

# Disability & Accessibility Policies

2024

# Table of Contents

<b>ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>ACRONYMS .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>DEFINITIONS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 PREAMBLE .....	5
1.2 POLICY STATEMENT .....	6
1.3 POLICY OBJECTIVES .....	6
1.4 SCOPE AND APPLICATION.....	7
<b>SECTION 2: LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS .....</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY INSTRUMENTS.....	7
2.2 THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS OF 10 DECEMBER 1948.....	7
2.3 THE UNITED NATIONS WORLD PROGRAM OF ACTION OF 1981 CONCERNING DISABLED PERSONS (WPA) IS A GLOBAL STRATEGY TO ENHANCE DISABILITY PREVENTION, REHABILITATION, .....	7
2.4 UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITY.....	8
2.5 THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS (ICESCR) OF 1976 .....	8
2.6 INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES, GUIDELINES, AND STANDARDS.....	8
2.7 STATUTORY PROVISIONS, NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND POLICIES.....	8
<b>SECTION 3: KEY PRINCIPLES TO BE APPLIED IN THIS POLICY .....</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1. NON-DISCRIMINATION .....	9
3.2. RESPECT .....	9
3.3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES.....	9
3.4. EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF SELF-DETERMINATION .....	9
3.5. RAPID AND COMPASSIONATE RESPONSE .....	10
3.6. ACCESSIBILITY .....	10
3.7. PARTICIPATION.....	10
<b>SECTION 4: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES .....</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.....	10
4.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES .....	11
<b>SECTION 5: THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT .....</b>	<b>11</b>

5.1 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY.....	11
5.2 FUNCTIONS OF THE DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DASS) .....	12
5.3. DISABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY SUPPORT SERVICES RESOURCE PERSONS (DASSRP) .....	13

**SECTION 6: REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS/ACCOMMODATIONS, PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY, DISCLOSURE AND ACCESSIBILITY .....** 15

6.1 REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS/ ACCOMMODATION .....	15
6.2 PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY .....	15
6.3 DISCLOSURE .....	15
6.4 ACCESSIBILITY .....	16
6.5 DOCUMENTATION .....	16
6.6 VERIFICATION .....	16

**SECTION 7: PROCEDURES FOR MAINSTREAMING, INCLUSION, AND ADJUSTMENTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES.....** 17

7.1 REPRESENTATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN GOVERNANCE.....	17
7.2 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT .....	17
7.3 INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS .....	18
7.4 APPLICATION, ADMISSION, ENROLLMENT, AND REGISTRATION PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES .....	18
7.5 ORIENTATION.....	18
7.6 CURRICULUM DESIGN, REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT.....	19
7.7 TEACHING AND LEARNING.....	19
7.8 ACADEMIC ASSESSMENT .....	20
7.9 TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT .....	20
7.10 SUPPORT SERVICES.....	21
7.11 QUALITY OF EMPLOYEES .....	21
7.12 FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE .....	22
7.13 CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES.....	22
7.14 RESEARCH, INNOVATIONS AND COMMUNITY SERVICE .....	22
7.15. STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT.....	23
7.16. MONITORING AND EVALUATION .....	23

**SECTION 8: DISSEMINATION OF THIS POLICY .....** 23

**SECTION 9: PROCEDURES FOR CHANNELLING AND MONITORING COMPLAINTS ON VIOLATIONS OF THE POLICY .....** 24

# ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS

## ACRONYMS

**DASSRP:** Disability and Accessibility Support Services Resource Persons

**DASS:** Disability and Accessibility Support Services

**DDF:** Disability Disclosure Form

**ICT:** Information Communication Technology

**ODIP:** Office of Diversity and International Programs

**OSCA:** Office of Student and Community Affairs

**SAEWD:** Students and Employees with Disabilities

**UNCRD:** United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

**UNCRPD:** United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

**WPA:** World Program of Action concerning Disabled Persons

## DEFINITIONS

Ashesi University takes into consideration the following definitions associated with disabilities:

