

# Restoring dignity for students with disabilities at South African universities

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## Abstract

Sections 3 and 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 state that one automatically has inherent dignity upon gaining South African citizenship. However, students with disabilities perceive that South African universities focus more on acknowledging and recognising dignity while struggling to promote respect for and the protection of individuals with a disability from the stages of studentship, all the way from application to graduation. These perceptions imply abuses against minors with disabilities that negatively affect their dignity. For this reason, the intention to promote respect for and the protection of students with disabilities at South African universities presents an interesting case that warrants examination. A qualitative research approach was preferred for this study in order to indicate those key areas where the dignity of particular individuals was jeopardised. Self-administered questionnaires were given to 15 focus groups of students with disabilities at Walter Sisulu University, who were selected through key informant sampling. This was followed by a semi-structured interview schedule to cover identified gaps in the Walter Sisulu University's policies and practices. A survey research design was chosen to enable the observation of students with disabilities in their physical environments. Content analysis was used to analyse the collected data. The findings indicate that various interventions, such as disability-specific educational, training and development programmes, are essential to imparting significant knowledge and skills about matters of disability. Recommendations include fostering strong collaborations and partnerships with key stakeholders for meaningful engagement, establishing structures and platforms where students with disabilities participate proactively, and the introduction of prescribed quotas of students with disabilities by the Department of Higher Education and Training to reflect on what South African universities preach.

**Keywords:** disability, acknowledgement, recognition, respect, protection

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## 1. Introduction

Despite the challenging nature of South Africa's shift to a more integrated society, students with disabilities continue to enrol at and attend all levels and sectors of education. Parker (2022) praised the South African government for advancing initiatives and implementing programmes that popularise dignity in a meaningful way for students with disabilities and dispel the stigmas associated with those disabilities. Meanwhile, the Education White Paper 3 on Higher Education (1997), Education White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education (2001) and the National Plan for Higher Education (2001) strongly prohibit discrimination and emphasise the importance of operationalising South African universities to strengthen the inclusion of students with disabilities in the academic environment. Nevertheless, South African universities encounter obstacles that hinder attempts to abandon discriminatory practices and which discourage the inclusion of students with various disabilities. This researcher believes that accessibility is the key element to restoring dignity to students with disabilities from the time of their application until their graduation. The mandate should be to ensure that students with disabilities are able to demonstrate their independence safely in their academic achievement and career performance.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 Perception about disability modalities

Students are considered to have a disability if they have a chronic or recurring illness and/or an impairment identified by a physician or a specialist and they experience difficulty in performing tasks independently (White Paper on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2016). Universities in South Africa are warned to focus on obstacles or barriers rather than on students' impairments; to concentrate on students' abilities rather than their disabilities; and to consider such students as normal rather than special when portraying 'disabilities'.

#### 2.1.1 Types of disability at South African universities

WHO (2021) indicated that approximately 7.5% of South Africa's population have various types of disability. Furthermore, the report titled *Statistics on Disabled Students in Higher Education* (2021) reveals that approximately 2.7% of South African university students have been diagnosed with one or more disabilities. By admitting students with disabilities to their campuses, South African universities are obliged to prioritise the expectations of this category, provided they are cognisant of the fundamental attributes of a disability (Klein, 2018).





Rugwiji (2012) has identified several types of disability that South African universities commonly admit to being in evidence on their campuses:

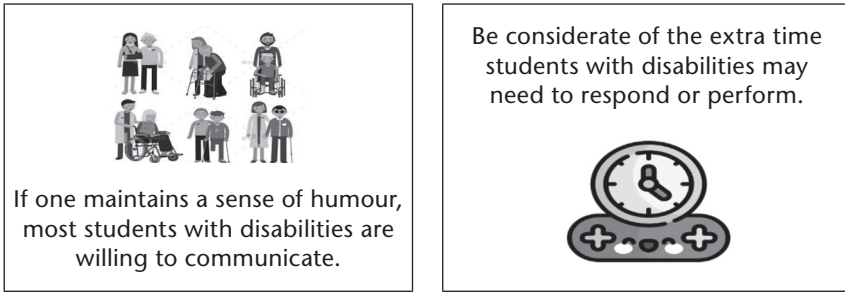
- learning – dyslexia, autism and other attention-deficit disorders;
- mental or emotional – psychological, psychiatric illness or condition;
- visual or blindness;
- deafness or hearing – hard or low hearing, speech impairment;
- physical or mobility – amputation, paraplegia, cerebral palsy;
- other types – chronic conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes and arthritis.

