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**POLICY FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF WITH SPECIAL  
NEEDS: FACILITIES AND SERVICES**



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Responsible Faculty/ Division & Unit	Advisory Committee on Students with Special Needs
Supporting documents, procedures & forms of this policy	Report of the Committee on Facilities for Students with Disabilities, October 1993  Report of the Committee to propose concessions to facilitate graduation of students with medical and/or psychological conditions, July 2016
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## 1 PURPOSE OF POLICY

The object of this policy shall ensure that students and Staff of the University community with special needs have access to both facilities, services and a learning environment that is, wherever possible, comparable to that of their peers without special needs. This policy shall recognise that students and Staff with special needs are an integral part of the academic community. It shall take as its starting point the premise that accessible and appropriate provision is not 'additional' but a core element of the overall service which the University makes available to all students and staff.

### 1.1 Preamble

The University of Ghana welcomes every student who is capable of succeeding on a chosen course. The University recognises that it is each individual's determination, potential and commitment which count. The University also recognises that students with special needs often have to be extra determined and committed in order to achieve their academic potential as well as realize their life aspirations. This is because there are more barriers in the way of their learning and more obstacles to get through in their daily lives. The University of Ghana is working hard to remove the barriers to learning and enjoyment within the University environment. The University also aims to make things more equitable for students and Staff with special needs by providing a range of support services for their individual needs.

The University is committed to its policy of equal opportunities for all students and staff, including those with special needs and aims to create an environment which enables them to participate fully in the mainstream of University life. The key principle which informs our approach to widening participation in a range of areas, including those with special needs (disability) derives from our mission statement; "everyone who has the capability to benefit from studying at the University should have the opportunity to do so".

The University of Ghana is spread over a wide area, with numerous buildings of various designs and age. Although some buildings are not fully accessible, the University makes every effort to make structural or organisational adjustments to enable students and staff with special needs

(especially ambulatory needs) to attend their classes or to find alternative ways of making the curriculum accessible. Prospective students and staff with special needs are therefore urged to visit the University to assess the suitability/ accessibility of departments, lecture halls, theatres and living accommodation, and to identify the level of support and facilities available.

## 1.2. Demographic Background

Currently three broad categories of students with needs (physically impaired, visually impaired and hearing impaired) form the core group of students with special needs at the University of Ghana. OSSN registered student data (2010/2011 – 2016/2017 academic year) is as follows:

Disabilities	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017
Physical	14	34	48	55	55	41	35	36
Visual	6	14	18	23	34	29	28	28
Hearing	2	3	2	5	4	8	8	8
Others	0	1	1	4	3	6	3	3
Total	22	52	69	87	96	84	74	75

## Gender Distribution

Sex	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017
Males	19	43	55	65	62	56	51	53
Females	3	9	14	22	34	28	23	22
Total	22	52	69	87	96	84	74	75

## 2 DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Students and Staff with Special Needs	Persons who are disadvantaged by reason of any verifiable and persistent physical, learning, cognitive, sensory, psychological, neurological, or temporary impairment of a nature and degree sufficiently serious to interfere with their work, studies and academic progress or participation in other essential campus activities.
Visual Impairment	Total or partial sight loss that impedes work or educational process and may necessitate accommodations, support services, or programmes (e.g., Braille, note-taking, enlarged prints, care attendants, etc.)
Hearing Impairment (Deaf and Hard of Hearing)	Total or partial inability to hear, that impedes work or educational process and necessitates accommodations, support services, or programs. Students/Staff in this category may require communication accommodation such as oral or sign language interpreters, and note taking services, etc.
Physical or Ambulatory/ Mobility Impairment (including wheel-chair users)	Limitation in locomotion or motor functions (e.g., cerebral palsy) that indicates a need for accommodations, support services, or programs. Included in this category are wheel chair user, crutches users, amputees, and students/staff who have physical limitations that restrict the ability to function without accommodation in the campus environment (e.g., note-taking, special transportation, care attendants, etc.)
Learning Disability	A generic term that refers to the heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities due to neurological dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may exist concomitantly with other disabling conditions (e.g., sensory impairment) the learning disability is not the direct result of those conditions or influences.
Other Disabilities	Any unique condition , such as a medical problem, dysfunction of a body part or process, a neurological or psychological disability that necessitates accommodations, support services, or programmes, that does not fall within the other categories of disabilities defined

### **3 APPLICATION AND SCOPE - EXCLUSIONS OR SPECIAL CONDITIONS**

This Policy is applicable to all members of the University community. These shall include officers and employees of the University, students, and persons who serve the University as its agents and are under the control of the University in all its locations.