- a. **Disability:** Any long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment, which may hinder an individual's full and effective participation in work, professional, academic, social, and other campus activities.
- b. **Accessibility:** This means that a person with a disability is "afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use." A person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability.  
(source: Resolution Agreement: South Carolina Technical College System, OCR Compliance Review No. 11-11-6002).
- c. **Assistive Technology:** Refers to any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially, modified, or customized, used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of persons with disabilities. These include, among others, wheelchairs, hearing devices, reading devices, Perkins Braille, talking devices, crutches, audio and visual systems, screen readers, white canes, adjustable furniture, and adapted Information Technology software.
- d. **Barriers:** Any impediments, be they physical, social/attitudinal, economic, technical or any other form of tool, information or service, that prevents persons with disabilities from enjoying their rights on an equal basis with others.
- e. **Disability Assessment:** Disability assessment is a process of identification by a qualified health professional of the condition, disability, and how it impacts the areas.
- f. **Discrimination:** Any distinction, exclusion, or restriction based on disability intended or with the effect of nullifying the recognition, enjoyment, or exercise on an equal basis with others of all academic and social activities.
- g. **Inclusion:** The process of addressing the functional needs of all students, staff, and faculty with disabilities in the mainstream educational setting. It is based on the principle that individuals are different and unique, and therefore, the education system and practices are expected to be reasonable, practically possible, and flexibly adapted to suit everyone's needs.
- h. **Reasonable Adjustments (Accommodations):** At the institutional and program levels, this entails making necessary and appropriate modifications and adjustments in the functional and instructional methods/approaches, materials, tools, assessments, physical infrastructure, work

requirements, and procedures, and policies to enable students, staff, faculty and other stakeholders with disabilities and to participate in the teaching/learning/working process equally and effectively. This will ensure the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom equally with others. Accommodation is determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the individual's experience and/or impact of their disability.

## **SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Preamble**

According to the World Report on Disability (World Health Organization and World Bank, 2021), more than one billion, constituting about 15% of people in the world, live with some form of disability caused by mental, physical, or sensory impairment. Of these, nearly 200 million experience considerable difficulties in functioning. The 2021 Population and Housing Census indicated that persons with disability constitute 8% of Ghana's population. Persons with disabilities are entitled to the same rights as all other human beings and to equal opportunities. However, they experience physical, attitudinal, and social barriers, which exclude them from everyday life activities, opportunities for full participation, and accessibility to quality education and services. Therefore, there is a need to provide the conditions for ensuring equal opportunity for quality education and resources that are sufficient, accessible, and well-designed to accommodate persons with disabilities. There is also the need to create, enable, and sustain inclusive quality education with qualified personnel.

Ashesi University employs and admits qualified students and staff regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, religion, or marital status. All members of the university community have equal access to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities in accordance with the laws of Ghana and Ashesi's own policies. Ashesi prohibits unlawful discrimination because of race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, religion, gender identity or expression, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

The University recognizes that everyone's determination, potential, and commitment count. The University also recognizes that students and employees with disabilities must often be extra determined and committed to achieve their academic potential, perform their daily functions, and realize their life aspirations. This is because there are more barriers to their learning and more obstacles to get through in their daily lives.

As part of its third-decade strategic plan and the University's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, Ashesi has taken the bold decision to ensure that 4% of the University community are persons (students and employees) with disabilities.

The University, therefore, acknowledges the need to establish a policy to guide the process of achieving its strategic target and work diligently to remove the barriers to learning and working within the University environment to ensure that all persons who are given access within this category of the University's membership succeed and thrive. The University also aims to make opportunities more equitable for students and employees with disabilities by providing reasonable accommodation for their needs.

The fundamental principle that informs our approach to widening participation in a range of areas, including those with disabilities, derives from our equity policy, which states that; "Ashesi University strives to provide a safe, inclusive community, and equitable study and work environment. Ashesi fosters fairness and respect for diverse groups of people. All members of Ashesi are to support equitable and meaningful access, participation, engagement, and success for all faculty, staff, and students of various backgrounds."

## **1.2 Policy Statement**

Ashesi University is committed to its equal opportunities and non-discriminatory policies for all students and employees, including those with various disabilities, and aims to create an environment that enables them to participate fully and effectively in mainstream university life.

## **1.3 Policy Objectives**

The objectives of this policy are to ensure the following:

- i. Promote the consolidation of policies, interventions, activities, best practices, and programs across the University intended to support and equalize opportunities available to all persons with disabilities in the University community.
- ii. Formulate and implement actions and procedures necessary to mainstream disability across all functions of the University.
- iii. Enhance accessibility to physical, social, economic, and cultural environments, health, communication, and education to enable persons with disabilities to fully and effectively participate in their normal functions in the University without any barriers.

- iv. Support the successful transition of students with disabilities post-graduation while effectively and continuously supporting employees with disabilities in executing their daily functions actively and fully as employees of the University.
- v. Sensitize the Ashesi community on disability etiquette to prevent and manage discrimination, unfair labeling, harassment, marginalization, and victimization of persons with disabilities.

#### **1.4 Scope and Application**

This Policy applies to all members of the University community. These shall include all 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.

### **SECTION 2: LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS**

This policy is guided by various legal, ethical, and professional frameworks. Ashesi University shall consult and comply with these frameworks in making reasonable accommodations to meet the entitlements of persons with disabilities.

