

POLICY ON FLEXIBLE ACADEMIC WORKLOAD & FLEXIBLE STUDY PERIOD FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (REVISED 2021)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The IIUM currently has 83 students with various types of disabilities. As of 6 July 2021, there are 41 who are physically disabled (including 7 wheelchair users), 18 with vision impairment, 10 with hearing impairment, 2 with speech impairment, 11 with learning differences, and 3 with psycho-social impairments who are registered with the Disability Services Unit (DSU). These students are spread out in all the Kulliyyahs at various levels of study, from the foundation level to the PhD level. At the moment, there are 12 students who are enrolled in postgraduate programmes at various Kulliyyahs.

2. OBJECTIVE

- 2.1 This Policy is to provide flexibilities in academic workload and study period for students with disabilities to be on equal footing as the non-disabled students, in line with the *IIUM Disability Inclusion Policy* (2018) and the Ministry of (Higher) Education's *Garis Panduan Pelaksanaan Dasar Inklusif OKU di Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi* (2019).

3. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

- 3.1 This policy is applicable to all IIUM students with disabilities who are registered with the Disability Services Unit.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

- 4.1 The University acknowledges that students with disabilities face various additional challenges as opposed to the non-disabled students, not only in the management of their daily routine but also in the teaching and learning process. For instance, those with low vision or hearing impairment take a longer time to study and to prepare for examinations as well as to complete their assignments and projects. They are also unable to read/study continuously for long hours as it would pose a tremendous strain on their eyes or ears. Those with learning differences such as dyslexia and autism also need longer study time to perform at par with other students. In addition to that, many have medical issues that had caused them to be frequently hospitalized for long durations. As a result, they have a high likelihood to have to take study leave for medical or other reasons that disrupts the smoothness of their study. Catching up to 'graduate on time' poses an additional challenge to them.
- 4.2 The University acknowledges that students with disabilities are at a disadvantage if they were imposed the same minimum workload as stated in the Student Academic Performance Evaluation (Undergraduate) Regulation (SAPER, 2015), or in the

Postgraduate Regulations (2020). This is because the actual workload that many of them have to bear is actually much more compared to non-disabled students in terms of the number of hours that they have to spend for each course that they take due to their impairments, in addition to the other stresses in life that they have to bear. As such, they are not a level playing field to perform at par with other students without disabilities if the maximum study period is applied to them.

- 4.3 As such, students with disabilities are allowed to take less than the required minimum number of courses per semester according to their ability/capacity (i.e., no required minimum workload per semester for students with disabilities).
- 4.4 In such a case, students with disabilities are also allowed a flexible study period, i.e., no maximum duration of study period for students with disabilities.

5. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 If a student with disability needs a flexible academic workload and flexible study period while undergoing the programme, the Dean/Director/ relevant Deputy Dean/ Deputy Director of the Kulliyyah/Centre/Institute, the Head of DSU and the student will discuss and agree on the estimated number of years (beyond the maximum duration) that the student is expected to complete the programme.
- 5.2 The Dean/ Director/ relevant Deputy Dean/ Deputy Director of the Kulliyyah/ Centre/ Institute will inform the Dean of the Academic Management and Admission Division (AMAD)/ Centre for Postgraduate Studies (CPS) of the expected number of years for the student to complete the programme to be recorded in the system.
- 5.3 In the case where the student requires additional period to complete the programme, the process is repeated, if necessary, until the student completes the programme.

6. MAINTENANCE POLICY

- 6.1 The Disability Services Unit is responsible to ensure that this policy is updated and improved based on the needs or requirements for any change or improvement at any needed time.

7. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES

- 7.1 This policy is read together with the latest version of the following policies:
 - a. *The IIUM Constitution (2016)*
 - b. *The IIUM Disability Inclusion Policy (2018)*
 - c. *Student Academic Performance Evaluation (Undergraduate) Regulation 2015*
 - d. *Postgraduate Regulations (Revised 2020)*
 - e. *Garis Panduan Pelaksanaan Dasar Inklusif OKU di Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi (2019), Ministry of Higher Education*