



**KLAIPĖDA UNIVERSITY**

APPROVED BY:  
Rector's Order No. 1-274  
dated 29 November 2024

**DISABILITY AND INCLUSION POLICY  
AT KLAIPĖDA UNIVERSITY**

## **1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

The Disability and Inclusion Policy document of Klaipėda University has been prepared in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Social Integration of the Disabled, the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and other internal legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania and Klaipėda University regulating the legal status of persons with disabilities.

The purpose of the document of the Disability and Inclusion Policy (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Disability Policy’) is to ensure equal rights for all members of the Klaipėda University (hereinafter referred to as ‘the University’) community.

The Disability Policy provides specific guidelines, recommendations and actions for their implementation aimed at supporting the University community members with disabilities or individual support needs, and ensuring that the University’s infrastructure and services are accessible to all. The University is committed to creating an inclusive culture and environment that facilitates learning and work, values diversity and ensures that all students receive a high-quality education, participate in the University’s activities and are involved in the decision-making process.

## **2. APPLICATION, PRINCIPLES, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF the DISABILITY POLICY**

The Disability Policy shall be followed by all members of the University community. The Disability Policy is based on the following principles:

1. Members of the University community have equal opportunities to participate in all University’s activities;
2. Members of the University community have the right to be treated with respect and dignity;
3. Members of the University community have the right to have an environment that meets their individual assistance needs.

The purpose of the Disability Policy is to ensure at the University an environment and culture of equality and non-discrimination, enhancing the accessibility of the study and work environment and properly adapting learning and working conditions for all members of the community. In order to achieve the purpose of the Disability Policy, the following tasks are set:

1. To identify and strive to remove any existing obstacles faced by persons with disabilities who study or work at the University.

2. To seek to properly adapt learning and working conditions for all members of the community, ensuring equal opportunities to participate in the areas of study, work and social activities.
3. To create at the University an environment and culture of equality and non-discrimination, emphasising the value and benefits of each of its members.

### **3. TERMS USED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THE DISABILITY POLICY**

**‘Person with disabilities’** means a person in respect of whom a level of disability or a level of participation of 55 % or less has been determined in accordance with the procedure laid down by laws.

**‘Discrimination on the basis of disability’** means any distinction, exclusion or restriction on the basis of disability which has the purpose or effect of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal basis with others, of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

It includes all forms of discrimination, including denial of reasonable accommodation.

**‘Individual assistance needs’** means the needs of persons with disabilities resulting from their disability and/or environmental factors that prevent them from being independent in their daily activities.

**‘Inclusion’** means an education system that creates conditions for each person to learn, develop their powers and abilities, receive the necessary support, experience success in learning, social, cultural and/or other activities, and be free from discrimination due to the diversity of educational needs and/or the need for educational support.

**‘Disability’** means a long-term functional impairment in a person’s body (person’s congenital and/or acquired conditions) which, as a result of environmental factors, prevents the person from participating fully and effectively in the life of society on an equal footing with others.

**‘Assistance’** means various assistance instruments, including financial assistance instruments (targeted payments, scholarships, benefits, etc.), provided with the aim of increasing the accessibility of studies.

**‘Accessible means of communication’** includes sign language, display of text, Braille, tactile communication, large print, accessible multimedia as well as written, audio, plain-language, human-reader and augmentative and alternative modes, means and formats of communication, including accessible information and communication technology.

**‘Reasonable accommodation’** means necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to

ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

**‘Universal design’** means the design of products, environments, programmes and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design. ‘Universal design’ shall also cover assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where this is needed.

#### **4. TYPES OF DISABILITY**

Individual assistance needs arise where students or employees have various disabilities, developmental disorders, learning difficulties. Coordination of individual assistance needs is necessary in the presence of such disabilities/disorders/difficulties. The types of disabilities due to which individual assistance needs may arise are listed below.