#### **2.1 International Disability Instruments**

Ashesi's policy on persons with disabilities will be guided by relevant Charters and Conventions of the United Nations and other human rights instruments that focus on the need to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by persons with disabilities. Ashesi will also incorporate disability inclusion into the implementation of its institutional programs and activities. Specific reference will be made to the following:

#### **2.2 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948.**

This recognizes the inherent dignity of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family. These are the foundations of freedom, justice, and peace in the world. Article 25 provides the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of self and family, including access to basic needs and medical care, necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of disability.

#### **2.3 The United Nations World Program of Action of 1981 concerning Disabled Persons (WPA) is a global strategy to enhance disability prevention, rehabilitation, and equalization of opportunities, which pertains to the full participation of persons with**

disabilities in social life and national development. The WPA also emphasizes the need to approach disability from a human rights perspective.

**2.4 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (UNCRPD, 2006)** The overall purpose of the UNCRPD is to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity.

**2.5 The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1976** Particularly, Article 9 calls for the protection of people against the risks of sickness, disability, employment injury among others; Article 13(2) calls for equally accessible education for all without discrimination; and Article 15 recognizes the right of everyone to participation in cultural life, the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress, and to benefit from the protection of the moral and material rights to any scientific discovery or artistic work they have created.

## **2.6 Institutional Policies, Procedures, Guidelines, and Standards**

Ashesi University shall ensure that this policy is read and implemented alongside other university policies, procedures, guidelines, existing handbooks, and standards and that they are made available, publicized in accessible formats, and clearly communicated to the university community, and especially to persons with disabilities. This shall ensure that no policy disadvantages, excludes, or discriminates against persons with disabilities.

All University members must be aware of this policy and the legal framework and shall respectfully treat students and employees with disabilities in accordance with these provisions. This policy shall be published and disseminated without charge to all members of the University community, especially all new recruits.

## **2.7 Statutory Provisions, National Legislation and Policies**

This policy shall be guided by the Persons with Disability Act, 2006 (Act 715), Chapter 5 of the 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana (Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms), International Treaties Applicable and any other applicable laws and their amendments thereof.

## **SECTION 3: KEY PRINCIPLES TO BE APPLIED IN THIS POLICY**

This policy shall be guided by principles that provide the framework for the policy and help to ensure that it is effectively and fairly implemented. The key principle that informs our approach to widening participation in a range of areas, including those with disabilities, derives from our equity policy which states that; “Ashesi University strives to provide a safe, inclusive, and equitable study and work environment. Ashesi fosters fairness and respect for diverse groups of people. All members of Ashesi are to support equitable access, participation, engagement and success for all faculty, staff, and students, of various backgrounds.”

### **3.1. Non-discrimination**

The University is committed to eliminating discrimination and harassment based on disability. persons with disabilities within the community shall not be denied access to any services or opportunities, including employment and education, simply because they have a disability.

### **3.2. Respect**

All members of the University community shall be treated with dignity, courtesy, and respect in accordance with the University’s codes of conduct for employees and students regardless of whether they have a disability or not.

### **3.3. Equal Opportunities**

The University shall be committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate in all aspects of the community. This includes the right to work, to receive an education, and to participate in all community engagement activities. The University will engage in an interactive and participatory process to collaborate with persons needing the accommodation and may for as far as reasonably practical make the appropriate reasonable adjustments for students and employees who have disabilities by making relevant reasonable changes to the delivery of teaching and other student life activities related to alleviate students’ difficulties while providing a conducive working environment for employees to succeed and thrive at their work. Any adjustments made should not affect academic standards or the quality of work and not impose a disproportionate or undue burden on the institution.

### **3.4. Education as a Means of Self-Determination**

The University shall adopt educative approaches to promote self-determination for persons with disabilities to ensure they know their rights and responsibilities within the community. This includes providing them with the information, resources, and support they need to make decisions and live independently within the community.

### **3.5. Rapid and Compassionate Response**

The University shall ensure that complaints of alleged denial of service that arise shall be addressed promptly and appropriately through informal and/or formal conciliatory procedures, in a sensitive and respectful manner. For employees, all such complaints should be directed at their immediate Head of Department and the Human Resources Department. For students, all such complaints shall be directed to the Dean of Students and Community Affairs.

### **3.6. Accessibility**

The University shall ensure that all public and private spaces on its campus are accessible to persons with disabilities. This includes buildings, information and communication technologies, etc. This would be done incrementally depending on urgency and availability of funding.

### **3.7. Participation**

The University shall promote the participation of persons with disabilities in all aspects of the community. This includes decision-making, planning, implementation, evaluation and review of policies and programs.

