

Petra University Services for People with Special Needs

The University of Petra aims to provide an educational environment suitable for people with special needs, which takes into account the individual differences of all, and the required support to acquire the necessary academic skills for students with special needs.

This includes the optimal use of proper technology, and the academic and psychological counselling to this category of society. Petra University thus adheres to the laws, and to the decisions of the Higher Education Council for People with Special Needs, which are as follows:

First: The Law of the Rights of Persons with Special Needs No. (20) of 2017, which includes the following articles:

Article No. (2):

The educational institution is defined as any of the governmental and non-governmental educational institutions that provide services or educational programs for people with special needs, whatever their licensing or registration authority may be.

Article No. (21)

“It is not permissible to exclude persons on the basis of their disability, or because of it from higher education institutions, nor to deny them the study of any of the specializations available in those institutions. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and its educational institutions must include the requirements for access to persons with special

needs to higher education as stipulated in relevant policies, strategies, plans and programs, as well provide reasonable and practical arrangements, and the various venues of access to persons with special needs for enrolment in the available fields of specialization.”

Second: The following Decisions of the Higher Education Council, which include:

Decision No. 356 in Session No. 19/2006

The decision stipulates approval of the special needs students’ admission to Jordanian public and private universities, and their exemption from the requirement to equate the comprehensive exam average (of a minimum of 65%) with the average of the high school certificate Grade average, provided that a medical document issued by the Disability Diagnostic Center affiliated with the Ministry of Health is presented, indicating that the disability is a reason for the student’s low educational attainment, and that the disability percentage is not less than 30%.

Decision No. 388 in Session No. 20/2006:

The decision stipulates against excluding applications submitted by students with special needs in postgraduate programs, and to treat them according to the current regulations of postgraduate programs. The Jordanian legislations define "the handicapped", according to 2007 Law of persons with Disabilities, as "every person who has total or partial deficiencies in any of his senses, or his physical, psychological, or mental abilities to the extent that limit the ability to learn, or adapt, or work, or to the extent the he may not meet the

requirements of the normal life of persons with no disabilities." **The following are the types of disabilities classified according to the Unified Admission Coordination Committee of the Ministry of Higher Education**, and its reports as follows:

1. **Visual disability:** The medical report shall specify how strong the vision is in each eye with the best possible correction and the sight line and the permanence of such disabilities.
2. **Auditory disability:** The report specifies the level of hearing impairment in both ears with or without the use of auditory aids after medical and surgical treatment if necessary (provided that the hearing threshold be calculated from the vibrations 500-1000 -2000-40000 Hz), and that the medical report be issued by an audiologist, or audiologist specialist and certified by an ear, nose and throat specialist.
3. **Motor disability:** The report should specify the nature and degrees of the motor / physical special disabilities, according to the standards, guidelines and provisions issued by the competent medical committee, formed by the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, in accordance with the regulations and instructions in force. In all cases, these disabilities irrespective of their nature must be included in the definition of disability stipulated in the Law on the Rights of People with disabilities No. 20 of 2017.

4. **Short stature**

5. **Mental disability** (mental schizophrenia: This is determined by a medical report issued by the National Center for Mental Health in the capital city of Jordan).

6. **Multiple disability**: This includes the presence of more than one disability, such as motor and auditory disabilities.

7. **Other disabilities**: These include specific learning difficulties including dyslexia, difficulty in coordinating limb movements, difficulty in dealing with numbers and calculations, or attention deficit disorder or epilepsy patients, according to a medical report identifying these cases.