All staff of the University are expected to be aware of this policy and the legal framework and shall respectfully treat students or staff with special needs in accordance with these provisions. This Policy shall be published and disseminated without charge to all members of the University community. It shall be displayed at conspicuous places in all Faculties, departments, the university website, lecture halls and other public areas as far as possible. It shall also be made available to newly recruited staff of the University and newly admitted students.

The timeframe for retrospective application of this policy shall follow the tenets laid down in the Laws of Ghana.

### **4 DOCUMENTATION/VERIFICATION OF DISABILITY**

#### **4.1. Documentation**

Students and staff who request accommodations or services shall be required to provide verification of the nature and extent of the disability from a medical, educational, psychological/psychiatric professional or other appropriate individuals.

#### **4.2. Verification**

Verification from certain sources may require endorsement by the Director of University of Ghana Health Services, who shall have the ultimate authority to determine disability status. Such documentation helps to ensure the appropriate delivery of accommodations and services necessary to facilitate the individual's success.

#### **4.3. Confidentiality**

The University is mindful of its responsibilities to students and staff with disabilities and shall do all that it can to ensure that the rights and needs of students and staff with special needs are not compromised.

Records that identify students and staff with disabilities including the student's name, address, nature of disability, support services needed, and verifying statement of the Director of University Health Services and other documentation provided by the student/staff shall be considered confidential and be protected in accordance with UG regulations with the purpose of providing appropriate academic accommodations or adaptation of curricula. Information about the student/staff shall only be released with the student's/staff's informed written consent in accordance with University of Ghana or other applicable legislation.

#### **4.4. Disclosure**

The University shall however endeavour to develop an environment within which individuals feel able to disclose their disability. Every encouragement and opportunity shall be given to students/staff to disclose any disability that may have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **5 POLICY PRINCIPLES**

### **5.1 Freedom from Discrimination and Harassment**

The University of Ghana is committed to fostering the right of individuals to be free from discrimination and harassment while engaged in activities undertaken as part of their study, employment, or other forms of association with the University of Ghana.

### **5.2. Right to Dignity**

All members of the University community shall be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect in accordance with the codes of conduct for staff and students.

### **5.3. Equal Opportunities**

The University of Ghana shall be committed to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities for its entire staff and student body, and to respond to

additional support requirements. Making adjustments for students and staff who have special needs shall be an integral part of the responsibility of the university authority, and making relevant necessary changes by academic staff to the delivery of teaching, to alleviate any difficulties. Any adjustments made should not affect academic standards and work.

#### **5.4. Education as a Means of Self Determination**

The University of Ghana shall use educative approaches for promoting access of students with special needs and ensuring staff and students know their rights and responsibilities.

#### **5.5. Rapid and Compassionate Response**

Should a complaint of alleged denial of service arise, the University shall sensitively facilitate timely and appropriate action through appropriate informal and/or formal conciliatory procedural options.

### **6 ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON STUDENTS AND STAFF WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

An Advisory Committee on Students and Staff with Special Needs shall be established by the Office of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor to review, evaluate, and recommend educational and administrative policies that address the needs of students and staff with special needs. The Advisory Committee shall meet at least once in every Semester. The Advisory Committee shall comprise the following, with the option to co-opt additional members when needed:

1. Coordinator of Office of Students with Special Needs
2. Dean of Student Affairs
3. Director, Academic Affairs.
4. Director, Careers and Counseling Centre
5. Representative, Campus Association of Students with Special Needs
6. Representative, Student Representative Council (SRC)
7. The University Librarian
8. Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO)
9. Director, University of Ghana Health Services
10. Head, Department of Social Work