Some impairments are temporary, whereas others are permanent, and they range from moderate to severe. Some students have disabilities or conditions from birth whereas others have disabilities or conditions that result from accidents.

2.1.2 *Interaction styles for students with disabilities at South African universities*

Dube and Mont (2021) concur with Sawubona Disability (2011) that the population with disabilities should adopt these specified interaction styles:

 <p>Listen attentively and ask for specific instructions, being polite and patient when assisting.</p>	<p>If offered assistance, wait until the offer is accepted or, in some instances, it may be refused.</p> 
 <p>Avoid asking personal questions about a student's disability, which are sensitive and/or emotional issues.</p>	<p>In cases where a mistake occurs, apologise immediately, especially if one senses that it has caused embarrassment.</p> 



**Figure 1:** Individuals with disabilities adopt these specified interaction styles

Source: Dube and Mont, 2021

Because every type of disability is unique and distinct, more research needs to be conducted to equip South African universities with a comprehensive understanding of how to deal with such individuals and to communicate with, instruct and assess each individual separately, while integrating appropriate assistive manual aids and electronic devices to cater to their needs.

## 2.2 South African universities' practices hindering dignity of students with disabilities

South African universities give preference to students with disabilities who are tolerant and can cope easily on their own with less supportive equipment. Consequently, students with disabilities declare that a lack of accessibility preparedness forces them to navigate inappropriate environments, causing them to pursue qualifications that are not their preferred choice, place academic and personal growth at risk, and feel frustrated and isolated. To reduce undignified practices, South African universities are reminded to conduct regular reflection and evaluation sessions with a view to filling identified gaps and developing new advances (Mokoena, 2020).

### 2.2.1 Variance in accessibility

The researcher agrees with O'Ferrall (2018) that accessibility is about the design of a service or a product, or a device or an activity, that is usable by students with disabilities, even though it is a multifaceted and intricate item. Students with disabilities concede that prioritising accessibility helps them to succeed academically and otherwise, which correlates with Gwala's (2023) opinion that accessibility is crucial to the survival and success of this group in all spheres of life.

### **Participatory**

Students with disabilities rarely demonstrate an interest in the academic and social activities at universities, despite the growing interest in inclusive South African universities (Barnes & Mercer, 2010). As an illustration, consider a situation in which students with impairments participate and perform poorly in discussions due to a surfeit of poorly accessible venues.

### **Perceptually**

Perceptual accessibility describes a scenario in which a student with a disability must adjust to an unpleasant environment to reach a specific destination, relying on only one or more of the five senses: smell, touch, hearing, sight, and movement (Groeger, 2012; Negm et al, 2012). For example, a student who is blind or visually impaired is made to listen hesitantly to familiar voices reciting instructions on how to reach to the desired destination.

### **Participatory**

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### **Financially**

Demirgüç-Kunt, Feyen and Levine (2012) call for financial assistance for students with disabilities to ensure that their financial accessibility is attained. The aim is to ensure that such students are not denied admission to higher education or drop out due to the unavailability of funds or because of insufficient funds to purchase extremely needed assistive technological or manual devices and to provide a human assistant or a sign language interpreter daily to help them to fulfil their academic dreams. For example, a student using a wheelchair, a student with a visual or a hearing impairment, or those with chronic conditions such as severe epilepsy. In the context of universities in South Africa, the financial needs of students with disabilities, apart from the costs of tuition, books, accommodation plus meals, extra devices such as a wheelchair, a hearing aid, Zoom Text software or a Jaws Reader, computer or any other device should be based on the recommendation of a qualified health professional.

#### *2.2.2 Inadequate adherence to legal requirements*

Deliberate progress in satisfying the needs, demands and expectations of students with disabilities by South African universities persists. This despite the interventions by the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) and the existence of specific policies, norms, standards, strategies, rules and regulations with the most positive intentions of creating a welcoming environment or such students on their campuses.

The task of compliance with the legal frameworks on South African university campuses is assigned to managers who are responsible for directing academic and support services. However, these leaders have declared that they are illiterate about disability matters and, in addition, that they are burdened by financial constraints that prevent them from performing this function effectively (Chirowamhangu, 2024; Wits DRU, 2024).