## **SECTION 4: RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

### **4.1 Rights of Persons with disabilities**

Persons with disabilities have the right to:

- 4.1.1 Self-respect, dignity and self-sufficiency. It is critical that all assistance and support provided to persons with disabilities is done with their full consent and inclusion and that the purpose and outcome of the assistance and support is that of self-respect and self-sufficiency.
- 4.1.2 Self-representation in processes and structures of decision-making on issues that affect them. In situations where they cannot represent themselves, they have the right to choose/nominate someone to represent them.
- 4.1.3 Training on the use, care, and maintenance of whatever institutional assistive devices they may be reliant on to enhance and support their abilities and accessibility.
- 4.1.4 Access to appropriate and relevant services according to the type or category of disability that one possesses.
- 4.1.5 Full inclusion and integration into appropriate functions, programs, and activities in the

university.

4.1.6 Fully participate in appropriate curricular and co-curricular functions and utilize all services offered to other university members.

4.1.7 Appropriate and reasonable accommodation, as possible, regarding learning, working and other forms of accessibility.

## **4.2 Responsibilities of Persons with Disabilities**

It is the responsibility of persons with disabilities to:

4.2.1 Inform the university of their disability and state what assistance they may require facilitating their full participation in both the curricular and non-curricular activities and programs in and out of the Ashesi University campus.

4.2.2 Access services from within and outside the university that will facilitate their learning and working.

4.2.3 Understand and advocate for their rights.

4.2.4 Complete any notification and registration procedures with the disability and accessibility support services available at the university of their disability and complete the procedures needed and documentations to request, review and continuously renew their reasonable accommodations.

4.2.5 Participate in assessing the quality, relevance and impact of the services they offer.

## **SECTION 5: THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT**

### **5.1 Implementation of the policy**

The management of Ashesi University led by the Office of Students and Community Affairs (OSCA) shall:

5.1.1 Provide administrative and operational support for this policy's implementation.

5.1.2 Facilitate the sensitization of students, staff, faculty, and other stakeholders on their shared responsibility in implementing this policy.

5.1.3 Identify areas of coordination and integration for stakeholders.

5.1.4 Ensure appropriate plans are developed, mainstreamed into current programs, and then

subsequently implemented.

- 5.1.5 Oversee the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the implementation process and ensure the timely review of this policy while updating it based on the evaluations and feedback.
- 5.1.6 Deal with any problems that may arise timeously.
- 5.1.7 Oversee the establishment of a dedicated unit with a senior administrator to oversee the implementation of the activities and programs of the Disability and Accessibility Support Services (DASS).
- 5.1.8 Oversee any formal contractual issues related to this policy in collaboration with the legal counsel and the Human Resource Office.

## **5.2 Functions of the Disability and Accessibility Support Services (DASS)**

There shall be a dedicated unit within OSCA that will be responsible for overseeing the DASS. Its functions shall include:

- 5.2.1 Ensuring the full adherence and compliance of this policy by all arms of the university community.
- 5.2.2 Developing tools, instruments, controls, and procedures for monitoring, assessment, evaluation, and tracking of the provision of services for persons with disabilities.
- 5.2.3 Collecting and documenting data on recruitment, admission, enrollment, retention, and graduation of persons with disabilities.
- 5.2.4 Verifying the diagnosis or nature of the disability presented and perform periodic reviews of the same.
- 5.2.5 Being the main point of contact for persons with disabilities about information on all university services.
- 5.2.6 Collaborating with Admissions and HR, respectively, to receive data on admitted and recruited persons with disabilities and notifying the various departments and student support services of the unique or additional learning support required by the person.
- 5.2.7 Documenting and tracking complaints raised by or relating to persons with disabilities regarding their curricular, co-curricular activities and work functions.
- 5.2.8 Liaising with the parents/guardians and support system for persons with disabilities on their general social, professional, and academic welfare.
- 5.2.9 Liaising with internal and external stakeholders, agencies, and committees to generate

information, training, and advocacy for persons with disabilities.

5.2.10 Monitoring, assessing, and evaluating the university's adherence to this Policy and recommend revisions as may be necessary. Such revisions shall be undertaken with due involvement of persons with disabilities and,

5.2.11 Conducting periodic research, reviews, and updating of this policy to ensure that emerging issues, practices, and trends in providing quality services, products, and education to persons with disabilities are, where appropriate and reasonable, incorporated herein.

### **5.3. Disability and Accessibility Support Services Resource Persons (DASSRP)**

Disability and Accessibility Support Services Resource Persons shall be essential to DASS. They will provide academic, social, and specialized support services such as Sign Language, Note-takers, Assistive Technology Guides, and facilitators. They will provide critical information on students' performance, advice, and guidance on how a particular disability may or is continuously impacting a student or employee's experience at the University. Their specific specialized duties will include:

#### **Academic Duties**

5.3.1 Act as a point of first contact and information for students and employees who need clarification on accommodations for students with disabilities.

