

Guidelines for the Inclusion of Employees with Disabilities

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WU Vienna University of Economics and Business encourages diversity among its students and employees and recognizes the potential of people with a wide variety of different physical and mental skills as both an opportunity and a resource. For this reason, WU has taken the needs of employees and students with disabilities into consideration for many years. People with disabilities are faced with prejudice and barriers every day that prevent them from full and equal participation in professional life. We are committed to recognizing and removing these prejudices and barriers. Our goal is to allow everyone to be included in academic and professional life on an equal basis, regardless of disabilities. As a public university and employer, we are committed to living up to our social responsibility and acting as a positive role model for other organizations.

WU's inclusive measures are aimed at **all people with disabilities**,¹ not only at beneficiaries² under the Disabled Persons Employment Act (*Behinderteneinstellungsgesetz*, BEinstG).

Fostering an environment of mutual appreciation and respect

At WU, we recognize diversity as enrichment. Our goal is to create a work and study environment that is free of prejudice, an environment that allows employees and students to experience appreciation and respect regardless of any physical or

¹ This includes not only physical disabilities but also mental and psychological disabilities and impairments due to chronic illness.

² A disability is defined (§3 Disabled Persons Employment Act) as the effects of a non-temporary physical, mental, or psychological impairment severe enough to make it difficult to participate in professional life. Beneficiaries under the Disabled Persons Employment Act are EU and EEA citizens and Swiss citizens and their relatives, refugees with asylum status, and persons with a permanent residence visa with a degree of disability of 50% or higher as confirmed by an official decision issued by the Ministry of Social Affairs. For more information, please see: <https://www.sozialministeriumservice.at/>

mental impairments or chronic illnesses they may have, and which accommodates the needs of employees and students with disabilities. To do this, we need to foster a climate and develop an organizational culture characterized by appreciation and respect for each individual. It's very important to us that supervisors and employees both share and practice these values, both among themselves and in their dealings with students and other WU stakeholders.

Human resource goals

With regard to human resource decisions, this means that we need to consider the many different skills and talents of our employees and take steps where necessary to ensure a barrier-free work environment (e.g. by adapting physical workspaces) in spite of any impairments employees may have.

Assigning tasks and adapting workplaces

WU works hard to ensure that target groups have the technical assistance they need and are assigned responsibilities where they can use and develop their individual expertise and skills to both their and WU's best advantage.

Increasing awareness

Supervisors are important role models. Through their position, they can promote equal opportunities and ensure that employees with disabilities are able to fully participate in professional life. The effects of supervisors as role models have a significant effect on the inclusion and acceptance of employees with disabilities, which is why it is particularly important to increase awareness for this topic among management staff. Individual, custom training programs, e.g. coaching sessions for mentors, management staff, and co-workers can provide much-needed information about trust, respect, appreciation, and appropriate behavior when dealing with colleagues with disabilities. The regularly scheduled performance reviews can also be an opportunity to discuss any changes that need to be made in an employee's working environment.

Recruiting and onboarding

No one may be discriminated against because of a disability, especially not in the case of hiring decisions, salary level, professional promotions, continuing education and training opportunities, or other working conditions.

People with disabilities should be enabled to participate in professional life on an equal basis. Like all employees, they each have their individual strengths and skills and can be given responsibility. WU's goal is to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities and to hire an increased number of employees with disabilities. This goal is included in our long-term human resource plans. When advertising open positions, please be sure to indicate that WU is particularly interested in employing the disabled. If applicants with disabilities fulfill all the qualification criteria of the job description, they should be invited for a job interview in the first round of the recruiting process.

Mentoring system

A mentoring system is in place to help facilitate employees' integration into the working environment. The mentor gives insights into WU's internal structures, helps new employees discover and assess their own skills, and offers support with organizational questions. Mentors act as an initial contact within the organization and make a valuable contribution towards the sustainable integration of co-workers with disabilities.

In-house health care

It's in WU's best interest to make sure its employees remain healthy and productive, which is why the continuous development of its in-house health care program is a top priority. Programs aimed at employees with physical or psychological impairments, e.g. re-integration management after long periods of sick leave, complement the in-house health care service portfolio.

Continuing education and training opportunities

All employees need to have equal access to continuing education and training opportunities to sharpen their skills and encourage lifelong learning. Educational and training events with barrier-free access are offered as needed.

Part-time employment

Employees with physical or psychological impairments should have the opportunity to work part-time temporarily if necessary. When new positions are being advertised, the option of also advertising an opening as a part-time position for disabled applicants should be considered. In this case, a later switch to full-time employment should be offered if desired and if the budget allows.

Monitoring

Just talking about the inclusion of people with disabilities isn't enough; at WU, it's what is carried out in practice that counts. Regularly scheduled reviews (every three years) of previously implemented measures are held to evaluate their effects on the level of inclusion of co-workers with disabilities. Based on the results of these reviews, changes will be made or new measures implemented as needed.