



## Cambridge Muslim College Disability & Equal Opportunities Policy

### 1. Purpose

This document sets out the College's policy, and associated procedures, for supporting students and staff at Cambridge Muslim College, with their disabilities, health conditions or learning difficulties, and ensuring equal opportunities to all.

### 2. Scope

- 2.1. Students and staff are subject to the Disability and Equal Opportunities Policy in force for the relevant academic year.
- 2.2. This document should be available to students through the student and staff portals.
- 2.3. A substantial adverse effect is something that is more than minor or trivial and goes beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist between people.
- 2.4. A long-term effect is one which has lasted at least 12 months; or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months; or which is likely to last for the rest of one's life.

### 3. Definition

- 3.1. The Equality Act defines disability as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition is designed to be as broad as possible and there are a wide variety of conditions and impairments that will be covered.
- 3.2. A substantial adverse effect is something that is more than minor or trivial and goes beyond the normal differences in ability which may exist between people.
- 3.3. A long-term effect is one which has lasted at least 12 months; or where the total period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months; or which is likely to last for the rest of one's life.

- 3.4. The Act recognises that ‘normal day-to-day activities’ vary from person to person and so it does not define these. However, they are generally regarded as things that most people must do every day, whatever their job or occupation.
- 3.5. See Table 1 for types of physical or mental impairments:

**Table 1: Types of physical or mental impairments**

| <b>General</b>  | <b>Examples</b>  |
|---|--|
| Physical impairments  | Mobility difficulties  |
| Sensory impairments   | Affected hearing or sight  |
| Learning difficulties   | Dyslexia and dyspraxia   |
| Mental health conditions                                      | Depression and anxiety, panic attacks, phobias, eating disorders, obsessive compulsive disorders, schizophrenia and bipolar affective disorder |
| Genetic and progressive conditions                            | Motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy  |
| Conditions which are characterised several cumulative effects | Pain or fatigue  |
| Hidden impairments  | Asthma or diabetes, if these affect day-to-day activities  |
| History of impairment   | This applies if a person is no longer disabled, but met the definition in the past   |

#### 4. Principles

- 4.1. The College is committed to ensuring that the policy is easily accessible, fair, transparent and consistent and provides everyone with a good quality experience. Every effort will be made to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format.
- 4.2. The College is committed to ensuring that all personal records are kept in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. The information will be confidential between the individual and the College and any other parties the individual has consented to. In line with the terms of the Data Protection Act 2018, individuals are entitled to a copy of all their personal data held by the College. There is a £10 administration fee for this service, and all requests should be made to the College Data Protection Officer.
- 4.3. As an education provider and employer, the College is keen to avoid any instance of discrimination against people based on any of the ‘protected characteristics’ defined by the Equality Act 2010. Disability is one of these characteristics.

- 4.4. This policy is aligned with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy. The College is committed to ensuring that the policy is easily accessible, fair, transparent and consistent and provides everyone with a good quality experience. Every effort will be made to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format.
- 4.5. The College seeks to be an institution which promotes inclusivity and makes anticipatory and reasonable adjustments to all policies, procedures and provision of services.
- 4.6. The College welcomes students with disabilities, health conditions or learning difficulties. The College aims to ensure that its educational provision is inclusive and geared towards supporting disabled students to achieve their full potential and participate equally in society.
- 4.7. This policy is to provide all students with equal access to all aspects of College community life including the teaching and learning programmes and to provide the academic and pastoral support that each individual need for this to take place.
- 4.8. The College makes a positive commitment to employing disabled people.

## 5. References

- [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Advice and Guidance- Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access](#) (Appendix 1)
- The Open University's Handbook for Validated Awards
- The Open University's Regulations for Validated Awards
- Cambridge Muslim College Teaching and Learning and Assessment Strategy
- Cambridge Muslim College Applications Policy
- Cambridge Muslim College Assessment Policy
- Cambridge Muslim College Extenuating Circumstances Policy
- Cambridge Muslim College Student Guidance and Support Policy
- Cambridge Muslim College Staff Recruitment Policy
- Cambridge Muslim College Disability and Equal Opportunities Policy
- Cambridge Muslim College Equality and Diversity Policy
- Cambridge Muslim College Data Protection Policy

## 6. Responsibility

- 6.1. The Operations Manager/Equality & Diversity Officer is responsible for implementing this policy in coordination with the Welfare Team.
- 6.2. All employees have an individual duty and responsibility to promote and implement this policy.
- 6.3. The Board of Trustees will be involved as necessary.