Problems for People with Special Needs:

These groups of people with special needs suffer from multiple problems. In the case of visual disability, for example, there are many problems that relate to moving from one building to another, problems related to exams, problems related to reading, teaching methods, and registration for Courses per Semester, conducting projects, and preparing workshop papers. In the case of hearing impairment, there are problems related to how to conduct academic counselling for this category of disabled persons, the provision of psychological support, in addition to speech therapy, and to converting lectures and exams into sign language. All of this calls for a proper university environment which accommodates the needs of these

students, regarding university infrastructure, technical services, social and moral support, and the modification of exams, methods of curricula and courses adaptations. In addition, training sessions should be conducted for time management, study skills, and services, advanced reading and writing. In addition, advanced technology support services, psychological counselling, transportation services and extracurricular activities, flexible exam time and summaries of lectures should be provided. Sign language translation services and a private library with means for Educational Help, use of the Braille system and other necessary means, including housing at the university are provided if possible. In addition, volunteers to escort students with special needs, provide audio recordings of lectures for the Blind, amplify information on a computer screen, and convert printed speech to audible and vice versa .

Petra University Services for People with Special Needs

Petra University has initiated through the its Colleges Deanships a set of procedures to facilitate this category of people's affairs, as follows:

First: 1. Admission and Registration Deanship

1. Admission of students with special needs, who have finished high school through a registrar at the University Deanship in coordination with the Deans of the Colleges and Heads of Departments to take the necessary actions to provide the possible

means of assistance to students with special needs provided that medical documents issued by the competent committees are presented.

2. admitting students with special needs as a bridge to Jordanian universities, according to the general policy of accepting students with a community college certificate in Jordanian universities

3. Students with visual or hearing disabilities are exempt from the TOEFL exam to proceed for their postgraduate studies

4. Students with visual impairment are entitled to swap courses in Computer science Statistics with other courses

Second: The Deanship of Student Affairs:

1. The Deanship of Student Affairs provides the Student Services Department of the Deanship of Student Affairs provides guidance and support for people with special needs

2. The Deanship of Student Affairs displays information about people with special needs on the Deanship of Student Affairs website

3. The Deanship of Student Affairs devotes part of students' part-time activities to support people with special needs by assigning students to help them in coordination with their respective departments and colleges, as well as employing those students, if possible

4. The Deanship of Student Affairs provides sports halls that can be used by people with special needs, including recreational activities and exhibitions.
5. The Deanship of Student Affairs conducts orientation sessions for new students with special needs
6. The Deanship of Student Affairs, in cooperation with the Academic Development Center, offers sessions on sign language for Deaf Students, Braille, talking computer, use of white cane, mobility (if needed) in coordination with the Supreme Council for Disabled Affairs.
7. The Deanship of Student Affairs provides information about services for people with Special Needs in the student's university guide
8. The Deanship of Student Affairs presents special awards for people with special needs at the graduation ceremony

Third: The University Campus including Colleges and Buildings and the Services provided for People with Special Needs

1. The university colleges devotes the community service course for the assistance of registered students with special needs.
2. The university allows the Blind and visually impaired students to make an audio recording of the courses through their mobile devices or make video recordings of

the lectures of course content presented on the data show provided that such materials are used solely for educational purposes.

3. The academic departments provides instructional materials and summaries for people with special needs in adequate time for them to transfer into sign language and Braille in coordination with the university library

4. The university grants students with special needs adequate time to answer exam questions.

5. The university assigns students from the Community Service Course or their peers from the Student Employment Program in the Deanship of Student Affairs or others appointed by the department head to assist the Blind in answering the essay questions and to convert them to spoken language.

6. The university provides suitable alternatives for providing exams, such as reading the exam for the visually impaired through the use of computers and magnification of the written texts and maintenance of an appropriate level of illumination.

7. The university adjusts infrastructure for the reception of persons with special needs, namely, disability lanes, elevators and health facilities and the use of elevators' cards

Fourth: The library

1. The library adjusts computer accessibility to meet the needs of the visually impaired.
2. The library provides audio databases for the Blind for research.
3. The library provides books in Braille for the required courses and for the extra-curricular reading activities in accordance with the concerned department recommendation.
4. The library provides electronic reading programs for the visually impaired (These are available in the Petra University databases).
5. The university provides the library with talking computers and scripts in dotted letters for the Blind and visually impaired.