1. Context

Torrens University Australia recognises the value of a diverse and inclusive University community and is committed to providing access and equity for students with a disability or medical condition. The University is also committed to fostering a learning environment that is free from harassment and discrimination. The aim is that all students will have the opportunity to participate, to the fullest extent possible, in the academic, cultural and social activities of the University. To this end, the University will make reasonable adjustments to ensure access to educational activities, services and facilities, and to overcome barriers to entry into its programs.

2. Definitions

**Disability:** Torrens University Australia uses the definition of Part 1 Section 4 of the *Disability Discrimination Act (1992)* which includes physical, psychological and psychiatric conditions and injuries, and ongoing medical conditions.

**Inherent requirements:** are the fundamental abilities, knowledge and skills that all students need to successfully complete a course or program. Students with a disability or medical condition can have reasonable adjustments made to enable them to meet these requirements.

**Reasonable adjustments:** are adjustments that can be made to allow a student with a disability to participate in education on the same basis as other students. Adjustments are reasonable if they balance the interests of all parties affected and do not affect the academic standards or inherent requirements of a course or program.

**University community:** students, staff, agents, alumni, titleholders, officers, contractors, volunteers and other people who are formally involved in a University-related activity, regardless of the location of that activity.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all enrolled and prospective Torrens University Australia students.
4. Principles

The University is guided by the following principles relating to access and equity for students and prospective students with a disability. Torrens University Australia will:

- foster an environment among all members of the University community that is positive, informed, and free of prejudice and discrimination towards people with a disability;
- respect the rights of people with disabilities to privacy and confidentiality;
- integrate the principles of equal access, participation and opportunity for all into University policies and procedures, the development of curricula, and the design of services and facilities;
- make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to study for people with a disability and to carers of people with a disability while maintaining academic standards and the academic integrity of courses and programs;
- recognise that people with a disability may have experienced prior educational disadvantage and will take this into consideration in its admission processes; and
- provide an appropriate level of services and support to enable students with a disability to pursue their academic goals.

5. Disclosure

5.1 Prospective students

For the purposes of planning the provision of services, prospective students are asked to identify specific requirements related to disability or medical condition to the University at the application stage. It is unlawful for the University to use such information to refuse admission to a student who otherwise meets the eligibility requirements of a program. However, a prospective student is not legally obliged to disclose personal information about a disability or medical condition.

5.2 Admitted students

Students are not legally obliged to disclose their disability or medical condition unless:

- they require the University to implement reasonable adjustments, or
- their disability or medical condition is likely to affect their capacity to meet the inherent requirements of a course or program.

Students who do require reasonable adjustments must identify themselves in a timely manner to the Student Support Co-ordinator to discuss the services and adjustments required.

6. Privacy

Confidentiality of information related to the nature of a disclosed disability will be protected, and access to this information will be restricted to those with a legitimate reason to know unless:

- the student gives express consent;
- the disclosure of the information is required by law; or
• the University has reasonable grounds for concern about the health or safety of the student or other persons.

7. Access Plans

Students who require the University to provide specific services and equipment, accommodations for physical access, or adjustments to teaching and assessment must submit an assessment from a medical, psychological or other recognised professional specialist which confirms the disability and recommends the type of adjustments required. The assessment must not be more than two years old and students may be requested to renew documentation every two years. All recommendations will be considered but may not be implemented as recommended (see 8 below).

On receipt of this assessment, the Student Support Co-ordinator will work with the student and, if appropriate, the Director, Services and Resources, to develop an individual Access Plan which will set out the specific adjustments required. The nature of a student’s disability or medical condition will not be disclosed in the Access Plan.

The Access Plan will inform negotiations with the Course Co-ordinator for each course in which the student is enrolled for adjustments to teaching and assessment. The student will be responsible to provide the Access Plan to the Course Co-ordinator in a timely manner to enable adjustments to be implemented.

Access plans will be approved by the Director, Operations and Services the Academic Director.

8. Determination of a reasonable adjustment

The following circumstances will be taken into account when determining if a particular adjustment for a student with a disability is reasonable:

• the student’s disability;
• the views of the student;
• the effect of the adjustment on the student’s independence and ability to achieve learning outcomes and participate in their courses or program;
• the inherent requirements of their course or program;
• the costs and benefits of making the adjustment; and
• the effect of the proposed adjustment on University staff and other students.

The University is not legally bound to make adjustments where it can demonstrate that doing so would impose an unjustifiable hardship on the University.

9. Work Placements and Study Abroad

Students with disabilities must:

• meet any requirement for fitness tests applicable to work placements to be undertaken; and/or
• provide evidence from a medical, psychological or other recognised professional specialist that they have the capacity to travel and live overseas.

The University is unable to guarantee access arrangements at other institutions and organisations in Australia and overseas and may not approve placements and study abroad for individual students. In such cases, alternative arrangements for meeting the learning outcomes of the program will be negotiated with the student.
10. Appeals

A student or prospective student with a disability or medical condition who is dissatisfied with an admission or reasonable adjustment decision by the University may appeal the decision by following the Academic Grievance Procedures of the Student Grievance Management Policy.

11. References

Disability Discrimination Act (1992) (Cwth)
Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cwth)

12. Authorities

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<td>Approve Access Plans</td>
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