
- [Data Protection Act \(2018\)](#)

## 6. Policy Details:

### 6.1 Policy Overview

Section 6.2 sets out the general principles of the University in ensuring an inclusive policy that promotes employment, training, promotion and career development, and appropriate supports of staff with a disability.

### 6.2 Policy Details

#### Training, Promotion & Career Development

- 6.2.1 The University is committed to equality of opportunity concerning the training, development, and promotion of all staff.
- 6.2.2 In assigning duties to staff with disabilities, care will be taken to ensure that they are given the same opportunities as other staff to acquire the range of skills and experience necessary for their future career development.
- 6.2.3 Staff with disabilities will be offered the same access to training as all other staff, and reasonable measures should be taken to ensure that they are not inhibited from availing of such opportunities for reasons of physical or sensory access or egress to training centres, conference rooms, format of training materials, etc. Staff with disabilities should inform Staff Development if they require special arrangements during training and development.

### **Reasonable Accommodation**

- 6.2.4 The Employment Equality Act (1998 – 2015) imposes specific duties on the University concerning staff with disabilities. Under the Act, the University is prohibited from unlawfully discriminating against people with disabilities by failing to provide reasonable accommodations.
- 6.2.5 The University will:
- provide all reasonable accommodations to ensure that an employee with a disability is not at any substantial disadvantage compared to an employee who does not have a disability;
  - consult with staff with disabilities to identify any reasonable accommodations and take all steps to ensure that any reasonable accommodation request to perform specific job functions or meet specific requirements are evaluated in a timely manner;
  - ensure that insofar as is practicable, the working environment supports staff and minimises difficulties which staff with disabilities may encounter; and
  - consult with staff with disabilities about suitable technical or organisational and environmental supports to assist them to maximise their ability in performing their duties.

### **Supporting Staff with Disabilities**

- 6.2.6 The relevant line manager will facilitate an employee's needs assessment, which will focus on additional supports, environment accessibility, and safety and egress considerations.
- 6.2.7 The line manager will liaise with the relevant functions to facilitate any reasonable accommodations. For example:
- Human Resources - time/leave accommodation
  - Safety, Health & Welfare Office – workstation equipment, evacuation plans
  - Campus & Estates Office – building and environment accessibility
  - People Development – training supports
  - Technology Services – for assistive technology
- 6.2.8 TU Dublin will make every reasonable effort to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all staff. Where a staff member's disability could have an effect on their work practices and/or health/safety at work of themselves or others, their line manager and the Health and Safety Office should be informed by that staff member.
- 6.2.9 The Health and Safety Office will advise line managers of their obligations Under Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Act (2005). This will include completion/review of a risk assessment to ensure that hazards are identified, steps are taken to manage

risks, and reasonable adjustments/further controls and enhancements are made where necessary. Special arrangements such as Personal Emergency Egress Plans (PEEPS) may also be required to ensure the safe evacuation of staff with disabilities. This includes appropriate arrangements for fire drills for staff with disabilities.

## **Disclosure**

- 6.2.10 TU Dublin seeks to create an inclusive environment where staff may disclose their disability with the confidence of a supportive response and be assured that their information is protected under data protection legislation.
- 6.2.11 The University is required to collect information on the number of employees with a disability to meet its obligations under the Disability Act 2005. This information will be collected confidentially and voluntarily through an annual survey administered by Human Resources for statistical purposes and the anonymous data released to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science each year.
- 6.2.12 Data in relation to disability that the University holds, is classified by data protection legislation as Special Category Personal Data or sensitive personal data. In addition to the normal standards of confidentiality, we carefully control access to sensitive data within the University so that it is only available to those staff who require it to perform their duties.
- 6.2.13 The University will endeavour to attract, engage and retain candidates with disabilities throughout all stages of the recruitment and employment process. Please refer to Recruitment, Selection & Appointment Policy HRP008.
- 6.2.14 The university encourages staff with disabilities to discuss their specific needs with their line manager so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented to support them to maximise their ability in performing their duties. Personal and medical information related to a staff member's disability will remain confidential. It will only be disclosed to relevant internal departments and third parties with the explicit consent of the individual in accordance with data protection legislation.
- 6.2.14 It is recognised that any staff member can develop a disability at any stage during their working life or may have, or develop, a disability that is progressive in nature. Every effort will be made to retain such staff and assist them in returning to, or continuing in, employment through the provision of reasonable accommodation and support.
- 6.2.15 Staff who acquire a disability are encouraged to inform their managers so that the appropriate accommodations may be put in place to support their employment.