### *2.2.3 Inadequate support from top management*

A number of universities in South Africa strive to support students with disabilities. However, only about 30% have the appropriate devices, resources, expertise and skills to support these individuals on their campuses properly (Dube, 2025). The shortage of support for those students with disabilities is exacerbated by the lack of dedicated personnel assigned to the disabled units on campuses (Sibanda & Nyoni, 2021). Apart from displaying slow progress in dealing with the obstacles that students with disabilities face, this group of managers provides superficial answers characterised by a lack of compassion (Chimwaza, 2025). For example, eliminating the discretion exercised by South African universities in admissions: this approach enables these universities to adjudicate on which students with disabilities to admit, decisions that are influenced by and contingent upon the classification of disabilities.

## **2.3 Strategies to elevate dignity of students with disabilities at universities in South Africa**

Implementing strategies can enhance the educational experience of students with disabilities at universities in South Africa (Molefe, 2023), despite the existence of various obstacles. Following these strategies encourages South African universities to nurture the acknowledgment and recognition of disabilities, in so doing increasing respect and protection for students with disabilities.

### *2.3.1 Comprehensive mentoring initiative*

According to a 2024 poll by the South African Student Union (SASU), students with disabilities frequently experience stress, anxiety and fear regarding their academic careers. By connecting students with disabilities to role models with impairments through digital media and in-person platforms, daily mentorship programmes create a supportive network that empowers these students. Similarly, mentoring can enhance students' confidence and trust, advancing friendships that encourage students with disabilities to pursue and take on leadership roles in their communities and build a sense of belonging in various

community structures. However, counselling programmes and services tailored to respond to the emotional, psychological, spiritual and mental aspects of living with a disability are also essential.

### *2.3.2 Provision of assistive technology and inclusive infrastructure equipment*

Some South African universities are indeed making progress by updating their existing buildings and adhering to disability-accessible building regulations when designing new ones (National strategic framework on reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities, 2020). This includes increasing the number of ramps, elevators, spacious restrooms and quiet spaces, all of which significantly enhance the daily experience of students with disabilities. Where equipment is lacking, conducting hands-on facility audits to ensure compliance with the national guidelines to deal with the identified barriers is crucial (Duma, 2024). The Framework for Disability Inclusion in Higher Education (DHET, 2020) emphasised the value of accessible technology and advocated learning management systems that can adapt to varying needs and ensure that every student with a disability can participate fully in their education.

### *2.3.3 Adaptable assessment methods*

Alternative assessment methods enable students with disabilities to showcase their mastery of content and context in their unique learning environments. According to Miller and Garcia (2024), among other methods, peer reviews, group projects and oral presentations manifest positive engagement and demonstrate the skills of students with disabilities. Such methods reflect a commitment to implementing diverse forms of intelligence, encouraging evaluations to consider each student's unique preferences and learning styles. As stated by Rogers and Johnson (2018), some students with disabilities may excel in presentations or writing assignments conducted during non-traditional hours; in contrast, others might perform better in simulated assessments than in traditional tests.

### *2.3.4 Campaigns for sensitisation*

According to Smith and Johnson (2024) and Peters (2025), in South African universities, the sensitisation phenomenon divulges unknown truths about facets of disability that are intertwined with the significance of dignity for students with disabilities and the broader university community consisting of able students, faculty members and other employers and employees. The South African Disability Alliance (SADA) launched sensitisation programmes, following a

storytelling trend by students with disabilities, that contributed positively to the university community and its surrounding society. Ngubane (2024) notes that the proactiveness of these campaigns combat stigma and dispel the myths associated with disability. Hill and Ponder (1976) emphasised well-planned orientation sessions in which each structure at the university clearly articulates its roles in promoting acknowledgment, recognition, respect and protection to mitigate undignified situations. These programmes not only enable students with disabilities to become more ethical, but also inspire their peers and colleagues to engage in all aspects of campus life and university affairs. Campus student councils are encouraged to advocate disability issues that are underpinned by respect for and the protection of the voices of students with disabilities in decision-making and implementation processes (Ramabulana, 2024).

### **3. Research methodology and design**

The qualitative research method is associated with a descriptive research design that is aligned with the interpretivist paradigm, which focuses on a survey research design that was applied to this study. The objective of using this methodology was to examine the relationship between the restoration of dignity and students with disabilities at South African universities, cascading down to Walter Sisulu University. Purposive convenient sampling was selected to form a sample of students with disabilities as key informants. Semi-structured questionnaires were administered to 15 ( $n = 15$ ) students with disabilities across four campuses of Walter Sisulu University, followed by interviews to deal with any identified gaps. Focus groups were recorded to gather their perceptions of acknowledgment, recognition, respect and projection towards them throughout their academic paths, from application to graduation. Data were systematically collected and content analysis tools were used to analyse general explanations in specific contexts with a view to producing the findings (Creswell, 2013).

