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Inclusive Education and Support Policy for Students with Disabilities

1) Purpose

While PIHMS is committed to inclusive education and equal opportunity, this commitment must be balanced with the applied and vocational nature of our programmes. Certain programme components—such as food production, hospitality service, and practical training—are essential for meeting academic, industry, and safety standards. Therefore, accommodations must not compromise core learning outcomes or operational safety.

2) Relationship to other Documents

This policy is supported by the Support Guidelines for Students with Disabilities.

3) Scope

This policy applies to all students with:

Physical disabilities (e.g. limited mobility, chronic health conditions)

- Mental health conditions (e.g. anxiety, depression, PTSD)
- Neurodivergent conditions (e.g. ADHD, autism spectrum disorders)
- Sensory impairments (e.g. hearing or visual impairments)
- Specific learning difficulties (SLDs; e.g. dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia)
- Any condition that impacts a student's ability to engage fully in academic or practical components of the programme.

4) Definitions

See table in 11) Appendices

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5) Guiding Principles

Inclusion and Equity: PIHMS is committed to upholding the rights of all students to access learning and practical training without discrimination.

Health and Safety: Reasonable accommodations must be balanced with hospitality industry standards for health, safety, and service quality.

Confidentiality: Disclosure of disability is voluntary and treated confidentially, with informed consent.

Collaboration: Accommodations are co-developed between the student, Academic Services, and relevant departments (e.g., F&B, Kitchen, Rooms Division).

6) Support and Accommodations

6.1 Academic Support

- Extended time for assessments
- Use of assistive technologies (e.g. screen readers, speech-to-text tools)
- Alternative formats for reading material (e.g. large print, change of colour or font)
- Reader/writer or electronic tools for in-class tests and exams

6.2 Practical Training Support

Accommodations for practical training (e.g., kitchens, restaurants, rooms division) will be assessed with respect to:

- Food safety and hygiene regulations;
- Service quality standards expected by industry;
- Physical and mental requirements needed to safely perform duties;
- The essential requirements of the qualification.

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6.3 Industry Placement Disclosures

For students undertaking industry placements, the following applies:

- Students are encouraged to disclose any disability or support requirement that may impact their ability to safely or effectively engage in placement tasks.
- In some cases, certain disabilities or conditions must be communicated to the placement provider to ensure that appropriate accommodations and health and safety measures can be implemented.
- The Industry Placement Advisor will have a confidential conversation with the student prior to placement, discussing the option or necessity to share relevant information with industry stakeholders.
- If the student chooses not to disclose, placement opportunities will be selected that minimise exposure to tasks that may pose risk or exceed the student's limitations.
- Host organisations are responsible for managing their own health and safety processes. However, PIHMS will also provide a health and safety form for the student to complete, which includes a section for voluntary disclosure of additional needs.
- Unreasonable accommodations—including the removal or substitution of core practical activities, or the waiver of non-negotiable industry safety standards—will not be granted. Where accommodations are not feasible, PIHMS may support the student in considering:
 - Partial credit for completed academic components (where possible);
 - Transfer to a more suitable programme;
 - Withdrawal with academic counselling.

6.4 Mental Health Support

- Support to get access to counseling services
- Time-off arrangements or reduced workloads during high-stress periods (professional assessment required)
- Quiet spaces on campus
- Emotional support strategies integrated into student support plans

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7) Responsibilities

Students: Disclose their needs early and engage with Student Support Services for an Individual Learning & Support Plan.

Academic & Operational Staff: Implement agreed accommodations, attend training on inclusive practice, and communicate respectfully.

Academic Services: Coordinate assessments, and monitor implementation of support.

Industry Placement Advisor: Liaise with industry trainers; ensure that appropriate placement conditions are met for students with disabilities. Engage students in pre-placement disclosure conversations and manage any confidentiality requirements.

Student Support Coordinator: Provide or refer to mental health and counselling support.

8) Limits of Reasonable Accommodation

PIHMS follows the Human Rights Act 1993 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 in determining what constitutes reasonable accommodation. Requests that:

- Require the removal or substantial alteration of programme learning outcomes;
- Create an undue burden on institutional operations;
- Undermine health and safety obligations;
- Are incompatible with the essential nature of the hospitality profession;

...will not be accepted.

Each case will be assessed individually, but PIHMS retains the right to decline enrolment or deny specific accommodations where these limits are exceeded. This includes but is not limited to requests for exemption from:

- Working in kitchens or food service due to sensory or mobility impairments;
- Performing roles that require standing, carrying loads, or handling food.

Where students choose not to disclose a disability or condition, PIHMS may not be able to implement the accommodations necessary for success, particularly in time-sensitive or externally managed contexts such as industry placements.

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9) Implementation and Review

- Support plans will be reviewed each semester or upon student request.
- The Inclusive Education Policy will be reviewed annually by the Academic Board and updated in line with NZQA guidance and tertiary sector standards.

The Academic Board will annually review that accommodation decisions uphold the principle that all adjustments must preserve programme integrity and industry readiness. This includes maintaining a register of declined accommodation requests and the rationale, to ensure consistent and justifiable decision-making.

10) Policy Access and Awareness

This policy will be:

- Discussed during Orientation Week;
- Made accessible via the Student Information Site
- Made accessible via the PIHMS website and support offices;
- Reinforced during placement preparation meetings to support proactive disclosure.

References and Legal Framework

- Kia Ōrite Toolkit – NZ Code of Practice for inclusive tertiary education
- Human Rights Act 1993 – Protection from discrimination based on disability
- Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 – Risk management obligations
- TEC Disability Action Plan Resources – www.tec.govt.nz

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11) Appendices

Definitions:

Term	Definition
Inclusive Education	An approach that ensures all students, regardless of their abilities or disabilities, can participate fully in academic and practical learning environments.
Equitable Access	Fair opportunities to access learning and services, taking into account individual needs rather than treating everyone the same.
Physical Disabilities	Long-term physical impairments that may limit movement or mobility, such as the use of a wheelchair, prosthetics, or chronic pain.
Mental Health Conditions	Diagnosable mental or emotional disorders such as anxiety, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which may affect mood, thinking, or behaviour.
Neurodivergent Conditions	Neurological differences such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and ADHD that affect how individuals think, learn, and interact with others.
Sensory Impairments	Conditions affecting one or more senses, typically vision or hearing, that impact learning or participation in activities.
Specific Learning Difficulties (SLDs)	Disorders like dyslexia, dyscalculia, and dyspraxia that affect how individuals acquire and process academic skills such as reading, writing, or mathematics.
Assistive Technologies	Devices or software (e.g. screen readers, speech-to-text tools) used to support students with disabilities in accessing learning materials or communication.
Reader/Writer	A support person or digital tool that reads exam questions aloud and/or writes down a student's dictated answers during assessments.
Reasonable Accommodation	Adjustments made to ensure students with disabilities can access learning and participate in activities without undue hardship to the institution.
Industry Simulation Standards	Standards that reflect real-world hospitality practices and expectations in simulated training environments such as the kitchen, restaurant, or hotel front office.

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Term	Definition
Disclosure	The act of informing the school about a disability or condition that may impact learning or participation, usually done voluntarily and confidentially.
Student Support Plan	A personalised plan developed with Student Services to outline the accommodations and support required for a student with a disability.
NZQA	The New Zealand Qualifications Authority, which sets national standards for tertiary education qualifications and quality assurance.
Kia Ōrite Toolkit	A national guide for ensuring inclusive education for tertiary students with disabilities in New Zealand.
Academic Board	The formal body responsible for overseeing academic standards and reviewing educational policies at PIHMS.