

# Disability Policy

## 1. PRINCIPLES

2. Pharez College will treat all employees with dignity and respect and will provide an environment for learning and working that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying and victimisation.

3. The College is committed to an Equal Opportunities Policy and recognises the importance and value of diversity. It recognises its social, moral and statutory duty to admit and employ people with disabilities, and will do all that is practicable to meet this requirement responsibly.

4. The College wishes to be an organisation that is recognised by the community for good employment opportunities. It wants individuals who apply to Pharez College to be confident that they will receive fair treatment and be considered on their ability to do the job.

5. Pharez College's employment policies aim to ensure that people with disabilities receive treatment that is fair, equitable and consistent with their skills and abilities. Similarly, the College admits students to the available places on its courses based on their academic ability and motivation, whilst recognising the particular achievements of disabled students who have reached this stage.

6. Pharez College will make every effort, if an existing employee becomes disabled, to retrain and retain them wherever practicable.

7. Pharez College is committed to providing relevant training on disability and involves disabled people and interested parties via the Disability Action Committee, in policy implementation and evaluation.

## 8. LEGISLATION

9. The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to harmonise and replace previous legislation, such as the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Equality Act has strengthened particular aspects of equality law, and in particular, disabilities. For instance, new categories of discrimination have been introduced, see point 16 below.

10. The Equality Act has made it easier for a person to show that they are disabled and protected from discrimination. The Act puts a duty on Pharez College to make reasonable adjustments for staff to help them overcome disadvantage resulting from impairment, e.g. by providing assistive technologies to help visually impaired staff use computers effectively.

11. The Equality Act takes the approach that employers and service providers must look specifically at the particular person's disability and identify how, if practicable, they can ensure that the disabled person is treated as favourably as everybody else. The law is in place to promote equal rights and fair treatment.

## 12. DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

13. Under the Act a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This would include such things as using a telephone, reading a book, or using public transport.

- 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'
- 'long-term effect' is defined as lasting more than a year (12 months or more).

14. Pharez College complies with this legislative definition, and it also defines disability as the loss or limitation of opportunities that prevent people who have impairments from taking part in the life of the community as equal, due to physical and social barriers. See Appendix A for excluded conditions.

15. The following are covered under this definition:

- Physical and sensory impairments
- Specific learning difficulties
- Autistic spectrum disorders
- Mental health issues
- Severe disfigurements
- Anyone with an HIV infection, cancer or multiple sclerosis
- Progressive conditions that affect normal day-to-day activities, including long term physical health issues

## 16. DISCRIMINATION AND EXCLUSION

17. Discrimination against disabled applicants or staff can take place in the following ways:

**Direct Discrimination:** An individual is treated less favourably than another because of a disability.

**Indirect Discrimination:** When a rule or policy that applies to the majority but disadvantages someone with a protected characteristic (disability).

**Discrimination by Association:** Direct discrimination against someone because they associate with another person who has a disability.

**Discrimination by Perception:** Direct discrimination against an individual because the others think they possess a particular protected characteristic, e.g. disability.

**Harassment:** Many people with disabilities experience harassment at work. At Pharez College harassment will not be tolerated and every reasonable step will be taken to deal with it. Any refusal to work with people because of their disability is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Staff can complain of behaviour they find offensive even if it is not directed at them, for example, if they believe the harassment or treatment of another has created a hostile environment.

**Harassment by a Third Party:** Pharez College is potentially liable for harassment of our staff by people we don't employ, e.g. out-sourced contractors.

**Victimisation:** When a staff member is treated badly because they have made, or supported a complaint or grievance, under the Equality Act:

- by treating them 'less favourably' than other people, or
- by failing to make a 'reasonable adjustment' compared with other people for a reason relating to their disability.

18. Discrimination is often unintentional and can arise from:

- assumptions and stereotypes
- prejudice or fear
- lack of understanding and information
- low expectations
- lack of direct contact with disabled people
- inaccessible environments
- lack of appropriate aids, services and adjustments which make something accessible
- inflexible practices and procedures

## 19. DISCLOSURE

20. As many disabilities are not obvious Pharez College has to rely on the staff member or applicant making a disclosure about their disability. It is understood individuals are often reluctant to do this because they fear discrimination, and feel it is not relevant in respect of being able to do the job. However, if staff or applicants know about Pharez College's disability policy and in particular our willingness to make reasonable adjustments, they will be much more inclined to disclose, including invisible disabilities.

21. Disclosure can be beneficial for the following reasons:

- the stress of not divulging a disability can exacerbate the person's difficulties at work or study;
- the employee and manager, or tutor and student, can together determine what adjustments, if any, would maintain or improve working conditions;
- the support of fellow workers can be enlisted.

## 22. CONFIDENTIALITY

23. Under legislation it is imperative that we safeguard the confidentiality of personal and medical information. When a person's disability status is known, all unnecessary and potentially damaging disclosures will be avoided. Disclosure will only occur:

- with the explicit consent of the individual
- when it helps to facilitate the person's ability to do the job
- if it is absolutely necessary within the law

24. The applicant or employee will always be informed about the purposes for which the personal information will be used.

25. The Equality Act makes it unlawful, except in certain circumstances, for employers to ask about a candidate's health before offering them work.

## **26. DISABILITY POLICY: “REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS”**

### **Central Issues (for all Subjects):**

- To ensure equal access to education as per those without disability.

### **To Achieve this:**

- “Reasonable Adjustments” to be employed by teachers in and out of lecture room to prevent substantial disadvantage to the disabled student.

NB: We are not legally obliged to provide auxiliary aids, (laptop, hearing loop) or particular services as a private college.

### **So what are the “reasonable adjustments” which can be made within the lecture room to accommodate those students with disability without prejudice to other students’ education and progress?**

(e.g. by covering the syllabus more slowly at the pace manageable by the disabled student, this may be detrimental to other students’ educational progress). These will be different in each case and an ILP will be agreed between the student and the College.

## **27. MINOR BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS (all students)**

- Listen to students – give them time to explain their misbehaviour
- Handle misbehaviour quickly and calmly to minimise disruption. Do not over react
- Move round the lecture room, constantly scanning the lecture for misbehaviour
- Avoid confrontation. Change the subject, defuse the situation, use humour and negotiate
- Display lecture room rules. Phrase the rules positively, refer to them regularly and be consistent
- Condemn and criticise the misbehaviour and not the student
- Catch the student being good. Emphasise the positive
- Reprimand the student privately. Do not humiliate him/her publicly
- Reward good behaviour instantly with praise and encouragement.
- Gain student attention by stopping talking mid-sentence. Say something unexpected; say the student’s name, make a joke or say ‘Look at me’; ‘Listen to me’, or ‘Excuse me’
- Use non-verbal cues: raising eyebrows, frowning, being silent, making direct eye contact, moving near the student, moving the student to the front of the lecture
- Give the student a lecture room responsibility
- Ensure that lessons are well structured. Give clear and concise instructions and explanations

## **28. ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER ADHD**

- Give the student stimulating curriculum materials to sustain interest.
- Accept use of laptop, word-processor in lesson and/or for homework
- Test via multiple-choice, ask for the student’s ideas and input
- Allow less homework to be done by that student. Ensure homework is recorded correctly
- Worksheets. Useful for structure to break up tasks into smaller bits
- Use visual and diagrammatic approach to learning, mind-mapping
- Set short structured and active tasks over shorter period of time
- Use student’s name as a key or cue for response
- Only call upon when hand is up as needed, then praise for not calling out

- Arrange a common cue system for student to stay on task (it is important that other students are unaware of the system (e.g. place a hand on the desk whilst walking past)
- Praise to raise feel-good factor and thus focus on lesson
- Care with group work and unstructured and/or long tasks
- Keep instructions short and clear, preferably written, and positive
- Set lesson goals and week goals.

## **29. IMPULSIVE**

- Ignore minor inappropriate behaviour
- Only call upon when hand is up or conforms to required behaviour
- Keep instructions short
- Increased speed of reward and consequence

## **30. HEARING IMPAIRED**

- Seated at front of the lecture where student can see the tutor clearly
- Back to the window to avoid silhouette effect
- Adequate lighting to facilitate lip-reading
- Background noise in lecture room reduced, e.g. windows closed
- A variety of teaching styles, e.g. paired discussion, worksheets
- Reduction in the amount of verbal information and planning so that no need to listen for an extended period which is very tiring, and lessons more accessible
- New vocabulary to be given or displayed in written form prior to lesson
- Copies of OHP to be provided and core lesson notes to help revision
- Salient discussion points on board or repeated to whole lecture
- Attention to be drawn to the speaker for student to focus on
- Agreed non-verbal signal to indicate student has not understood comment or concept in a lesson
- Bright lights can be a distraction
- TV video should have sub-titles
- Arrange for note-taker to have copies of notes if needed
- Check homework is understood
- Warn the student about a loud noise e.g. fire bell

## **31. ASPERGER'S SYNDROME**

- Sequence activities
- Identify the main idea in new information
- Use prompts to enable the student to commence tasks
- Check that the student understands what she has to do
- Give one instruction at a time
- Introduce choice in tasks gradually to develop decision-making skills
- Show the student what is expected by demonstration
- Use visual or pictorial cues to make a task clear and aid understanding
- Be calm, positive and consistent with the student
- Identify the student's interests and likes and incorporate these into curriculum activities
- Introduce any change gradually to the student
- Need to differentiate pace, content, methodology in lecture room
- Take account of social communication difficulties with other students
- Extended writing tasks to be broken up into smaller sections
- Ability levels can be very high and need challenging and stimulating materials
- Concentration span can be short however

- Need to understand someone else's view and respond appropriately
- Helpful to have daily contact with significant adult
- Must have structure and routine to reduce anxiety about change
- Strategies to organise work, timetable, homework, books, times
- Clear lines of behaviour expected and maintained
- Short and long term targets for ILP to be the focus for progress

### **32. DYSLEXIA**

- Break down tasks, information or instructions into smaller parts
- Ensure that differentiated work matches reading level and is age appropriate
- Display key words / subject vocabulary on lecture room walls and provide word banks
- Provide photocopied notes and highlight or underline key words and phrases in the text
- Allow alternative methods of recording, e.g. computer, verbal response, graphical representation
- Give extra time for completing written tasks at home and in lecture
- Provide support for writing, e.g. writing frames, grids, flow diagrams, brainstorming, model / demonstrate
- Ensure homework is recorded accurately and repeat instructions
- Make use of rhymes, acronyms or visual methods to aid memory
- Mark work on content rather than on spelling

### **33. DYSCALCULIA**

- Put a list of numbers with their spellings (1-100) on a prompt card
- Give the student a set of mathematics symbol cards with the range of names for each symbol
- Provide an audiotape with multiplication tables on for home / lecture use
- Provide support materials, e.g. number square, number line, calculator, counters, large decimal point
- Head number columns (Hundreds / Tens / Units) to assist with place value
- Use arrows to help students know which direction to perform a calculation in
- Model a method of calculation and put this in the student's exercise book
- Allow the student to use her own method of calculation if it produces the correct answer consistently and is acceptable within the requirements of examinations
- Break down mathematical problems into smaller steps
- If the student is also dyslexic, audio tape 'wordy' problem solving questions

### **34. DYSPRAXIA**

- Break down tasks and instructions into smaller parts
- Pair a dyspraxic student with a more coordinated supportive peer in practical activities
- Use pictures, symbols, modelling and demonstration
- Repeat instructions
- Ensure homework is recorded accurately
- Praise effort and attainment, however small
- Provide additional time during practical tasks
- Cut out shapes for students beforehand
- Encourage the student to self-correct her own work or behaviour
- Use colour coding for left and right

### **35. VISUAL IMPAIRMENT**

Visual impairment can be classified in many different ways:

- Restrictions in the visual field
- Difficulties with scanning
- Gross distortion of what is being seen and perceived
- Difficulties with visual fixation
- Problems in maintaining and changing focus at long and short distances
- Distortions in colour perception
- Visual fatigue
- Additional time is required to process visual information
- Colour blindness

The implications for learning for students with visual impairment will depend on a number of factors:

- The age of onset of the eye condition
- Parental and family attitude
- Motivation and general intelligence level of the student
- Social and emotional security of the student
- The level of visual discomfort and fatigue
- The pace of learning may be slower, especially in subjects that are highly visual
- Incidental learning and the basic knowledge of everyday objects and experiences is restricted by visual impairment
- Progress may not be an accurate reflection of a student's true ability
- Holding a book close to the eyes will not harm vision, and for some students, it may be the only way of getting the print into focus
- Having a visual impairment does not necessarily mean that other senses, such as hearing, are highly developed

### **36. Strategies to support learning:**

- Encourage the student to use word processing
- Allow the use of a lap top, which has the facility for different sizes of print, in lecture
- Encourage the use of specialist software like *TextHelp* which provides the facility for all text on the computer screen to be read aloud by a computer voice
- Encourage the student to use a hand-held tape recorder for making notes and also for submitting homework

A student with visual impairment may qualify for special arrangements for external examinations.

### **37. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

38. The Principal, Heads of Departments/Divisions, and all those in managerial positions have a particular responsibility to ensure implementation of the College's Equal Opportunity policies and procedures.

39. Every individual working within the College has responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. The College has a responsibility to avoid discrimination in the areas of:

- recruitment
- training and development

- career development
- redundancy and dismissal
- day to day working life

40. Everyone working for Pharez College, and those responsible for procuring services for the College, are responsible for ensuring that non-discriminatory policies and procedures are in place in order to avoid discrimination against disabled staff, clients and visitors.

41. In addition, all staff have a responsibility to avoid, and to challenge the victimisation or harassment of disabled people.

42. If any member of staff believes they have been treated in a way that is contrary to this policy, concerns should be raised with someone in authority who is in a position to take appropriate action, e.g. a HOD, the Administration Manager or Welfare Adviser, or a College Disability Support Contact.

#### **43. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

44. Pharez College is committed to conducting transparent monitoring to make the College fully accessible for all.

45. The College's Disability Equality Policy is published on the web. This policy sets out the wide range of support and provision for disabled staff and students, along with a comprehensive action plan which is kept under regular review by the Disability Action Committee.

46. Annual audits of performance are reviewed at Management Board and Committee meetings.

Created: August 2013  
Next review Date: August 2014