## **6.3 Approval process**

This policy must be approved by both the University Executive Team and Governing Body in order to be considered active.

### **Responsibilities – Monitoring & Implementation**

- 6.3.1 Human Resources holds the primary responsibility for compliance and implementation of this policy. In addition, Human Resources will ensure awareness and best practice training is developed and delivered to all staff, ensuring they are aware of their rights and obligations under this policy. Human Resources will work with the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Directorate to monitor and keep the policy under operational review ensuring good practice and alignment with legislative changes.
- 6.3.2 The Occupational Health Advisor through the Health & Safety Office will provide information, support, and assistance to management and staff as appropriate.
- 6.3.3 Staff will be made aware of the policy during induction, and relevant training will be made available.

### **Grievances**

- 6.3.5 Any staff member who feels they have been discriminated against on the grounds of their disability should in the first instance refer to the University's Grievance Procedures [Grievance Procedures HRP005](#). Staff are encouraged to seek advice from the Employee Relations Manager in this regard.
- 6.3.6 Grievances in relation to recruitment may be considered under the [TU Dublin, Recruitment, Selection & Appointment Policy](#)

### **6.4 Change Process**

This policy will be reviewed after the first anniversary of publication and will be updated to ensure continued relevance with any legislative, health and safety or operational effectiveness requirements. Following the first year, it will be reviewed for effectiveness at least once every 3 years or earlier in line with any changes to legislation. This review should be triggered by the document owner and will be undertaken by the HR Policy Committee (HRPC).

## **7. Related Documents**

- Recruitment, Selection & Appointment Policy HRP008 – [Recruitment, Selection and Appointment](#)
- University's Grievance Procedures [Grievance Procedures](#)
- Procedures supporting this policy are currently under development.



- Supporting Staff with Disabilities in TU Dublin – “Reasonable Accommodation Request Form”
- Data Protection Policy

## 8. Conclusions

TU Dublin is fully committed to a working environment which removes any obstacles facing staff with disabilities. The University will ensure that staff with a disability will have equal access to every aspect of the University including employment, training, promotion, and career development and that their safety, health, and welfare is appropriately supported. The policy also encourages all staff to work within the principles and spirit of this policy, regardless of whether they identify as a person with a disability.

### Queries on this Policy

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Directorate** Email:  
[Equality@TUDublin.ie](mailto:Equality@TUDublin.ie)

**Employee Relations - Human Resources**  
Email: [Employeerelations@tudublin.ie](mailto:Employeerelations@tudublin.ie)

**Health and Safety Office**  
Email:  
[shw@tudublin.ie](mailto:shw@tudublin.ie)

## 9. Appendix

None

## 10. Document Management

### 10.1 Version Control

VERSION NUMBER	VERSION DESCRIPTIN / CHANGES MADE	AUTHOR	DATE
Draft	Initial Draft	Head of HR and Director of EDI	21.03.2022


### **10.2 Document Approval**

VERSION NUMBER	APPROVAL DATE	APPROVED BY (NAME AND ROLE)

### **10.3 Document Ownership**

This document is owned by the Head of Human Resources.

### **10.4 Document Review**

This policy will be reviewed after the first anniversary of publication in consultation with the EDI and Safety, Health & Welfare managers and will be updated to ensure continued relevance with any legislative, health and safety or operational effectiveness requirements. Following the first year, it will be reviewed for effectiveness at least once every 3 years or earlier in line with any changes to legislation. This review should be triggered by the document owner and will be undertaken by the HR Policy Committee (HRPC).

### **10.5 Document Storage**

This document will be stored on the common personnel (Human Resources) drive. This policy will be available to all staff, students and members of the public at Human Resources | TU Dublin.

### **10.6 Document Classification**

This policy will be classed as TU Dublin Public and is available to all staff, students and members of the public who need to view it.