### **4. Findings and discussion**

Students with disabilities at Walter Sisulu University perceive the signs of undermining, non-remembrance, non-considering and a feeling of insecurity as being linked to a sense of a lack of safety, which signs tend to undermine their dignity on their respective campuses.

#### **4.1 Findings**

The opinions of some of the students with disabilities who were members of the study cohort are shared below. They represent the experiences of this entire group.



The student with a partially blind disability had the following to say about the actual outcome of their expressed choice of a field of study:

'My first choice of course last year was Accounting Studies with the idea to ensure that my parents' spaza is sustainable but I received confirmation that I was admitted to Public Relations, another type of diploma.'

A student with a hearing disability shared the following unfortunate experience:

'I was diagnosed with hearing impairment four years ago. My parents chose Education, seeing teaching opportunities as a teacher, for example at Efata School for the Deaf and Blind, but I find myself in the Bachelor of Social Sciences. I urge the university to assist me to go back to Education, and ensure I get NSFAS especially that the university employed a sign language interpreter now. Not relying on my colleagues' notes to read them.'

Other students with different types of mobility impairment explained that they are admitted and registered in various diploma programmes on various campuses:

'Some of us accepted diplomas we had never known.'

'We are not happy with how spaces for wheelchairs are arranged. Where space reserved is awkward, we feel isolated from our non-disabled friends and sometimes do not hear and see properly.'

Students with partial visual impairment pursuing a Diploma in Public Relations at various levels shared the following positive and negative experiences:

'Yes, we have been accepted to those courses we ticked first.'

'We find it difficult to cope with our studies, the majority of our lecturers ignore us and continue as if everything is normal. They do not know how to handle us, rely on our classmates to grasp what is done in class, especially if conducted online.'

Students with dwarfism disabilities reported on their negative experiences, as expressed by this particular student:

'The university never creates space for us, students with dwarfism disabilities to get support devices like a footplate, armrest, electric lift for height. Fortunately, as beneficiaries of NSFAS after April, we were able to have these support devices. To survive in this institution, one must advocate very strongly.'

The following experience was common to students with hearing and visual impairments:

'I was told to register four subjects, each with two modules per semester, thus eight modules. Trying, but difficult to cope and I fear failing some of the modules.'

A student with a mobility disability and epilepsy confirmed that he did not disclose his disability, fearing the way he would be judged. Of his graduation he wrote as follows:

‘Although I felt excited when my sister checked my portal and found that I am due to graduate, I thought I would get a separate request checking if I would require any assistance. As a result, I arrived before to be near the university, slept in my friend’s room at the university and with his friends he assisted me. Anyway, I was happy to see my picture on the university website.’

#### *4.1.1 Inadequate application and admission processes*

Students with disabilities at Walter Sisulu University stated that when engaging with the application and admission processes, they often feel like scaling an insurmountable wall, which leads to their viewing themselves as second-class citizens in the academic system. All of the applicants conform to the procedures specified in the Institutional Admissions and Registration Guidelines, with the exception that every stage must be completed online without external intervention. The disclosure of various types of impairment is minimal, and is provided for adequately only for physical and/or mental disabilities. Applicants with deafness or hearing and visual impairments revealed that they rely solely on friends and/or family members to navigate and fill in the application forms successfully. As a result, they end up being admitted to qualifications they had never dreamed of. Such choices jeopardise students with disabilities’ career and professional expectations and place their prospects at risk.

#### *4.1.2 Difficulties in using registration system and course selection*

Although certain dates are dedicated to students with disabilities to register peacefully and successfully, those assisting them are not trained to cope with their expectations either online or face to face. This leads these students to struggle with selecting appropriate subjects and/or module combinations and resorting to conforming to what they are told to do. Realising that the final actual selection demolishes their dreams, they eventually discontinue their studies because of this mismatch.

#### *4.1.3 Obstacles in the instructional setting*

Lecturers play a vital role in implementing accessible teaching and learning environments. However, many lack an understanding of and/or training in inclusive teaching practices, including the absence of essential accessibility elements such as captions and audio descriptions. This results in missed opportunities for their engagement with students

with disabilities as they concentrate at best only on those students with slight disabilities who would easily understand the module content. Furthermore, their instructional materials and learning management systems are either inaccessible or poorly accessible to some students with disabilities. These restrictions put students with disabilities at a significant disadvantage against those who are able, and this not only reduces their eagerness to participate but also leads to their dropping out instead of completing their qualifications.