11. Head, Department of Psychology
12. Head, Department of Teacher Education
13. Representative, School of Law (preferably a lawyer or law lecturer)
14. The Committee shall have the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (ASA) as the Chairperson, who shall chair all the meetings of the Committee. The Chairperson will oversee the functions of the committee and ensure the effective planning of every meeting. Being informed by matters raised by members of the advisory committee, the chairperson will be responsible for the agenda of the committee meeting. The Chairperson shall be instrumental in summoning meetings, initiating enquiry processes and ensuring the integrity of all proceedings relating to investigation of grievances. With the assistance of the Coordinator of OSSN, the chairperson will ensure that, within a timely manner, indispensable members are provided with critical issues and information that pertains to the Office of Students with Special needs and committee meetings

The Committee shall nominate a Vice-Chair who shall act in the absence of the Chairperson and a Secretary who shall ensure that all records of the Committee's meetings and proceedings are properly taken and documented. The Vice-Chair of the advisory committee shall bear the responsibility to assist the Chairperson in the delivery of his/her functions in relation to the advisory committee meetings. In addition, the Vice-Chair would also bear the responsibility to oversee to the implementation and monitoring of decisions made by the committee. The Vice-Chair would also serve to facilitate the encouragement of members to contribute to the committee's affairs and the work of the Office of Students with Special needs.

The Advisory Committee shall also assist in the evaluation of current campus policies and procedures relating to students and Staff with special needs.

To engender buy-in of faculty, the office of the Pro Vice Chancellor (ASA), would take steps to empower faculty (especially Head of Departments) and staff to respond to the directions outlined in this policy.

## **7 OFFICE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Office of Students with Special Needs (OSSN) (see Appendix I) shall consist of:

- (i) A Coordinator (See Appendix II)
- (ii) Full-time Resource Persons (See Appendix III) and
- (iii) Administrative Staff

who together shall address a range of matters involving students and Staff with special needs.

The OSSN shall assist students/staff with special needs to receive reasonable accommodations in academic and non-academic programmes, to provide them with an equal opportunity to participate fully in all reasonable aspects of their life at the University of Ghana and to create awareness of issues and of abilities of people with special needs among University of Ghana students, faculty and staff.

The type and amount of support services and accommodations provided to students/staff with special needs shall be determined by the OSSN, in consultation with the students/staff seeking the accommodation and, as appropriate, with affected faculty and staff.

## **8 SPECIALIZED FACILITIES/ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

### **8.1 Braille Library**

A Braille Section for visually impaired students commenced in September 1989 is housed in the Balme Library buildings. The Braille Section potentially shall ensure regular supply of Braille and related materials. There shall be a resource person who shall be in charge of the Braille Section. The resource person shall work with an Assistant Librarian to assist students/staff in library researches and transcribe reference material on demand. The Braille Library shall have books in Braille, and in soft copies.

## **8.2 Information & Communications Technology (ICT)**

The University's ICT shall offer students/staff with special needs the ability to access knowledge by adapting digital media to the nature of their disabilities, and to enhance their social and academic integration in the University community. Assistive Technologies, (e.g., Spell-check and Correct Grammar Software, Supernova - magnification and screen reader software and JAWS -text-to-speech) shall be made available for individuals with special needs.

## **8.3. Careers and Counseling Centre**

The Centre shall enable the University of Ghana put in place effective and efficient support systems for students/staff with special needs not only to achieve equalization of opportunities at the University but also to enhance their competitiveness on the employment market. The Centre shall exist to provide counselling services, careers advice, and academic study skills to all students including students with special needs.

With regards to the provision of academic study skills, the Careers and Counseling Centre can also consider collaborating with OSSN resource persons, language Centre and some departments within the School of Languages to provide good academic writing proficiency for special needs students (especially students who are Deaf) when necessary.

## **8.4 Sports and Recreational Facilities**

All efforts shall be made to create situations to provide the necessary conditions to meet the sports and recreational needs of students/staff with special needs. Efforts shall be made to increase their leisure, entertainment and recreation through sports and physical fitness. The University Sports Complex shall offer students/staff with special needs opportunity to enjoy, experience and compete in sporting events including wheelchair football, swimming, track and field, ground volleyball, and weight-lifting.

## **8.5 Students Organisation**

The Campus Association of Students with Special Needs (CAOSSN) is an organization of both students with special needs and other students. CAOSSN shall work to make the University of Ghana a place where disabilities are turned to abilities'. CAOSSN shall work to promote better

understanding among the campus community by sponsoring activities such as awareness programmes and speakers' bureau.