**Physical disability.** This group includes individuals with physical, movement and positional, and neurological disorders (e.g., cerebral palsy, muscle diseases, etc.).

**Sensory disability.** This group includes individuals with visual impairment and/or hearing impairment.

**Psychosocial disability.** This group includes individuals with mental health disorders (e.g., depression, anxiety disorders, etc.).

**Developmental disorders.** This group includes individuals with multiple complex developmental disorders (e.g., autism spectrum disorders).

**Specific learning disabilities.** This group includes individuals with reading, writing, and math learning difficulties (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia, etc.).

**Chronic diseases.** This group includes individuals whose health condition results in a long-term disorder and this disorder has an impact on the person’s daily functioning (e.g., diabetes, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, etc.).

**Complex disability.** This group includes individuals with several concomitant types of disability (e.g., movement and posture, vision, and hearing disorders).

#### **5. DISABILITY POLICY: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The participant in the Disability Policy is University’s community: the management, faculties and equivalent units (institutes), departments and equivalent units (centres), administrative units and other units necessary for the fulfilment of studies, research, social, cultural and other needs and provision of relevant services; members of the academic community, i.e., University students and free listeners, lecturers, research workers, professors Emeritus, and other employees directly

participating in research and (or) study activities; other members of the University community, i.e., employees of the University Administration and other employees who ensure the administration and other activities of the University and its internal organisational units; alumni of the University, Honorary Doctors of the University, representatives of the Student Union, and applicants.

**The management of the University** is responsible for informing members of the University's community about the provisions of the Disability Policy and related rights and obligations of the members of the University's community. The management of the University ensures the structure and processes that facilitate the implementation of the Disability Policy, as well as regularly reviews and updates the Disability Policy.

**The University Administration** is responsible for the adaptation of the study and work process to persons with disabilities. University employees, according to their competences, consult and inform about study or work conditions; ensure appropriate infrastructure conditions for persons with disabilities. The University Administration employee is assigned the functions of implementing (coordinating) the Disability and Inclusion Policy.

**The University employee, who is assigned the functions of implementing (coordinating) the Disability and Inclusion Policy** (hereinafter referred to as 'the Employee'), is responsible for planning, implementing and monitoring the Disability Policy; coordinates measures aimed at the inclusion of persons with disabilities; informs students and employees about the adaptation of the study and work environment to persons with disabilities; communicates with representatives of University departments and other institutions on matters concerning disability issues, conditions and adaptation of the study process; resolves academic and social problems related to disability; organises training for members of the University's community on disability-related topics.

**The heads of the academic departments of the University** organise provision of information for the applicants and students with disabilities at the University about the adaptation of study conditions; seek to increase the accessibility of the study and work environment and to adapt properly learning and working conditions for all members of the community.

**The Student Union of the University** is responsible for creating opportunities and conditions for students with disabilities to participate in the activities of the Student Union and in events organised; informs students about the rights of persons with disabilities; takes care of the academic and social well-being of students with disabilities.

**Students and applicants to the University** should report the issues concerning disability as early as possible (at the start of the study semester) in order to receive reasonable accommodation concerning study conditions. They should discuss their individual assistance needs with the Employee, informing about difficulties in the study process that may arise due to their disability or

individual assistance needs. They are to report on changes in their health status if they receive support intended for persons with disabilities.

## **6. ADMISSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO THE UNIVERSITY**

The University creates conditions for individuals, regardless of their disability or individual assistance needs, to study at the University. The University is committed to adhering to the policy of equal opportunities and non-discrimination and seeks to apply it at all stages of the admission process. Persons with disabilities have the right to study and make use of the opportunities and assistance provided by the University. Persons with disabilities are admitted to the University in accordance with the Rules for Admission of Students to Klaipėda University.

An applicant whose questionnaire indicates that the applicant is a person with disability shall be contacted by the Employee who cooperates with the University departments on issues of providing reasonable accommodation concerning the study and work environment based on individual assistance needs. With the consent of the student with a disability, an individualised study process plan is drawn up (standard form is given in Annex 1). Persons with disabilities who are applicants to the University are provided with information concerning possible financial support and assistance in the course of their studies.