#### *4.1.4 Lack of preparedness for graduation attendance*

This is an unforgettable moment convincing everyone: ‘Nothing About Us Without Us.’ Although in some instances the graduation team is aware of the special needs of those students with disabilities, on this particular day there was no evidence of concrete, specific and clear plans for those students with disabilities during the graduation preparations – except the presence of an assigned sign language interpreter in the graduation venues. The burden consequently falls on family members or friends to ensure that the student’s dignity is restored during the graduation ceremony.

## **4.2 Discussion**

### *4.2.1 Acknowledgement and recognition*

Chapman et al (2024) share the same sentiment as Mutanga (2017) that acknowledgment differs from actually recognising the applicant with an impairment. According to these authors, acknowledgement is the action of accepting the truth. For instance, the university uses assistive devices, which implies that it has accepted the reality that there are students who are disabled. As stated by Laitinen (2011), recognition involves embracing specific types of disability; for instance, the policies targeting this type of category are developed together with them rather than for them. Walter Sisulu University has made significant progress in acknowledging and recognising students with disabilities, which is greatly appreciated by this category of students.

### *4.2.2 Respect and protection*

Smith and Jones (2020) view respect as a sense of fulfilment in treating students with disabilities with appreciation and positive gestures. Furthermore, Brown and Taylor (2023) affirm that respect entails valuing students with disabilities. Protection ensures safeguarding the well-being of students with disabilities from harm both on and off campus (Jones & Ngcobo, 2021) and also eliminating incidents of bullying and discrimination. For example, a student with a mental impairment and a student with mobility restrictions cannot be treated

equally when formative and summative assessments are conducted owing to the differences in their level of thinking, the time required to complete tasks and, consequently, their levels of focus.

#### 4.2.3 *Shaping respect and protection for students with disabilities at Walter Sisulu University*

A one-size-fits-all strategy cannot fit everyone; therefore, the insertion of clauses that accommodate the needs of students with disabilities could progressively strengthen excellence on its campuses. Closing the gaps from application to graduation would lead to doubts about students with disabilities choosing to study at Walter Sisulu University being dispelled and any unwillingness to accept such students being overcome.



**Figure 2:** A variety of assistive devices and technology for different types of disability

The installation on their smartphones of built-in tools and also visual and hearing apps from Apple and Android for students with a visual or blindness impairment, technological braille aids and screen-reading enlargement aids should be a standard procedure. Adding caption features which transcribe the audio that plays on any app of a student with a hearing impairment smartphone as well as the permanent employment of sign language interpreters for communication purposes to the entire university would be some ways in which the university could proactively accommodate the needs of such students. These could also encourage the university to employ academics with a hearing or deafness impairment. In addition, the universities should take advantage of the availability of mobile aids that include wheelchairs, walkers, scooters, crutches, canes, and prosthetic and orthotic devices for students with a mobility impairment. Physiopedic devices such as software, memory aids, educational software, and speech recognition and voice recording for students with a mental

or emotional impairment should also be considered as essential aids. For students with dwarfism impairment, an electric elevator, adaptive furniture, a footplate and additional means of comfort would be necessary aids. In particular, the revival of the Institutional Disability Support Services Unit with a more meaningful structure is imperative if Walter Sisulu University is to confirm its commitment to admitting or accepting students with an impairment on its various campuses.

Other areas in which students with disabilities at Walter Sisulu University can be accommodated more effectively are these: revisiting and updating application forms, the university's general website and any guidelines affecting students with an impairment, where necessary. These should include application and graduation forms, the institution's structures website on which the correct, relevant and current email addresses and crucial particulars that would direct students with disabilities to the required destination should either be inserted or updated.

In addition, driving and coordinating the in-and-out-work training and development programmes for all stakeholders inside and outside the university should form part of the administration, management and leadership tasked with dealing with students with disabilities. If necessary, the university must purchase an institutional licence for all disability software.