## **8.6 Assessment and Examination Arrangements**

Assessment and examination policies, practices and procedures shall be put in place to provide students with special needs with the same opportunities as their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes, which shall, in some cases, include alternative assessment and examination arrangements. Academic Affairs Directorate shall liaise with the OSSN to ensure that any necessary human support is arranged (e.g. Braille machines, sign language interpreters, use of a computer, etc.).

In special circumstances, OSSN shall enable the University of Ghana apply special concessions to facilitate graduation of students with special needs, especially those with medical or psychological condition. (Report from the committee set up in 2016 by the Vice-Chancellor, to propose concessions to facilitate graduation of students with medical and/or psychological conditions will serve as an underpinning policy. See Appendix VI)

## **9 REMOVAL OF BARRIERS IN ACCESSIBILITY, ACCOMMODATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

As far as practicable, every building on campus that is used by students/staff with special needs shall have the appropriate facilities to enable them gain easy access and move about freely. The University of Ghana shall ensure that new buildings and service facilities like hospitals, lecture rooms, hall of residence, erected at the University, include structures appropriate for persons with special needs. Students/staff with special needs shall be involved in the planning for the provision of such structures. This approach shall be enshrined in the University reconstruction guidelines.

Students with special needs shall automatically be offered residential accommodation all through their stay at the University. They shall be housed in rooms that give them easy access to toilets, bathrooms, libraries, dining halls and other hall facilities. Toilets and other facilities shall be adapted to be user-friendly to the students.

In choosing room-mates for students with special needs, account shall be taken of the prospective roommate's prior experience with persons with special needs. Persons who have had prior experience with such persons have a greater understanding of their needs and make better room-mates. Room-mates with no previous experience shall be given orientation to enable them understand how to relate to the student with special needs.

Professional Resource Persons for students with special needs shall by the nature of their work be housed on campus.

Students with visual impairment shall not be offered courses in Mathematics and its cognate courses like statistics, research methods, data management, etc. Subsequently, they shall be exempted from University examinations in such courses. The argument being that, "Visually Impaired students enrolled in pre-University Educational institutions were not taught mathematics and science subjects because facilities for teaching were not available". (See. Appendix V)

In view of this the University of Ghana shall liaise with the Ministry of Education to ensure that pre-university institutions for the visually impaired are provided with facilities for teaching Mathematics.

Until then students with visual impairment who gain admission into University of Ghana shall not be offered courses in Mathematics and its cognate courses and shall subsequently be exempted from examination in such courses.

## **10 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS AND STAFF WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Students/staff with special needs shall be entitled to an equal opportunity to learn/work. They also shall have the same obligations as any other students/staff to meet and maintain the University's academic and technical standards. Subsequently, students/staff with special needs shall have the right:

- (i) To demonstrate or document how their disability affects a particular delivery system, instructional method, or evaluation criteria when requesting an accommodation.

- (ii) To be evaluated based on their ability, and not their disability. If their disability affects the outcome of an evaluation method, they shall be entitled to an evaluation by alternative means.
- (iii) To identify themselves as needing accommodation (services) in a timely fashion.
- (iv) To participate actively in the search for accommodations (services) and auxiliary aids. This responsibility shall extend to working with the University to seek financial assistance from government and private sources.
- (v) To access services, extracurricular activities, and transportation at levels comparable to those accessed by all other students/staff. This shall be especially significant if the location, delivery system, or instructional methodology limit their access, participation, or ability to benefit from the academic community.

## 11 COMPLAINTS/APPEAL PROCEDURE

Although the primary responsibility for the provision of a supportive and responsive academic, social and physical environment shall rest with the entire University, such commitment, however, shall not defer students/staff with special needs from being active participants in their ultimate success. Students/staff with special needs shall take the initiative to inform the institution of their needs; pursue their work /studies with the same diligence required of all students/staff; and accept responsibility for the role that they play in their success or failure.

To appeal the University's decisions concerning accommodation (services), students with special needs shall accomplish this by writing a letter to the Office of Students with Needs (OSSN); failing that, they shall file a complaint with the Dean of Student Affairs, and hence the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Student Affairs).

