

# Procedure for support measures and adapted study schedules for disabled students at EPFL

LEX 2.6.5

1<sup>st</sup> July 2010, status as at 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025

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*The Direction of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne,,*  
based on the [Ordinance on the evaluation of Bachelor and Master studies at EPFL of 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015](#) (RS 414.132.2)<sup>1</sup>,  
based on the [Loi fédérale sur l'élimination des inégalités frappant les personnes handicapées](#) (RS 151.3)<sup>2</sup>,  
based on Art. 4, para.1 of the Ordinance on the Organisation of the Ecole polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne,  
*hereby adopts the following:*

## Article 1 Scope of Application

<sup>1</sup> The present directive lays out the authority and tasks relating to the creation of conditions favourable for the prevention, reduction or elimination of inequalities which may be experienced by a disabled student in EPFL teaching or examinations.

<sup>2</sup> All of the EPFL courses and examinations are concerned.

<sup>3</sup> EPFL lends its support to disabled students as far as is possible in the introduction of auxiliary measures or ad hoc personal assistance, in teaching and in examinations. The school also plays a secondary role in disability related organisations.

## Article 2 Request for support

<sup>1</sup> In case of doubt or certainty regarding the relevance of adapting the form or conduct of future examinations in relation to his/her disability, or regarding support for his/her studies, the student shall present a written request to the Registrar's Office (EPFL – Registrar's Office, BP 1229 (bâtiment BP), station 16, 1015 Lausanne or to [sae.amenagements@epfl.ch](mailto:sae.amenagements@epfl.ch)).

<sup>2</sup> The student shall attach medical reports or diagnoses of current learning disabilities necessary for the evaluation of the situation. He/She will then be invited for an interview in which he/she may suggest appropriate support measures and highlight which teaching elements or examinations are likely to be concerned.

<sup>3</sup> The student shall present his/her request as soon as possible, and at the beginning of the academic year at the latest for requests concerning learning support, and two months prior to the examination date at the latest for examination support.

<sup>4</sup> The student assumes the consequences of a late request.

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### <sup>1</sup> Art. 12 Students with disabilities

1 If so requested at the beginning of the academic year by a candidate with disabilities, EPFL shall organise a test procedure adapted to that individual's disability and shall decide on the use of any special means or personal assistance necessary.

2 The objectives of the test must be met.

### <sup>2</sup> Art. 2 Definition of disability

1 Any person for whom an apparently long-term psychological, mental or physical deficiency hinders or prevents them from completing the standard activities of daily life, maintaining social contact, moving, following a teaching course or further training course, or exercising a professional activity, is considered to be disabled within the context of the present Directive.

2 Inequality arises when a disabled person is treated differently, in law or in fact, to a non-disabled person in such a way as to disadvantage them without objective justification, or when shortcomings are experienced in the difference in treatment required in order to re-establish de facto equality between a disabled person and a non-disabled person.

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5 Inequality of access to training or continuing education courses is notably experienced when:

- a. the use of specific auxiliary measures or necessary personal assistance for a disabled person is not allowed;
- b. the duration of support for the training services provided, as well as the examinations required are not adapted to the specific needs of the disabled person.

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<sup>5</sup> An examination result cannot be annulled on the basis that the examination was not adapted to the student's disability if the student did not submit a request for support on time.

### **Article 3 Handling of the request**

<sup>1</sup> The Registrar's Office:

- a. records the student's request;
- b. is responsible for maintaining a proper follow-up;
- c. transfers the request to the Student Affairs service.

<sup>2</sup> The Student Affairs service:

- d. examines the student's situation;
- e. determines, with the student, the support measures necessary;
- f. informs the person in charge of the teaching course of the chosen means of support (duration of studies, terms of conduct for examinations and any use of auxiliary measures – personal assistance, etc.)

<sup>3</sup> The person in charge of the teaching course (Director of CMS, Section Directors, Director of Doctoral Programme, Continuing Education Director):

- g. informs the teaching staff concerned;
- h. verifies against the course requirements that the chosen form for the examination guarantees its objectives, as only the form of the examination may be adapted to suit a disability, and not the scale of marking or the examiner's appreciation of the work.
- i. transmit his/her conclusions to the Student Affairs service.

<sup>4</sup> The EPFL services guarantee the confidentiality of the disability dossier with regards to third parties.

### **Article 4 Decision**

<sup>1</sup> Upon reception of the final decision from the Student Affairs service regarding the measures to be implemented, the Registrar's Office will communicate in writing to the student and the person in charge of the teaching course which support measures have been selected and for which elements of teaching/examinations they are applicable. A copy of this decisions will also be communicated to the teaching staff concerned and the Student Affairs service.

<sup>2</sup> The student may appeal this decision, in writing, within 10 days, establishing the grounds of unequal treatment. The Registrar's Office handles this objection with the support of the other services concerned and the legal service of EPFL, before submitting the case to the Delegate of the Provost for Student Relations.

<sup>3</sup> In no case may the student object to the decision after the examination has taken place.

<sup>4</sup> The person in charge of the teaching course then becomes responsible for the proper implementation of the support measures selected.

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**Article 5      Entry into force**

The present directive entered into force on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2010 and was revised on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021 (version 1.3) and on 1 January 2025 (version 1.4).

On behalf of the EPFL Direction:

President:  
Anna Fontcuberta i Morral

Director of Legal Affairs:  
Françoise Chardonens

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**Information regarding support for studies, teaching and examinations**

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1. Each situation is examined individually and if necessary, EPFL will seek guidance from the Federal Office for the Equality of People with Disabilities and the Invalidity Insurance (IV) advice service.
2. It falls to the student to explain the necessity of support measures. Alternative means must have been examined. The school will lend its support.
3. The disabled student shall collaborate with the school's services in the selection and implementation of support services.
4. Support from health professionals or professionals in learning difficulties who have supervised the student may be requested.
5. The support measure selected must be the most reasonable and commensurate option possible in relation to the inequality that it is intended to reduce or prevent.
6. EPFL may refuse means of support or propose alternatives.
7. Funding for necessary support measures shall be primarily claimed from the IV. EPFL may finance a measure provisionally pending the decision of the IV. EPFL cannot finance a measure on the grounds that the student concerned is not affiliated with the IV (foreign students).
8. EPFL selects the measures which will enable the student to be as least dependent on others as possible, in order to prepare him/her for entry into his/her professional life.

**Examples of support measures adapted to a specific disability:**

- Prolongation of the maximum duration of studies and implementation of a specific study plan.
- Modification of the examination format (oral or written), auxiliary means or personal assistance during the examination, splitting of the examination or prolongation of its duration.
- Appointment of a student for note-taking, photocopying and scanning of documents or assistance from an EPFL service for help in researching documents.
- Implementation of auxiliary means provided by the student (computer, recording device (after obtaining permission to record the lesson for the student's personal use), magnifying device, etc.).