



**Weill Cornell  
Medicine-Qatar**

## **Disability Accommodation Policy**

### **Introduction**

**Disability** is defined by *The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* as "... a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities." Such impairments may include physical, sensory, and cognitive or intellectual impairments. Mental disorders (also known as psychiatric or psychosocial disability) and various types of chronic diseases may also be considered disabilities. A disability may arise during a person's lifetime or may be present from birth.

Weill Cornell Medicine in Qatar (WCM-Q) is dedicated to assisting all students achieve their full potential and succeed in the WCM-Q learning environment by providing equal educational opportunities. In accordance with United States federal law, "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability...shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program."

The WCM-Q Division of Student Affairs coordinates student requests for reasonable accommodation and is committed to protecting the privacy of all students. The Division of Student Affairs is also committed to collaborative dialogue with students throughout the entire process of evaluation and implementation of approved accommodation.

### **Making an Accommodation Request**

1. Students who would like to request an academic accommodation must begin the process by submitting a completed *Accommodation Request Form* to the Director of Student Affairs.
2. After submitting the appropriate paperwork, the student will meet with the Director of Student Affairs. The purpose of this meeting is to understand the challenges the student has faced, to review the documentation the student has submitted, and to discuss the desired accommodations.
3. The Disability Services Committee<sup>1</sup> will review the request and make a formal determination of the need for accommodation.
4. Accommodation requests will be reviewed within 2 weeks; however, there may be delays before a final decision may be made (i.e. the need for additional information).

### **Accommodation Process**

Once a request for accommodation has been approved:

1. Notification of accommodation will be sent to the student.

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<sup>1</sup> The Disability Services Committee is comprised of the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, the Director of Student Affairs and the Psychologist, Learning Support Specialist from Student Affairs.

2. A student's diagnosis(es) and/or disability will not be disclosed in the notification of accommodation. Also, a student's diagnosis(es) and/or disability will not be disclosed without signed consent from the student.
3. It is the student's responsibility to meet with the individual faculty for the course where accommodations are being sought to discuss the implementation of the approved accommodation(s). In the case of centralized NBME exams during the clerkship years, the student should meet with the Director of Educational Administration. Meetings with the appropriate faculty and/or staff must take place *at least seven business days* in advance of needed accommodations.
4. *At least seven business days* before any subsequent activity requiring accommodation, the student should reconfirm arrangements for accommodation with the appropriate faculty or staff.
5. If any concerns or questions arise, the student should contact the Director of Student Affairs for assistance.

## **Documentation**

1. A student must provide documentation of disability. Documentation must be sufficient to establish that the requested accommodation is appropriate for the student's condition. If a student previously received accommodations from other academic institutions or testing agencies, then the student should submit this information.
2. Forms for requesting and documenting disability are available from the Division of Student Affairs.
3. The completed WCM-Q verification of disability form and supporting documentation from a licensed, credentialed examiner must include all of the following:
  - i) Diagnostic statement identifying the disability (Note, a condition by itself may not automatically qualify as a disability)
  - ii) Description of the diagnostic methodology
  - iii) Description of the current functional limitation
  - iv) Description of the expected duration and progression of the condition
  - v) Rationale and justification for all requested accommodations
4. WCM-Q maintains the right not to accept documentation that does not meet the criteria stated above and may seek a confidential third-party professional opinion regarding documentation or implementation of requested accommodations.
5. Documentation of disability accepted by WCM-Q is valid as long as a student is continuously enrolled at the school. However, if there is a break in the student's enrollment, the student may be required to present updated documentation to the Disability Services Committee prior to receiving accommodation. Additional documentation may be necessary to support requests for changes to existing accommodations or to support accommodations if the educational context has substantially changed.
6. All documentation of disabilities is received and held solely by the Director of Student Affairs. Documentation of disability is treated as confidential information and is protected as per FERPA guidelines. Documentation is destroyed six years after the last semester the student is enrolled.
7. The student is responsible for any costs or fees associated with obtaining the necessary documentation.