The University shall have in place policies and procedures to deal with complaints arising directly or indirectly from a student's/staff's special need. Formal complaints shall follow the same guidelines that apply for other complaints within the University. Students/staff denied requested

services shall appeal the decision through on-campus informal and formal dispute resolution processes.

## 12 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The University shall monitor the applications, admissions/employment, academic/work progress and nature of impairment of students/staff with special needs. OSSN shall provide annual report which shall include enrolment data and academic progress report.

Additionally, the Advisory Committee on Students with Special Needs in conjunction with OSSN shall develop and implement a system for evaluating programmes and services for students/staff with needs at the University, at least every three years.

Every three years (beginning in 2020), the Advisory Committee shall review the Policy for the Provision of Accommodations and Facilities for Students/staff with Special Needs.

At a minimum, the evaluation shall report on programme objectives, implementation of the programme, outcome data, staff and student perceptions of programme effectiveness, and physical accessibility requirements. The evaluation shall cover compliance with enrolment, retention, transition, and graduation trends of students with special needs. A report including recommendations shall be prepared for the Vice-Chancellor.

## 13 VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version Control	Date Released	Date Effective	Approved By	Amendment

## 14 APPENDICES

### 14.1 Appendix I: Functions of Office of Students with Special Needs (OSSN)

Specific duties of OSSN shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Coordination and administration of specialized services, including consultation with faculty for students/staff with special needs (disabilities).
2. Advisement and counselling on disability-related issues.
3. Liaisons with campus and external agencies, including referral and follow-up services to these agencies on behalf of students/staff with special needs.
4. Providing adaptive technologies (e.g. computer training, assistive listening devices, adaptive computer hardware or software) including new devices that may become available with emerging technology.
5. Providing oral and sign language interpreters.
6. Providing note-takers for classroom and academic activities.
7. Providing on-campus mobility assistance to and from lectures, etc.
8. Creating student volunteer program/Soliciting volunteers to provide support for tutoring, reading, scribes, etc.).
9. Registration assistance, including priority enrolment, assistance with applications for financial aid, and related university services.
10. Providing Braille and transcription services.
11. Providing loaning services for tape recorders, Braille machines, enlarged prints, etc.
12. Providing specialized orientation to acquaint students/staff with the campus environment.
13. Providing examination and test-taking adaptation and facilitation.
14. Monitoring academic progress of students with special needs.

15. Undertaking an assessment of the educational needs of students with special needs
16. Encouraging students/staff with special needs to register with the Office.
17. Advocacy and outreach programmes aimed to raise awareness on disability issues
18. Providing special transportation services when necessary (especially for persons with limitation in locomotion or motor functions)

If future evidence supports the need to modify or amplify the aforementioned services, such changes will be assessed and acted upon within the parameters posed by the University's available resources.

#### **14.2 Appendix II: Duties of Coordinator for Office of Students with Special Needs**

The University shall appoint a Senior Faculty Member as the Coordinator for Students with Special Needs. The Coordinator shall be the head of the Office of Students with Special Needs and his/her duties shall include:

1. Ensuring the implementation of the University's policy of equal opportunities in respect of students/staff with special needs.
2. Administration of the affairs of students/staff with special needs in the University in pursuance of the equal opportunities policy of the University which should encompass admissions, accommodation, academic work, health, social and recreational needs.
3. Liaison with the Admissions Office to ensure that the applications of students with disabilities are properly evaluated with reference to exemptions and waivers.
4. Drawing up profiles of students with special needs and their subsequent distribution to faculties; departments and Halls of Residence.

