

Policy Title	Policy Special Needs	Year	2025
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Policy Index	Page
1. Purpose of the Special Needs Policy	2
2. Scope of the Special Needs Policy	2
3. Students with physical disabilities	2
4. Students with cognitive disabilities, learning or behavioural problems	3
5. Students with physical sensory impairments e.g. sight or hearing impairments	4
6. HIV and AIDS	4
7. Disclosure and confidentiality	4
8. Chronic illness	5
9. Help Centres	5

1. PURPOSE OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

This policy serves as a basis for the consideration of employees and students with special needs and, where relevant, to be able to include them in the workplace and in the delivery of our learning programmes at **eta**. The policy aims to ensure that eta, where possible, provide an environment in which employees and students with special needs are included and are protected from unfair discrimination.

2. SCOPE OF THE SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

This policy applies to all employees of the **eta**, as well as **eta** students.

3. STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

In most instances, **eta** is in a position to provide a teaching and learning environment for students with certain physical disabilities. Our premises accessible and additional sport and fitness facilities that we use are accessible. Our faculty strives to be in a position to adapt their teaching environment and their scenarios to ensure that physically disabled students are able to gain optimal learning at the **eta**. This implies that our practical learning environments are able to cater for and adapt to the needs of physically disabled students. It is however the responsibility of the student to bring any specific or special needs they may have in relation to their physical disability to eta's attention.

All **eta** campuses and offices should be able to include disabled students in the context of sport and fitness education. Our policy aims to ensure that we achieve the following:

- The inclusion of persons with disabilities in physical activity sessions.
- The learning environment is adapted when needed to maximise the participation of persons with disabilities.
- Equipment is adapted when needed to maximise the learning of persons with disabilities.

The teaching and learning environment and assessment must be sensitive to learners with special needs or disabilities and within budget constraints, endeavour to create an environment in which learning can occur.

4. STUDENTS WITH COGNITIVE DISABILITIES, LEARNING OR BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS

This point in the policy relates, in particular, to students with special needs relating to psycho-social factors, learning problems or behavioural problems. This can include but is not limited to dyslexia, ADD, ADHD, OCD and or a range of disorders within the psycho-social realm. If an enrolling student presents with these special needs, it is the responsibility of the campus manager or their staff handling the enrolment to ensure the following:

- 4.1 The special needs must be identified and noted on the registration form and on the **eta** Student Information System.
- 4.2 The student or their legal guardian must inform the **eta** about the specific requirements of the special needs so that the **eta** can determine whether they have the resources and the staff to manage the student's special needs.
- 4.3 An official letter must be provided by the student's medical practitioner e.g. therapist, psychologist, psychiatrist which indicates the name and the nature of the condition, the implications for the student in terms of their ability to cope with studies and the special needs they may have to support their learning. A letter from a parent or guardian is not acceptable and special needs that are not handled in an official manner can be perceived as unfair practice.
- 4.4 If specific additional support is needed e.g. scribes, translators, physical helper, it is the responsibility of the student or their legal guardian to organise this and to inform the **eta** about the need and about the plans made to provide for this. For example, if a scribe is needed for a dyslexic student during an exam, the student must inform the **eta** so that arrangements can be made to inform examiners and include the scribe. If extra exam time is needed for written work, this should be indicated in an official letter from the student's health practitioner.
- 4.5 In the absence of the above evidence, **eta** is not in a position to help the student and the student cannot be treated as a special need student.

5. STUDENTS WITH SENSORY IMPAIRMENTS e.g. sight or hearing impairments

Currently, and until budget constraints prove otherwise, unless the student is in a position to provide the resources needed for their sensory impairment, **eta** is not in a position to cater for such needs. We do not have the resources to adapt study material to brail for blind students and we do not have the resources to take on signers for deaf students. However, if the student feels that he can cope and if the faculty of the campus feel that they can support and work with the student to enable their learning, then they are encouraged to include the students wherever possible and provide a supportive environment for teaching to take place and for the student to learn and be assessed.

6. HIV and AIDS

The **eta** will ensure that employees and students living with HIV/Aids are treated with compassion and understanding. The **eta** recognises that HIV/Aids is not transmitted through casual contact, but will ensure a safe working environment. We encourage staff and students to declare their HIV status privately to management to enable them to respond appropriately to any occurrence. However, **eta** grants that HIV-infected employees have a right not to disclose their status to other employees or other students, unless an incident occurs that could be of risk to the health of everyone.

- **eta** will not dismiss an employee because of their HIV status.
- **eta** will not refuse employment of anyone because of their HIV status.
- Infected employees can retain their jobs as long they meet the job requirements. Therefore, an employee who becomes too ill to work will be treated in accordance with the incapacity provisions of the Labour Relations Act.
- **eta** will not refuse enrolment or support to a student because of their HIV status.

7. DISCLOSURE AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The **eta** respects the individual's right to confidentiality and will not impose testing or enquire for HIV status on employment. However, in a case of fully developed Aids the employee is encouraged to reveal the presence of the disease to enable appropriate handling of the illness and the employee's needs. Nevertheless, confidentiality is of paramount importance, failure to do this will be regarded in a serious light.

The **eta** does not have a counselling department due to its capacity as an organisation but management will encourage the affected employee to seek counselling and will provide the support they can. Colleagues are expected to treat affected employees, colleagues and students normally and may not refuse to work with those affected by HIV

and Aids. If unjustifiable refusal persists the **eta** will follow the disciplinary procedure for employees.

8. CHRONIC ILLNESS

Staff or students with any chronic illness (physical or mental illness) are obliged to make their illness known to the **eta** to ensure the proper management, care and respect for the employee or student. Staff or students with special needs in terms of medical care must provide proof of this to ensure correct management of leave, time off for appointments and, in the case of students with chronic illness, extension or remediation of studies should it be required.

- Employees and sick leave: Each case is treated individually and according to the specific needs of the employee and in accordance with the South African Labour Law. In the event that a staff member needs time off to cater for medical care, the sick leave policy applies.
- Students and sick leave: Each case is treated individually and according to the specific needs of the student, their medical practitioner and, where relevant, their care giver. In the event that a student needs time off from studies to cater for medical care, a medical certificate is required together with a meeting with the campus manager to ensure careful management of studies and assessment.

9. HELP CENTRES

AIDS help line: 0800-012-322

Glaxo Welcome HIV/AIDS treatment hotline: 0800-110-605

FAMSA family counselling website - contact details <http://www.famsa.org.za/>