## **7. EMPLOYEES WITH DISABILITIES**

The Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania and stipulations thereof apply to University employees with disabilities. Appropriate measures must be taken to create conditions for persons with disabilities to obtain employment, work, pursue a career, study and develop professionally. Adjustment measures must be effective and practical, and must actually help such an employee perform his or her specific job functions. The University Administration shall adjust only those conditions that are directly related to the job functions and necessary for the work performance. The University Administration has to take these measures if they do not impose a disproportionate burden on the obligations of the University.

## **8. ENCOURAGING TO COMMUNICATE INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS**

Disability can be visible or invisible. Disability is not always obvious. The University strives to ensure an open and supportive environment in which members of the University's community feel comfortable, therefore, individuals with disabilities or individual support needs are encouraged to disclose such conditions.

### **8.1. Encouraging students to communicate their individual assistance needs**

Not only applicants to the University but also individuals already studying at the University are encouraged to disclose their disability or learning difficulties. Students may provide information about their disability, individual assistance needs or learning difficulties by filling out a questionnaire (Annex 2), which is available on the University website. Students are encouraged to inform the University about their disability as early as possible (at the start of the study semester) in order to receive reasonable accommodation concerning their learning. In order to provide an individualised study process and reasonable accommodation concerning the study environment to persons with disabilities, students who have filled out the questionnaire are asked to submit documents confirming their disability, individual assistance needs or learning difficulties.

Having examined the submitted documents and other factors, the Employee may recommend to the University department specific methods of adapting the study environment according to the individual assistance needs of the student. Taking into account the nature of the disability, this information will be administered and stored until the student graduates. If a student becomes disabled or learns about his or her disability while studying and this causes difficulties in learning, the student shall notify persons responsible of changes in his or her health condition. To complete the semester or course that such a student has started, she or he has to be provided with the same conditions as other students with disabilities.

### **8.2. Encouraging University employees to communicate their individual assistance needs**

In order to receive reasonable accommodation concerning their working conditions, University staff members with disabilities and/or individual assistance needs shall contact the head of the department in which they work or the Employee. After identifying the individual assistance needs of a staff member and the problems arising due to improper accommodation of his or her working conditions, an attempt will be made to remove the relevant obstacles and thus increase the accessibility of the workplace. In each case, the most suitable individual methods of the work process shall be sought.

## **9. POSSIBILITIES OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

**Infrastructure and physical environment:** University buildings, auditoriums, laboratories and other spaces have to be accommodated to persons with mobility disabilities. Toilets, recreation areas and other common spaces have to be accessible and comfortable for use for persons with

disabilities. The University undertakes to constantly update and maintain the infrastructure so that it meets international accessibility standards.

**Study process:** with the student's consent, the Employee communicates with the faculty (institute) where the student with a disability studies regarding the individualisation of the study process. Based on the Employee's recommendation, the department prepares a study individualisation plan, providing for specific methods of study individualisation: lecture materials adapted for learning, adaptation of exams and assessments, adapted study programmes and teaching methods, taking into account the specific needs of the disability.

**Social and emotional support:** counselling and psychological assistance services, as well as assistance in integrating into the University's community, are provided to persons with disabilities.

**Work environment:** accommodated workplaces and conditions for University staff members with disabilities. Flexible work schedules and remote work options, where necessary due to disability. Employee trainings and seminars on topics of disability recognition and assistance to persons with disabilities are conducted.

The policy concerning the adjustment of conditions at the University is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its effectiveness and compliance with the latest standards and legal requirements. Community members are encouraged to provide suggestions and feedback on improving the Disability Policy.