5. Ensuring that students with disabilities are given appropriate accommodation on campus.
6. Arrangement of orientation programmes for students/staff with special needs in respect of their health, mobility, academic, social, recreational and other needs to facilitate their fullest [participation and] integration into campus life.
7. Liaising between students and departments during initial discussions.
8. Enhancement of disability awareness on campus by organizing orientation programmes for faculty, students, and staff.
9. Consultation with students with special needs in the search for technical advice on the nature of facilities they require in the Halls of Residence, lecture rooms, libraries and the general environment on campus and forward findings to the University authorities for the necessary provision to be made
10. Consulting with students/staff with special needs for advice as to the facilities they would require for their support in respect of learning, studies, work, examination, etc. and informing the University authorities to make the necessary provision and adjustment.
11. Liaison between the University and outside agencies, governmental and non-governmental, concerned with the students with special needs to ensure that students/staff with special needs fully benefit from their programmes, financial and material assistance.
12. Liaison between students/staff with special needs and Faculty Boards/other University bodies to facilitate the resolution of the problems and difficulties of students/staff with special needs.
13. Ensuring that students/staff with special needs get the professional help they need by liaising with governmental and non-governmental agencies.
14. Coordinating and overseeing of all services available to students/staff with special needs and the writing of annual reports on them for the University's information and necessary policy decisions;

15. Campaigning for funding.
16. Co-operation with the Careers and Counseling Centre to explore the possibilities of full employment for graduating students with special needs.
17. Undertaking all other kinds of service that would enhance the academic life of students with special needs in the University.

### **14.3 Appendix III: Duties of Resource Persons for Students with Special Needs**

Resource Persons shall form an essential part of the Office of Students with Special Needs. They shall provide information, advice and guidance on the way in which a particular disability may impact on a student's/staff's experience at the University and assist with organizing academic, technical and social support. Their specific specialized duties shall be as follows:

#### **A. Academic Duties**

1. Act as a point of first contact and information for students and for academic staff who need clarification on issues relating to accommodations for students with special needs.
2. Provide specialist study skills and tuition for students with specific learning difficulties.
3. Provide assistance with accessing academic materials, library resources, etc.
4. Monitor attendance to lectures, classes and tutorials. (Some students especially with visual or physical impairments may have an ongoing conditions resulting in lassitude and fatigue. When experiencing problems fatigue, the student may seem distant, vague and uncommunicative. Attendance at lectures may be erratic).
5. Provide all the necessary support for the conduct of university examinations.
6. Provide support for students who will need to attend and participate

in fieldwork and placements in field of study (e.g., Social Work, Sociology, etc.).

7. Provide support for foreign students who bring requests for appropriate disability-related accommodations (e.g., ADHD, specific learning disability).
8. Provide academic support for students on the basis of their disability. Students shall be required to meet with their Resource Person at least twice per semester.
9. Report on students' academic progress

### **B. Technical Duties**

1. Explore continuously technological aids and strategies to determine how individual students/staff shall benefit from such support (including IT equipment, assistive software, audio recorders, personal reader, specialist mentoring, library support, etc.)
2. Provide note-takers, access to speech-to-text/lip speaker/sign language interpreter for lectures, classes and tutorials.
3. Provide academic materials in advance and in alternative formats (e.g. Braille, electronic, audio, large print).
4. Provide transcription services of academic materials for use by faculty.
5. Provide training to students/staff in assistive software (e.g., JAWS, Dolphin).
6. Provide campus space orientation on arrival for new students/staff with visual or physical impairments.
7. Participate in and supervise off-campus trips involving students/staff with special needs (e.g., Inter- University Disability Games).

### **C. Personal/Social Duties**

1. In collaboration with the Careers and Counseling Centre, would provide confidential counselling services on variety of issues e.g., time management, exam anxiety, academic planning, depression, anxiety, stress management, problem solving/decision making, financial needs, to students/staff with special needs and are the first point of contact for information regarding assistance. (The Resource Persons act as facilitator in this confidential process to assist students).
2. Provide advocacy on behalf of individual students/staff or on disability issues that affect a number of students/staff.

3. Run induction programmes and events to provide pre-entry support for all new and for specific groups of students/staff with special needs.
4. Help students through the complex events, e.g., Disability Bursary Applications, operating bank accounts, etc.
5. Provide support to students around personal issues and also serve as mediators helping students establish roommate agreements and resolve roommate conflicts and personal disputes.
6. Act as an in loco parentis for the students helping them to become independent, grow socially, academically and psychologically in the university setting. Have opportunity and responsibility of guiding students through some of the most consequential decisions of their lives.
7. Are trained to be informed about university standards, rules and policies, model these policies, educate students, enforce policies and confront violations.
8. Provide specialist mentoring and buddy support for students with special needs.