5.3.2 Provide specialist study skills and tuition for students with specific learning difficulties.

5.3.3 Aid with accessing academic materials, library resources, etc.

5.3.4 Monitor attendance of lectures, classes, and tutorials. (Some students, especially those with visual or physical impairments, may experience lassitude due to ongoing conditions. When fatigued, students may seem distant, vague, and uncommunicative. Attendance at lectures may be erratic.)

5.3.5 Provide all the necessary support for the conduct of university examinations.

5.3.6 Support students who will need to attend and participate in fieldwork and placements in the field of study.

5.3.7 Provide academic support for students based on their disability. Students must meet with their Resource Person at least twice per semester.

5.3.8 Report on students' academic progress

#### **A. Technical Duties**

- 5.3.9 Explore continuously technological aids and strategies to determine how individual students/employees shall benefit from such support (including IT equipment, assistive software, audio recorders, personal readers, specialist mentoring, library support, etc.)
- 5.3.10 Provide note-takers access to speech-to-text/lip speaker/sign language interpreters for lectures, classes, and tutorials.
- 5.3.11 Provide academic materials in advance and alternative formats (e.g., Braille, electronic, audio, large print).
- 5.3.12 Provide transcription services of academic materials for use by faculty.
- 5.3.13 Provide training to students/employees in assistive software (e.g., JAWS, Dolphin).
- 5.3.14 Provide campus space orientation and mobility training on arrival for new students/employees with visual or physical impairments.
- 5.3.15 Participate in and supervise off-campus trips involving students/employees with disabilities

### **Personal/Social Duties**

- 5.3.16 Collaborate with the Counseling and Coaching Department to provide confidential counseling services to students and employees with disabilities on various issues, including time management, exam anxiety, academic planning, depression, anxiety, stress management, problem-solving/decision-making, and financial needs.
- 5.3.17 Provide advocacy on behalf of individual students/employees or disability issues affecting many students/employees.
- 5.3.18 Run induction programs and events to provide pre-entry support for all new and specific groups of students/employees with disabilities.
- 5.3.19 Help students through complex events, e.g., operating bank accounts, etc.
- 5.3.20 Support students with personal issues and serve as mediators, helping them establish roommate agreements and resolve challenges.
- 5.3.21 Act as an in loco parentis for the students, helping them to become independent and grow socially, academically, and psychologically in the university setting. Have the opportunity and responsibility of guiding students through some of the most consequential decisions of their lives.
- 5.3.22 Are trained to be informed about university standards, rules, and policies, model these policies, educate students, enforce policies, and confront violations.
- 5.3.23 Provide specialist mentoring and buddy support for students with disabilities.

## **SECTION 6: REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS/ACCOMMODATIONS, PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY, DISCLOSURE AND ACCESSIBILITY**

### **6.1 Reasonable Adjustments/ Accommodation**

In making reasonable adjustments/ accommodations, Ashesi shall:

- 6.1.1 Take into consideration the impact on other students, staff, and faculty within the University
- 6.1.2 Incorporate all services provided at institutional, school, program, course, and individual levels.
- 6.1.3 Consider the minimum standards that have been set by the University, Professional bodies, Statutory Provisions and Regulatory bodies; and,
- 6.1.4 Be guided by the principles of respect, inherent dignity, participation and involvement, inclusion, equity and equality, non-discrimination, and accessibility.

### **6.2 Privacy and Confidentiality**

The university's policies, rules, and regulations concerning privacy and confidentiality shall apply. The University is mindful of its responsibilities to students and employees with disabilities. It shall do all that it reasonably can within its power to ensure that the rights and needs of students and employees with disabilities are not compromised.

Records that identify students and employees with disabilities, including their name, address, nature of the disability, support services needed, verifying statement of the Head of the University's Health Services, and other documentation provided by the student/employee, shall be considered confidential and be protected in accordance with Ashesi's data protection regulations to provide appropriate academic accommodations and the adaptation of curricula or working conditions. Information about students/employees shall only be released with the student's/employee's informed written consent in accordance with Ashesi requirements or other applicable legislation.

### **6.3 Disclosure**

Disclosure will only occur with the explicit written or other form of consent of Persons with disabilities and only in their interest through a suitable Disability Disclosure Form (DDF).