## **10. ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF MEMBERS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students and staff members with disabilities are provided with information and assistance, as well as consultations concerning the assistance and accommodation of the study and work environment to individual assistance needs, by the Employee, academic departments (faculties, institutes) of the University, University Administration, HR and Document Management Department, Office of Studies staff, other students and university employees, and psychologist consultant.

### **10.1. Assistance for students with disabilities**

**University Administration** ensures the implementation of the disability, equal opportunities and non-discrimination policies.

**Heads of academic departments (faculties, institutes)** ensure the implementation of the disability, equal opportunities and non-discrimination policies in respective departments. Students with disabilities may contact the department administration concerning the adjustments to conditions. Staff members of a department may consult with the Employee.

**The Employee** coordinates and implements measures for the integration of persons with disabilities; provides information on the study environment accommodation to students and



applicants with disabilities; consults on the adaptation of the study process and mediates in solving problems; provides information on financial assistance instruments in the course of studies. Students with disabilities may apply for an individualised study plan.

**Staff of the Office of Studies** consult persons with disabilities on the conditions for admission to the University; provide information on financial assistance instruments in the course of studies, including state-supported loans, scholarships and benefits for persons with disabilities.

**Students** are encouraged to help their fellow students with disabilities. In case of difficulties in communication or providing assistance, students may contact the Employee. Upon noticing that a fellow student with a disability is experiencing difficulties, students may contact the department staff or the Employee.

**Psychologist Consultant** provides psychological and emotional assistance to students with disabilities.

## **10.2. Assistance for University staff members with disabilities**

**University Administration** ensures the implementation of the disability, equal opportunities and non-discrimination policies.

**Heads of academic departments (faculties, institutes)** ensure the implementation of the disability, equal opportunities and non-discrimination policies in respective departments. Staff members with disabilities may contact the department administration concerning the adjustments to conditions. Staff members of a department may consult with the Employee on the issues concerning disability and workplace accommodation.

**The Employee** cooperates with the University departments in order to provide reasonable working conditions' accommodation and ensure work accessibility for University community members with disabilities; Consults community members on the adjustments to the work environment and mediates in solving problems. Employees who need reasonable accommodation to working conditions due to individual assistance needs shall contact the Employee. University staff members may consult with the Employee regarding student needs and the individualisation plan for studies. Staff members who have queries concerning their colleagues with disabilities may consult with the Employee.

**The HR and Document Management Department** ensures equal and non-discriminatory working conditions for all staff members. Manages the procedures for hiring and firing employees. Applies the terms and conditions of the Labour Code of the Republic of Lithuania regarding disability.

**Psychologist Consultant** provides psychological and emotional assistance to staff members with disabilities.

## **11. CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION ABOUT A PERSON'S DISABILITY**

Personal data related to a disability or individual assistance needs of a student/staff member may be used only for study or work purposes and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, the Law of the Republic of Lithuania on the Legal Protection of Personal Data, and the Procedure for Processing Personal Data at Klaipėda University. The data on a disability and individual assistance needs of a student/staff member shall be obtained from the data subject himself/herself or their legal representative. The confidentiality of information may be violated when it is believed that a person with a disability is at risk of danger to himself/herself or others and should be clearly justified in each specific case.

## **12. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF THE DISABILITY POLICY**

The person responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Disability Policy and the measures provided therein shall be the Employee. In order for the Disability Policy to meet the individual assistance needs of students and staff members with disabilities, members of the University community are included in the implementation of the Disability Policy. The monitoring and assessment of the Disability Policy is carried out in accordance with the measures provided for in the Strategy Plan of the University. To assess progress, shortcomings and areas for improvement of the Disability Policy, the University regularly collects quantitative and qualitative data on the criteria for the implementation of the measures. The reports on the Disability Policy implementation data analysis are drawn up annually.

## **13. FINAL PROVISIONS**

The Disability Policy shall be approved, amended and declared invalid by order of the Rector of Klaipėda University. The Disability Policy shall enter into force on the day following the day of its publication in the internal information system of the University.