#### **14.4 Appendix IV: Capacity Building - Resource Persons**

Resource Persons help the University manage students/staff with special needs. They assist students/staff in varied ways including academic, technical and social service.

##### **Educational Requirements**

1. Considering their multiple roles, especially academic, the position of a Resource Person shall call for a higher degree and/or unique skillset and professional knowledge. The University shall prefer that Resource Persons shall hold at least a master's degree in special education from a recognized University.
2. In some cases, individuals with a bachelor's degree in Special Education from a recognized University shall be given entry-level positions as Resource Person.

## Training

To maintain an agreed standard of proficiency by practice and instruction, specialized Resource Persons such as Sign Language Experts, Scribes and Braille transcribers shall undertake continual training to keep abreast of the latest techniques and innovations.

Throughout their career at the University, Resource Persons shall take on a life-long commitment of learning about disabilities and training to improve and hone their knowledge, skills, dispositions, support and guidance skills that shall allow them to function effectively in the holistic development of students/staff with special needs at the University of Ghana. Resource Persons shall thus have a strong work ethic, including reliability and passion for the work.

### 14.5 Appendix V: Admission Requirements and Residential Accommodation

1. Visually impaired applicants shall be exempted from the basic GCE 'O' Level/SSCE/WASSE requirements in Mathematics and Science in view of their disability (modified from AB Minutes 1/80-90, section of item).
2. Admission for all applicants with special needs shall be without recourse to the operative cut-off-points provided that the applicant meets the minimum requirements for admission. (AB MINUTES 2/2000-2001 Tuesday, October 10, 2000)
3. Students with special needs at all levels shall automatically be offered residential accommodation (AB MINUTES 2/2000-2001 Tuesday, October 10, 2000)

### 14.6 Appendix VI: Committee's Report on Special Concessions

The Committee identified the following categories of students with medical or psychological conditions and suggested the following concessions:

1. **Students who have gone through the mandatory four years, have taken the two year amnesty and still could not pass the required courses** Students in this category may apply to the Director of Academic Affairs for an Aegrotat Degree through the Head of Department with a confidential medical report from a recognized specialist. The Director of Academic Affairs would refer such cases

to the UG Medical Board which will certify that the student indeed suffers from the said medical condition and therefore, recommend the student for an Aegrotat degree. An Aegrotat degree, diploma or certificate will be awarded without the specification of class.

An aegrotat (/ˈi:grɒtæt/; from Latin aegrotat, meaning "he is ill") degree is an honours degree without classification or a pass, awarded under the presumption that had a candidate who was unable to undertake or complete his/her exams due to illness or even death, would have satisfied the standard required for that degree. Aegrotat degrees are often qualified with an appended "(aegrotat)".

## **2. Students who develop a medical or psychological condition in the first year of the programme.**

If a student develops a medical or psychological condition that significantly hinders their academic performance or prevents them from writing the examination in the first year, he/she may be withdrawn from the programme. He/she may re-register for the programme after he/she has been assessed by the UG Medical Board based on the recommendation of a medical specialist.

## **3. Students who have not completed the four year programme but are having difficulties taking their examinations as a result of medical and psychological challenges**

A student in this category would be required to apply to the Director of Academic Affairs for a concession in a particular paper through the Office of Students with Special Needs. Since it is usually difficult to identify such disorders, the student will have to submit a current report from a specialist. This confidential report must also indicate the severity of the condition and its impact on the student's learning and academic performance.

The Medical Board will certify the classroom limitations, such as difficulty with oral presentations and other cognitive problems.

The department of affected students would have to arrange for flexible forms of assessment including allowing the student to write a term paper instead of regular examination questions. In cases whereby a student can graduate only if a required course (core) is taken, the department can substitute or waive the course.

Other Concessions to be allowed include the following:

- Extended time for assignments
- Extended time for tests and quizzes
- Modify tests and quizzes based on the condition of the affected student
- Tests and quizzes with breaks to the washroom, for tea, etc.
- Use of readers and scribes for testing and quizzing
- Permission to have beverage and food during instruction in class
- Permission to leave class and return as needed
- Flexible attendance requirements
- Modification of seating arrangements as desired
- Peer note takers and tape recorders in class
- Allowing course materials in online format such as WebCT

**These concessions should not in any way affect the standards for awarding grades**