Although Persons with disabilities are not obliged to disclose their disability during recruitment, admission, enrolment, or registration, it is advisable that such a person should be encouraged to do so as early as is practically possible. The university is not responsible for making individual adjustments for persons with disabilities if they choose not to disclose their condition or need. The University shall, however, endeavor to develop an environment where individuals can disclose their disability. Every encouragement and opportunity shall be given to students/employees to disclose any disability that may have a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

## **6.4 Accessibility**

Ashesi shall ensure a full range of services are accessible to Persons with disabilities by:

- 6.4.1 Placing mechanisms of identifying social, academic, attitudinal, and environmental barriers hindering persons with disabilities and addressing them in policies, procedures, programs, activities, resource allocation, and strategic planning.
- 6.4.2 Sensitizing and publicizing the range of services accessible to persons with disabilities.

Ensuring that outsourced and alternative services are in compliance with the university's inclusive policy for persons with disabilities and continuously reviewing the range of services to ensure their state of usability, accessibility, availability, and compliance; and ensuring that accessibility initiatives take into account external constraints including affordability, competing priorities, availability of technology and knowledge, cultural differences and sound scientific evidence.

## **6.5 Documentation**

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

## **6.6 Verification**

Verification from certain sources may require endorsement by a designated institutional evaluator in alignment with the type of disability. If the designated institutional evaluators are unable to endorse or verify, they must seek expert advice to help make the verification and subsequently endorse the disability. Such documentation helps to ensure the appropriate delivery of accommodations and services necessary to facilitate the individual's success.

## **SECTION 7: PROCEDURES FOR MAINSTREAMING, INCLUSION, AND ADJUSTMENTS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES**

In consultation with the DASS, disability mainstreaming, inclusion & adjustments shall be based on the following aspects:

### **7.1 Representation of persons with disabilities in governance**

Ashesi shall ensure that persons with disabilities are represented in critical decision-making structures within the university.

### **7.2 Human Resource Management**

In line with HR policies and strategies, Ashesi shall:

7.2.1 Make necessary provisions for the recruitment and development of persons with disabilities in line with national and institutional standards and statutes. This will be done by:

- Adopting a disability-inclusive recruitment policy that provides reasonable accommodation to candidates with disabilities during the recruitment process. This may involve providing accommodation such as extended time for interviews, providing a sign language interpreter, or using telecommunication equipment. Collecting feedback from employees with disabilities to help identify areas in the recruitment process that need to be improved
- Partnering with organizations that serve persons with disabilities to reach a wider pool of qualified candidates and to learn more about the needs of persons with disabilities.
- Creating a supportive work environment for persons with disabilities. This shall include and will not be limited to providing accommodation such as flexible work arrangements and assistive technology for their work's effective execution.
- Providing on-the-job training and development opportunities to persons with disabilities to help them succeed in their careers at the University.
- Empower staff and faculty on disability inclusion through capacity building and training. This can be done through organizing workshops on disability awareness and accommodations for all employees. These workshops can help employees to better understand the different types of disabilities, the challenges that persons

with disabilities face, and how to be allies to persons with disabilities.

### **7.3 Information Management Systems**

Ashesi shall progressively:

- 7.3.1 Ensure that the information systems and information technologies; web, hardware, and software are accessible and usable to persons with disabilities and adhere to accessibility standards in line with all Web Content Accessibility Guidelines
- 7.3.2 Establish appropriate information management systems for identifying, assessing, documenting, and managing information related to persons with disabilities for planning and decision-making at all levels.

### **7.4 Application, Admission, Enrollment, and Registration Processes and Procedures**

Ashesi shall ensure that:

- 7.4.1 The application, admission, enrollment, and registration processes and procedures consider the nature of disability. All related documentation shall be inclusive, user-friendly, and in accessible formats.
- 7.4.2 The application, admission, enrollment, and registration processes and policies will promote equity and equality and be guided by national and legal requirements, program designs, and learning outcomes.
- 7.4.3 Reasonable adjustments are made and publicized to enable persons with disabilities to meet learning requirements.
- 7.4.4 Personnel dealing with the application, admission, enrollment, and registration processes and services for persons with disabilities are appropriately sensitized and trained.
- 7.4.5 The application process has a form/section for disability disclosure, either in personal statements or references.
- 7.4.6 The admissions team collaborates and partners with the relevant specialists in the assessment and inclusive provisions for persons with disabilities during the application process.
- 7.4.7 Including the lead of DASS in the selection process of persons with disabilities.

### **7.5 Orientation**

As part of the new students, staff, and faculty orientation, Ashesi shall ensure that:

- 7.5.1 The procedures and policies for orientation promote inclusivity and participation of persons with disabilities.
- 7.5.2 Orientation programs accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities.
- 7.5.3 The information provided regarding services and resources available to persons with disabilities shall be disseminated promptly and in accessible formats.
- 7.5.4 There is a dedicated session to orient all new community members about institutional policies and expected acceptable engagements with persons with disabilities.