## 7. Responsibilities as Education Provider

- 7.1. The College welcomes students with disabilities, health conditions or learning difficulties. The College aims to ensure that its educational provision is inclusive and geared towards supporting disabled students to achieve their full potential and participate equally in society.
- 7.2. The College policy is to provide all students with equal access to all aspects of College community life including the teaching and learning programmes, and to provide the academic and pastoral support that each individual need for this to take place.
- 7.3. Education providers can only make adjustments if they would be 'reasonably expected to know' a student has a disability. This means that the College should take reasonable steps to find out if any applicants are disabled.
- 7.4. Applicants are asked to disclose on their application form any known disability, condition or difficulty that may affect their ability to participate fully in College life, and any special support they may require to make an application, attend an interview and/or study on the programme if accepted. It will be appropriate, for certain health conditions, for applicants to include medical evidence.
- 7.5. These applications are considered without discrimination, using the same criteria as applied for all students: academic merit, references and interview.
- 7.6. Information disclosed is only shared in confidence with those responsible for ensuring that the applicant receives the support that they need.
- 7.7. Any disclosed requirements will be discussed either before or at interview, to gauge the impact of a disability on the applicant's ability to follow the course, and what reasonable adjustments it might be necessary for the College to put in place to ensure that all students can access the education, facilities and services equally.

## **8. Responsibilities as Employer**

- 8.1. The following points are covered in the College's Staff Recruitment Policy and are set out here for the sake of completeness.
- 8.2. Reasonable adjustments will be made at any stage of the recruitment procedure as required in consultation with the applicant to ensure no-one is disadvantaged because of their disability.
- 8.3. Any disabled person(s) who meet the minimum criteria for the job will be invited to interview.
- 8.4. Reasonable adjustments will be made as appropriate to shortlisting, interview and assessment arrangements, and to support candidates to do the job, should they be appointed.

- 8.5. When an offer of appointment is made, successful disabled candidates will be invited to discuss their requirements for reasonable adjustments to the workplace, including premises and equipment, work duties and practices or policies, as appropriate.
- 8.6. Where reasonable adjustments are agreed these must be recorded in writing. The candidate should also receive written confirmation of whatever adjustments have been agreed.

## **9. Confidentiality**

Information about any impairment is sensitive personal data. Students and staff have a right for it to be kept confidential, in accordance with the College's Confidentiality Policy.

## **10. Anticipatory Duty**

- 10.1. As an employer, the College does not have an anticipatory duty. However, as an education provider, the College has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people generally, regardless of whether the College knows that a student is disabled or whether it has any disabled students at all.
- 10.2. This means that the College must plan for reasonable adjustments and not wait for such a need before considering how to meet the duty. This involves anticipating the type of barriers that students with various impairments may face and the adjustments that can be made to remove these barriers.

## **11. Reasonable Adjustments**

11.1 The College recognises its duty, both as an education provider and an employer, to make 'reasonable adjustments' to ensure that disabled students and staff can fully participate in education/employment and other benefits, facilities and services provided for students and staff. The Equality Act does not define what is 'reasonable'. The following factors are likely to be considered when considering whether adjustments are reasonable:

- the effectiveness of making the adjustment (will it be effective in overcoming the substantial disadvantage suffered by the disabled student or staff member?)
- the practicality of the adjustment
- the College's financial resources and the cost of making the adjustment
- the availability of grants, loans and other assistance to disabled students and staff members
- the extent to which aids and services will be provided to disabled students and staff members from other sources
- health and safety requirements
- the relevant interests of other students and staff members – for example if the adjustment results in significant disadvantage for other students.

11.2 Adjustments can include changes to policies and procedures, changes to buildings to make them physically accessible, or provision of equipment and human support. The aim is to prevent disabled people being disadvantaged compared to non-disabled people.

11.3 Depending on the situation, additional support can be made available to:

- assist with using the library to access learning materials (including extended loan arrangements)
- identifying appropriate local medical facilities
- identifying external support
- modifications to improve access to College facilities
- allocation of accessible accommodation
- provision of assistive technologies
- exemption from certain physical tasks or requirements
- provision of pastoral care through the College welfare team.