## **5. Conclusion**

Poor acknowledgement, a lack of formal recognition, a lack of respect and slim protection measures lead to an undignified experience for students with disabilities, which ultimately damages such students' well-being, health and ambitions. In today's world, education is an important pillar of personal growth and social development, especially in South Africa. However, students with disabilities often face many obstacles that hinder their academic journey at their universities and campus facilities. It is essential to enter into meaningful discourse about the need to restore dignity to these students and to ensure that they receive equitable treatment, adequate support and full inclusion in the university environment and activities. To fulfil the promise of education for everyone completely, it is important that all students receive not only acknowledgement and recognition, but also the respect and protection they deserve at the university. South African universities must adopt and embrace the role of masters of inclusion, steering the narrative towards a future in which all students can thrive, free of the constraints of prejudice or negligence. Through their collective efforts and commitment, the universities in South Africa can serve as an exemplary model of inclusiveness, injecting transformation in order to ensure that all students are able to thrive with dignity.

## **6. Recommendations**

### **6.1 Disability Students Society**

The significance of the Disability Students Society cannot be overstated. It is a place where students with disabilities can amplify their voices and advocate their rights, which are likely to lead to changes and developments that promote accessibility and inclusivity. Moreover, the Disability Students Society can provide meaningful support to students with disabilities through mentorship and empowerment programmes, academic support services and social events. For instance, mentoring and motivational programmes can suggest and enable students with disabilities to become involved in sports suited to them, and help them to plan their activities and events. Also, it acts as a platform for students with disabilities to share their strengths, achievements, weaknesses, challenges, opportunities and threats. The idea is to create a sense of solidarity among students with disabilities who often face similar barriers and obstacles. The Disability Students Society can also learn from other existing student societies at Walter Sisulu University and adopt similar strategies that create a more equitable and accessible learning environment. It is time for Walter Sisulu University to be the first to ensure that the Disability Students Society takes its rightful place and shapes the future of the university.

### **6.2 Disability units at South African universities**

Most universities in South Africa do not have independent emails that are dedicated to disability units; only a minority provide well-detailed contact with their key staff, including providing their emails. The key functions should be:

- (i) consider the database of students with disabilities;
- (ii) provide the most important support services and intervene when students with disabilities are inappropriately and unfairly treated;
- (iii) sensitise and train staff, students and stakeholders and design appropriate mechanisms to curb obstacles to disabilities;
- (iv) facilitate programmes that foster a positive self-concept and high self-esteem in such students;
- (v) take explicit account of the needs of students with disabilities in planning, maintaining and upgrading the university's facilities; and
- (vi) be proactive in developing policies for students with disabilities, making changes and amendments where necessary, where a secondment appointment would find it difficult to cope.

To fulfil these key functions, the disability unit at South African universities should be led by a professional with suitable appropriate qualification(s) and a wealth of knowledge, experience and skills. Such a unit should be entrusted with and devote its undivided attention to the management, administration and strategic leadership of students with disabilities, aiming to focus on their needs and expectations. For example, hiring this person to focus on students with disabilities at Walter Sisulu University will respond to those issues noted by the former deputy national minister responsible for the Department of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities during their 2011 and 2014 university visits, and the recommendation made by the Higher Education Qualification Committee.

### 6.3 Comprehensive handbook

To guarantee the accessibility of information, a thorough handbook must be developed and published. This handbook should contain guidance, direction, control, maintenance, and monitoring and evaluation, providing both the institutions and the individuals with a disability with support and direction from the time of their application to their graduation. This handbook should

- include a brief description of each disability;
- explain in detail how to manage, interact with, instruct and evaluate students with disabilities;
- include a list of the support services on each campus or site; and
- provide contact information for all of the faculties, departments and structures at the university.

Each university should be proactive in its marketing strategy, disseminate designed leaflets, brochures, newsletters, and sell branded items to enhance the exposure of the university to its broader community. Pertinent information about and the contact details of the Institutional Disability Support Services Unit must be included in each faculty prospectus and departmental brochure. The goal is to educate society and the university community while increasing future awareness of disability concerns.

### 6.4 Collaboration and partnership

Collaboration and partnership are essential phenomena that should serve to improve the inclusion efforts that South African universities pursue with local, regional, national and international stakeholders, organisations, institutions, civil society and interest groups. The universities must also engage with such third parties and sign

agreements through their Internationalisation and Partnership Unit. For instance, instead of denying access to those with a severe disability, the individuals could be admitted to and registered with a less resourced facility while attending and being assessed at a well-resourced one. Artificial intelligence technology tools also create spaces for students with disabilities to maintain and deliver an exceptionally fair and integrated learning experience. As a result, it is appropriate for South African universities to initiate quotas not only to ensure the growth of the population of students with disabilities in higher education, but also to solve the problem of those students who are admitted being limited to those with only certain types of disability.

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