




WCCN Student disability policy

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All Change requests should be submitted to WCCN

REVISION	TITLE OR BRIEF DESCRIPTION	ENTERED BY
2021/12/21	Rebranding	Dr T M Bock
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SENATEPREAMBLE

This policy is to be applied from adoption hereof. This policy is by no means to be retrospectively applied and will only deal with the exam cycle, immediately prior to ratification of this policy.



1. SCOPE

The policy is applicable to all the students of the Western Cape College of Nursing (WCCN) with its unique institutional culture based upon the values of caring, accountability, competency, and responsiveness as the College and the Nursing Profession espouses.

It is in line with the constitution and guided by principle of inclusivity without disregarding the inherent requirements expected of the nursing students when executing /fulfilling nursing care. Nursing necessitates a great deal of physical activity (characterised by strenuous activities; alert senses full range of joint and muscle movements), emotional strength and social intelligence to meet the needs of the health care users who are sometimes less abled due to compromised health conditions.

It is intended to construct an enabling academic environment by avoiding unfair discrimination against students with disabilities and assist College with the necessary support to determine the level of suitability of the students to perform to their full potential in theory and clinical practice as a safe competent health practitioner to be.

It sets out measures and prescripts complying with provisions of Higher education in the country with approaches and practises on integrated learning experiences expected of the nursing students.

2. THE PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

The policy is undertaken in the context of the institutional statutes and is resolution of the Council of the College as informed by the availability of the resources which are aligned to the institution's current and future priorities and commitment of the institution and in alignment with National Policy on Disability and National Plan for Higher Education in South Africa with reference to:

- a) Increasing access to higher education for the deserving students
- b) To afford all qualifying students with disability an opportunity to undergo necessary assessment for recommendation for assistance and programmes that can assist the students to succeed in their studies
- c) Increased inclusivity and integration by understanding and recognising diversity among the students and staff within the institution
- d) To afford the students with disability the assumption of responsibility for recognising their capacities and seek reasonable services available at the institution to support them throughout the academic environment

3. DEFINITIONS

The institution is aligning itself with the provisions of the Disabled People of South Africa (DPSA) In terms of (DPSA) disability is defined and categorised to different aspects

- 1) Long term or recurring
- 2) Physical or mental (psychological) impairment
- 3) Substantially limits ability

All who satisfy these criteria above are defined as persons with disabilities

3.1 Long term or recurring

Long-term

This is known to refer to an impairment that has lasted or is likely to persist for at least twelve months. A short-term or temporary illness or injury is in terms of this definition not an impairment that gives rise to a disability.

Recurring

This impairment is one that is likely to re-occur from time to time. It includes constant underlying conditions, even if its effects on a person fluctuate. (Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998; based on The Constitution 1996)

NB: Progressive conditions are those that are likely to develop or change or recur. People living with progressive conditions or illnesses are considered as people with disabilities once the impairment starts to be substantially limiting. Progressive or recurring conditions which have no overt symptoms, or which do not substantially limit a person are not disabilities.

3.2 Physical or mental impairment

3.2.1 Physical impairment

This refers to partial or total loss of a bodily function or part of the body. It includes but is not limited to sensory impairments such as varying degrees of hearing and visual impairments, reading and/or writing impairments and/or any other combination of physical impairments.

Mental impairment

It refers to clinically recognized conditions that affect a person's thought processes, judgment or emotions. (Employment Equity Act No 55 of 1998; based on Constitution 1996)

3.3 Substantially Limiting Ability

An impairment is substantially limiting if, in the absence of reasonable accommodation by the WCCN, a person would be either totally unable to study or pursue a career or would be significantly limited in his/her study process or in fulfilling the career. An assessment of whether the effects of impairment are substantially limiting must be considered if medical treatment or other devices would control or correct the impairment so that its adverse effects are diminished, prevented or removed.

3.4 Discrimination

Discrimination refers to an unequal treatment of students with disabilities and can occur either directly or indirectly. It is direct discrimination for a College official to treat people/students less favorably because of their disability. It is indirect discrimination when a practice appears in the institution (WCCN) to treat everyone equally but in effect such practice disadvantages or excludes people with a disability.

4. PRINCIPLES WHICH THIS POLICY STRIVES TO UPHOLD

4.1 General Principles

Disability is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and this context is geared at enhancing the principle of right to self-representation and inclusivity for full participation in the mainstream society.

- a) WCCN is committed to offer the students with disabilities the equal opportunity and access by promoting a positive safe environment and protecting students with disabilities from prejudice.
- b) WCCN creates platforms to encourage students with disabilities to disclose their disability status for assistance to be provided in terms of assessment that will guide and support the institution in striving towards meeting the needs of students with disabilities as expected by the Higher Education legislative prescripts.
- c) All students on orientation would be equipped with information with regard to this policy.
- d) WCCN may not be held liable and accountable in the case a person with disability choosing not to disclose his or her disability status in cases where the disability is not self-evident.

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- e) WCCN upholds the principle of confidentiality in dealing with disclosed information.
- f) WCCN will ensure that it strives to make provisions for flexibility in all academic activities where possible to enhance success in students with disabilities as part of upholding social integration and academic inclusivity.
- g) WCCN will create platforms which empower staff and student body with sensitivity towards students with disabilities through continuous training programs
- h) Students disabilities will be continuously monitored by the component of Disability Unit in the student health.
- i) WCCN commits and strives to continually reviews and re-aligns its policies and plans to Higher Education legislative in dealing with areas that seem to create barriers for upholding the principle of good practice

5. SUPPORTING ELEMENTS

The institution commits to establish a Disability Unit which will be supported by the Disability committee and student admission committee

5.1 Academic and support staff

- a) First year team will include the disability unit to disseminate information about disability to all new students during orientation and encourage students with disability to disclose at their consent.
- b) The students that have disclosed based on this information need to be referred for assessment which will determine the processes that need to be in place to be able to support and assist the student with disability with reference to the institutional capacity.
- c) A written report with recommendations should be forwarded by the Disability Unit to the academic and support staff in the student level of study.

5.2 Appeals

- a) Candidates may appeal against the process of the assessment and Appeals policy will apply according to institutional process
- b) Candidates may also appeal against other aspects of the disability service provided, e.g. discriminatory treatment, unreasonable delays.
- c) The appeal process should be concluded in the first two week of commencement of the academic program of that year.

6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND/OR POLICY, CODES OF PRACTICE, PROFESSIONAL AUTHORITIES:

- Policy on Disability
- White paper on the Rights Of persons with Disabilities approved by Cabinet on 9 Dec 2015
- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996
- South African Human Rights Commission

- HEQC Criteria for Institutional Audits and Programme Accreditation.
- Relevant policies of South African Nursing Council.

7. RELEVANT INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES/ DOCUMENTS/MANUALS/ HANDBOOKS

- Vision, Mission & Strategic Plan of WCCN
- Curriculum development policy,
- WCCN Appeals Policy
- Academic Rules and Regulations