## **7.6 Curriculum Design, Review and Assessment**

Ashesi's Curriculum design, review, and assessment processes shall consider the changing perspectives on disability and:

- 7.6.1 Reflect the needs and expectations of persons with disabilities that inform the formulation of the expected learning outcomes.
- 7.6.2 Involve the persons with disabilities in reviewing, designing, and assessing programs.
- 7.6.3 Recognize relevant stakeholders' needs and interests, including organizations of and for persons with disabilities.
- 7.6.4 Ensure that the methods used in program design, review, and assessment shall be flexible and appropriate and allow for reasonable adjustments and participation by persons with disabilities without compromising the standard and quality of the expected learning outcome.
- 7.6.5 The designed programs shall be inclusive and learner-centered, and the persons involved in curriculum design review and assessment shall be trained on the exclusivity of persons with disabilities using universal design methodologies.

## **7.7 Teaching and Learning**

Ashesi shall ensure that the teaching and learning strategies and other related learning activities take into consideration the needs of persons with disabilities and progressively ensure the following:

- 7.7.1 Adoption and adaptation of various inclusive teaching methods, resources, and techniques to facilitate effective and meaningful teaching and learning for persons with disabilities.
- 7.7.2 Use of teaching and learning support services and assistive technology that are accessible, usable, and address the diverse needs of persons with disabilities.

- 7.7.3 Adopting and adapting practices and procedures that accommodate persons with disabilities during fieldwork, field trips, internships, and other out-of-class learning activities.
- 7.7.4 Encouragement of peer support where students, staff, and faculty without disabilities interact and assist persons with disabilities.
- 7.7.5 Use of feedback to make further adjustments and support persons with disabilities.
- 7.7.6 Avoidance of discriminatory behaviors in class and workplace.
- 7.7.7 Training of students, staff, and faculty to promote an inclusive teaching and learning environment.

## **7.8 Academic Assessment**

Ashesi shall ensure that assessment strategies and methods are flexible and diverse to allow persons with disabilities to demonstrate learning by:

- 7.8.1 Ensuring that examination policies, rules, regulations, and procedures include provisions that accommodate the diverse needs of persons with disabilities.
- 7.8.2 Continuously reviewing assessment methods to make necessary adjustments.
- 7.8.3 Ensuring that during the assessment of students' learning, appropriate adjustments shall be made to accommodate the individual needs of persons with disabilities.
- 7.8.4 Ensuring that the assessment and grading criteria for persons with disabilities are transparent, fair, and non-discriminatory.
- 7.8.5 Ensuring assessment feedback shall be in accessible formats.
- 7.8.6 Support and guide students, staff, and faculty on inclusive assessment strategies.
- 7.8.7 Providing an opportunity for persons with disabilities to make known and request necessary adjustments in assessments.

## **7.9 Teaching and Learning Environment**

Ashesi shall progressively ensure that:

- 7.9.1 The teaching and learning environment is accessible, functional, and available to persons with disabilities.
- 7.9.2 The teaching and learning environment provides opportunities for equitable participation by persons with disabilities.

- 7.9.3 Mechanisms are implemented to enable persons with disabilities to make the best use of assistive technology in teaching and learning.
- 7.9.4 Library facilities, policies, procedures, and services are inclusive and responsive to the practical and information access needs of persons with disabilities.
- 7.9.5 ICT personnel are conversant with inclusive service provision and assistive technologies in an inclusive environment.
- 7.9.6 There is continuous consultation, monitoring, and review of the usability, accessibility, and availability of assistive technologies for persons with disabilities.
- 7.9.7 The technologies adopted progressively adhere to Universal Design.

## **7.10 Support Services**

Ashesi shall ensure that support services for persons with disabilities are accessible and appropriate to cover their needs progressively:

- 7.10.1 Providing competent and qualified personnel who will provide specialist advice and support to persons with disabilities and those who work with them.
- 7.10.2 Facilitating linkages between institutional program support and advice, financial aid programs, and other specialist services.
- 7.10.3 Ensuring mentoring, psychological counselling, placement and career services fully accommodate the diverse needs of persons with disabilities.
- 7.10.4 Ensuring that persons with disabilities have access to placement and career services to allow them to engage with potential employers and progress to employment or further studies.
- 7.10.5 Ensuring that information related to the rights and responsibilities of persons with disabilities shall be part of the advisory and support services; and,
- 7.10.6 Ensuring that student residence, facilities, and services are disability friendly and that persons with disabilities are included in social and other extracurricular programs.

## **7.11 Quality of Employees**

Ashesi shall progressively:

- 7.11.1 Facilitate the participation of all its employees in a range of activities that enhance their knowledge and practice towards an inclusive institutional culture; and,
- 7.11.2 Ensure that there are designated academic and student support staff members with

appropriate skills and experience to provide specialist advice and support to persons with disabilities.