# ANNEXES

Annex 1 to  
the Disability and Inclusion  
Policy at Klaipėda University

(Plan form)

## INDIVIDUALISED STUDY PROCESS PLAN

\_\_/\_\_/202\_\_ No. \_\_

The plan is valid: \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_.

### 1. Student information:

Name Surname	
Date of birth	
Faculty	
Study Programme	
Course, Group	

### 2. Individualisation of the study process according to study conditions:

<b>2.1. Study environment</b>	
Auditoriums, laboratories, other premises	
Additional equipment and/or software required for studies, information resources	
Parking space	
Other	

<b>2.2. Study material</b>	
Type	
Format (DOC, PPT, PDF, etc.)	
Submission method and time (e.g. VMA Moodle, in advance)	
Other	

<b>2.3. Organisation of study performance assessment</b>	
Time (duration, change)	
Additional breaks	
Assessment methods and forms (remote, written/verbal)	
Other	

<b>2.4. Other individual assistance needs</b>	
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Additional information: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of Faculty/Director of Institute \_\_\_\_\_

Head of Department \_\_\_\_\_

Student \_\_\_\_\_

## **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS REGARDING DISABILITY, INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE NEEDS, LEARNING OR HEALTH-RELATED DIFFICULTIES**

Dear student,

Klaipėda University strives to ensure equal opportunities and appropriate study conditions for all students. This questionnaire is intended for students who due to a disability have individual assistance needs during their studies. Disability may also be understood as specific learning difficulties, psychosocial disability, etc. In order to make reasonable accommodation to the study environment, emphasis is put on the individual assistance needs arising out of a disability.

Confidentiality of the data provided will be ensured. The information provided in the questionnaire will be accessible only to the Employee of the University who is assigned the functions of implementing (coordinating) the Disability and Inclusion Policy (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Employee’). The data provided in the questionnaire will be transferred to the faculty or institute only with your consent.

After evaluating the data provided in the questionnaire, the Employee will ask you to provide documents proving your disability (certificate of the level of participation/disability or other documents proving your individual assistance needs, e.g., a certificate from a specialist, doctor, assessments, etc.). An individual meeting can take place remotely or live at a pre-agreed time. During the meeting, the student’s individual assistance needs during studies are evaluated.

Only with your consent will the Employee prepare a recommendation for the individualisation of the study process, which will be forwarded to the faculty/institute. Based on this recommendation, the respective unit will prepare a study individualisation plan.

1. Name

2. Surname

3. Date of birth

4. Place of residence (city, country)

5. Phone number

6. E-mail address

7. University unit where you study:

*Select:*

- Faculty of Marine Technologies and Natural Sciences
- Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
- Faculty of Health Sciences
- Institute of Baltic Region History and Archaeology
- Institute of Marine Research

8. Indicate the cycle of studies:

*Select:*

- First cycle of studies (bachelor's studies)
- Second cycle of studies (master's studies)
- Third cycle of studies (doctoral studies)
- Professional pedagogy studies
- Other (*please specify*)

9. Indicate the study programme:

10. Indicate the study year:

*Select:*

- First year
- Second year
- Third year
- Fourth year
- Fifth year
- Sixth year

11. Indicate the type of disability you have:

- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Mobility impairment
- Complex disability
- Psychosocial disability (e.g., depression, anxiety disorders, etc.)
- Specific learning difficulties (e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia, etc.)
- Chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, epilepsy, etc.)
- Developmental disorders (e.g. autism spectrum disorders, etc.)
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- Other (*please specify*):

12. Indicate your level of participation/disability (if determined):

13. . Describe your disability and individual assistance needs:

14. . Indicate how specifically the disability affects or could affect your study performance:

15. Indicate what obstacles you are facing or could face in the study process due to disability/individual assistance needs:

16. Would you need the assistance of student volunteers during the studies? If such assistance is needed, please indicate what kind of assistance and how often.

17. Additional information: