

## Procedure for Students with Special Needs

While the organizational ideology of respect for diversity in all forms precludes the classification of students according to the special needs they may present, MODUL University Vienna nevertheless requires a formalized procedure for acknowledging the existence of special needs and granting special consideration according to the guiding principle of equal opportunity. This document outlines the procedure employed by the University in order to identify and verify student claims of special needs, and to work in collaboration with students to develop personalized strategies to accommodate their differences and expand their opportunities while ensuring equitable treatment for all students and maintaining the academic standards of the university.

### Identifying Special Needs

The underlying principles are that it is the responsibility of the student (or potential student) to bring any special needs to the attention of the University, and that this should be done prior to the commencement of studies (new student) and no later than two weeks into the semester (existing student). Issues may be raised during the admissions process in the case of prospective students, or with any faculty and/or staff members in the case of existing students. The most appropriate contact points for existing students are:

- Open Office mentors
- SSC representatives
- the Gender & Diversity Party (GDP)
- the Dean of the respective program

It is the responsibility of the University to ensure that this initial contact is easy for the student and treated confidentially. At this time, the student should be made aware of, and directed to, this document as well as the Special Needs Consideration Form (available in the Student Service Center and on the website; a reference to these documents is also included in each study contract). In the interest of fairness to all students, all claims for special consideration must be supported by official documentation. The following professionals are endorsed to substantiate such claims:

- Doctors
- Psychologists
- Government Health Departments
- Other (to be determined on a case-by-case basis)

It should be noted, however, that the presentation of a prima facie case of special needs does not imply automatic acceptance by the University or the granting of special consideration. Rather, these outcomes are determined through the consultative process detailed below. In cases where a claim cannot be verified or is otherwise determined to be suspicious, MODUL University Vienna may rely on an external expert to act as an advisor and mediator for the case in question. The choice of expert will depend on the nature of the claim.

### **Requesting Special Consideration/Academic Accommodations**

Students with special needs who wish to receive special consideration must complete the Special Needs Consideration Form and submit official documentation. Registration is a voluntary, confidential process and must occur prior to the commencement of studies (new student) and no later than two weeks into the semester (existing student). MODUL University Vienna uses a consultative review process to develop personalized, academic accommodations for students with special needs. Students are required to follow MODUL University Vienna's procedures for requesting accommodations as outlined below:

- Submit complete Special Needs Consideration Form
- Submit official documentation
- Special Needs Committee convenes to verify claim
- Special Needs Committee meets with student
- Lecturer(s) is/are informed via Letter of Accommodation
- Outcome is documented

### **Complete Special Needs Consideration Form**

Students who wish to receive special consideration must complete a Special Needs Consideration Form available in the Student Service Center and on the website.

### **Submit Documentation**

Students must submit official documentation that verifies their claim, identifies its functional impact, and establishes a link between this impact and the need for developing personalized academic accommodations. Please submit to: [gdp@modul.ac.at](mailto:gdp@modul.ac.at).

### **Special Needs Committee Verification**

The Special Needs Committee, consisting of the student's Open Office mentor, the Dean, a representative of the GDP, and the external expert (where necessary) meet to review and verify the student claim.

### **Special Needs Committee Meeting**

Once the Special Needs Committee has reviewed and verified the student claim, the student must meet with the Special Needs Committee to determine appropriate accommodations. No formal regulations will be formed about the types of special needs which will be considered or the management of specific cases as this would contradict the idea of diversity. Rather, arrangements for special needs will be decided on an individual case-by-case basis according to the general guideline that modes of teaching or examining may be adapted, but that learning objectives and target competencies must never be compromised. Furthermore, it will be decided during this meeting if the student or a member of the Special Needs Committee will communicate with the respective lecturer(s) about implementing the approved accommodations.

### **Documentation of Outcome**

The student will receive a Letter of Accommodation that states the outcome of the decision of the Special Needs Committee including any and all approved accommodations. The Letter of Accommodation may be subject to renewal. The original Special Needs Consideration Form together with the Letter of Accommodation will be included in the student's record located in the Academic Office.