## **7.12 Facilities and Infrastructure**

Ashesi shall progressively ensure that facilities and infrastructure, equipment, and resources are available, accessible, barrier-free, adequate, and functional to persons with disabilities to enable their full participation in their academic and social life in the institution by:

7.12.1 Progressively employing a universal design for all infrastructure.

7.12.2 Involving persons with disabilities in the implementation process of universal design.

7.12.3 Providing a conducive physical, social, and teaching/learning environment that accommodates persons with disabilities.

7.12.4 Putting in place safety measures in the institutional facilities and infrastructure to prevent accidents, injuries, or other foreseeable harm leading to disability or aggravation of existing disability and,

7.12.5 Putting reasonable alternative measures in place where it is practically impossible to ensure access for persons with disabilities.

## **7.13 Co-curricular Programs and Activities**

Ashesi shall progressively ensure that the range of co-curricular programs and activities accommodate the needs, capabilities, interests, and talents of persons with disabilities by:

7.13.1 Providing opportunities and any additional support for equitable participation of persons with disabilities in co-curricular activities; and,

7.13.2 Facilitating the participation of persons with disabilities in disability-related co-curricular programs and activities both within and outside of the campus.

## **7.14 Research, Innovations and Community Service**

Ashesi shall ensure that:

7.14.1 The research, innovation, and community service policy frameworks should support the involvement and participation of persons with disabilities and

7.14.2 The funds allocated for research, innovation, and community service also accommodate persons with disabilities or the appropriate thematic areas.

## **7.15. Stakeholder Involvement**

Ashesi shall engage with persons with disabilities and relevant stakeholders in formulating strategic plans, budgets, policies, program design, reviews, and assessments geared towards providing quality education for persons with disabilities.

## **7.16. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Ashesi, through the DASS unit, shall:

7.16.1 Develop and implement a system for evaluating programs and services for persons with disabilities.

7.16.2 The DASS shall monitor the applications, admissions, employment, academic, work progress, and nature of impairment of community members with disabilities and the support services provided.

7.16.3 Have policies, procedures, and instruments in place for monitoring, evaluation, and follow-up reports of processes, activities, and services that accommodate persons with disabilities.

7.16.4 Coordinate regular stakeholder satisfaction surveys on the intake, quality, and effectiveness of programs and services for persons with disabilities.

7.16.4 Proactively review the policy every two years and when there is any major shift in global and local standards and trends to ensure the university follows current and updated best practices and valuable trends.

## **SECTION 8: DISSEMINATION OF THIS POLICY**

Ashesi, through the DASS, shall:

8.1 Make this policy available on its website and other university communication channels and ensure that the information is accessible and up to date; and,

8.2 Continuously sensitize its campus community and all relevant stakeholders regarding the provisions of this policy, especially regarding the inclusivity and needs of persons with disabilities.

8.3 The DASS team shall continuously review the Policy on persons with disabilities. The evaluation shall report on program objectives, program implementation, outcome data, employee and student perceptions of program effectiveness, and physical accessibility

requirements. The evaluation shall cover compliance with enrolment, retention, transition, and graduation trends of students with disabilities. A report including recommendations shall be prepared for the Executive Team.

## **SECTION 9: PROCEDURES FOR CHANNELLING AND MONITORING COMPLAINTS ON VIOLATIONS OF THE POLICY**

Complaints on exclusion and discrimination should be lodged with the DASS team who shall liaise with the relevant offices to investigate and make recommendations in accordance with prevailing university policies. This process requires Ashesi:

9.1 Establish mechanisms for the management and handling of issues of discrimination against and exclusion of persons with disabilities from any programs, services, and activities and

9.2 Institute procedures for investigating complaints of exclusion and discrimination of persons with disabilities.

9.3 Although the primary responsibility for providing a supportive and responsive academic, social, and physical environment rests entirely with the University, such commitment does not exclude students and employees with disabilities from being active participants in their ultimate success. Students and employees with disabilities must take the initiative to inform the University about their needs, pursue studies and work tasks with the same diligence required of all other community members, and accept responsibility for their role in their success or failure.

9.4 A person can appeal against the University's decisions concerning accommodation (services) by writing a letter to the Dean of Students and Community Affairs (for students) and the Human Resources (employees). If dissatisfied, they may file a complaint with the President (employees and students). Ashesi will follow its appeal procedures to address complaints arising directly or indirectly from a community member with disabilities in all cases of appeal.

9.5 Formal complaints shall follow the same guidelines that apply to other complaints within the University. Students and employees who are denied requested services may appeal the decision through on-campus informal and formal dispute resolution processes.