Specific adjustments might include:

| Condition  | Adjustment  |
|--|---|
| Hearing impairment   | Ensuring a student has a seat at the front of the lecture room<br>Providing a specialist microphone for use by lecturers, or a hearing loop<br>(For hearing-impaired staff) providing a specialist telephone  |
| Visual impairment  | Providing of learning materials and College documents in alternative formats – e.g. large print, audio recordings<br>Arranging for guiding  |
| Learning needs, e.g. dyslexia                                | Putting in place support for individual learning needs (e.g. study skills classes, one to one support, guidance on accessing proof-reading services, provision of lecture notes and presentations ahead of classes, provision of learning materials in alternative formats) |
| Health conditions  | Making relevant staff aware of the condition’s impact upon learning; medications; what to do in an emergency  |
| A medical condition requiring frequent hospital appointments | Putting in place arrangements for time off<br>Making appropriate arrangements to support the student or staff member to manage their workload   |

## 12. External Support

UK students may be eligible for funding for accessibility tools, photocopying costs etc through the Disabled Student’s Allowance (DSA). The Operations Manager will assist students with applications for funding and locating external support.

## 13. Adjustments in Assessment

- 13.1. If a student is unable to be assessed by the methods specified in the assessment regulations, the College will try to accommodate that student by making special arrangements for examination or assessment.
- 13.2. The Faculty Board may vary the methods as appropriate, bearing in mind the learning outcomes of the programme and the need to assess the student on equal terms with other students.
- 13.3. The College must have procedures in place for approving any special arrangements in advance of a student’s first assessment and is expected to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made, having regard to any applicable legislation.

- 13.4. Failure to implement any special arrangements which have been formally agreed may be grounds for an appeal.
- 13.5. Depending on the nature of the disability, health condition or learning difficulty, assessment support may include:
  - extensions to submission deadlines
  - the provision of readers and/or amanuensis for exams or assignments
  - alternative formats and/or additional time for exams
  - consideration of the condition in the assessment of spelling, grammar, the formatting of references, and bibliographies.
- 13.6. Additional support with assignments and exams and other consideration in relation to assessments will be offered only if the following conditions are met:
  - 13.6.1. Students must have been officially recorded by the College as having a recognised disability, health condition or learning difficulty in order to be eligible for additional support and/or exemption from certain assessment criteria.
  - 13.6.2. These considerations can only apply to assessments taking place after the student has been noted by the College as having a recognised disability, health condition or learning difficulty.
  - 13.6.3. Eligible students who are sitting exams and are granted additional time, a reader or an amanuensis are required to request these services at least one month before the exam date.



**REVISION HISTORY**

| <b>Revision Number</b> | <b>Effective Date</b> | <b>Description of Change</b>   |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| 00                     | 25 April 2018         | New Document   |
| 01                     | 25 February 2020      | Change to new format   |
| 02                     | November 2020         | Change the name of Person Responsible to be Operational Manager/Equality and Diversity Officer |
| 03                     | March 2021            | Update the References of QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education                              |

## Appendix 1

### QAA UK Quality Code

[The QAA UK revised Quality Code for Higher Education Advice and Guidance: Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access to higher education](#), states the following Expectation and Core Practices:

#### **Expectations for standards**

Effective admissions, Recruitment and widening access policies and procedures enable providers to recruit students who are capable of meeting the required standards for their course.

#### **Core Practice**

The provider ensures that students who are awarded qualifications have the opportunity to achieve standards beyond the threshold level that are reasonably comparable with those achieved in other UK providers.

#### **Expectation for quality**

From admission through to completion, all students are provided with the support that they need to succeed in and benefit from higher education.

#### **Core Practice**

- The provider has a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.
- In practice, this means that fairness and reliability are embedded principles within admissions and recruitment, and inclusivity pervades throughout the process from outreach activity to processes and practices to enrolment.
- The provider actively engages students, individually and collectively, in the quality of their educational experience.  
In practice, this means that there needs to be active engagement with students who have recently gone through the admissions process and those who declined, with a view to continuously improve the process for future diverse cohorts.
- The provider has fair and transparent procedures for handling complaints and appeals which are accessible to all students.  
In practice, this means that providers adhere to the practice of having clearly articulated and transparent processes for handling complaints of prospective students that are accessible to all stakeholders. These should be monitored and reviewed to mitigate against the same issues arising in the future.