



University of Potsdam

INCLUSION CONCEPT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF POTSDAM

*to improve the study and working conditions
for people with disabilities and/or chronic illness*



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1. General part

1.1 Political mandate

By signing the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in December 2008, the Federal Republic of Germany committed itself to implementing inclusive thinking and action in all areas of society - including education. In particular, Article 24 formulates concrete steps on the way towards a university "for all"

a formulation, which the Higher Education Rectors' Conference also states in its 2009 recommendation and which sums up the essence of inclusion (cf. Federal Government Commissioner for the Interests of Persons with Disabilities 2017, Higher Education Rectors' Conference 2013). People with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses who have the formal qualification must therefore be granted free access to the university, equal participation, good working conditions and the opportunity to obtain academic degrees.

With the adoption of this inclusion concept for students and employees¹ with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses, the University of Potsdam is making a comprehensive contribution to the removal of barriers and the realization of the prohibition of discrimination, which is laid down in Article 3 paragraph 3 of the Basic Law (GG) and which was further concretized in the Equal Opportunities for Disabled Persons Act (BGG), in the Ninth Book of the Social Code (SGB IX), in the Federal Participation Act (BTHG) and in the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG).

The Brandenburg Higher Education Act defines in §3 the consideration of the "special needs of disabled university members [...] in all areas" as a general task of the university and concretizes this for the area of study regulations in §19 as well as for examination regulations in §22 (cf. §19, §22 BbgHG). Consequently, the design of an inclusive university is a law and not a choice. The adoption



¹ This text employs gender-neutral spelling, to ensure accessibility and inclusivity on all levels. The Harvard citation is also used to ensure

accessibility.

of the inclusion concept also results from the corresponding obligation in the Higher Education Development Plan (HEP 2019 - 2023, cf. University of Potsdam 2019: 29) and from the Higher Education Contract (HSV) of 21.03.2019 (cf. MWFK & University of Potsdam 2019: 12).

The commitment to social diversity and committed action against all forms of discrimination are tasks of university policy and equally of society as a whole. The University of Potsdam sees itself as democratically obligated to recognize the heterogeneity of the realities of life of its members and to break down existing barriers. Inclusive thinking and action is understood as a continuous process and part of a comprehensive professionalization that improves study and working conditions and promotes a critical, respectful dialogue between all participants.

1.2 Central terms

1.2.1 Disability

The term can be viewed from the perspective of different disciplines and thus focuses either on the individual with a special need or on the historically entrenched social conditions that impede or prevent participation. Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons

with Disabilities (UN CRPD) defines persons with disabilities as "those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments" which, "in interaction with various barriers, may prevent their full, effective and equal participation in society" (Federal Government Commissioner for Matters relating to Persons with Disabilities 2017: 8). According to the Social Code on Rehabilitation and Integration for people with disabilities (SGB IX), people are considered disabled "if their physical function, mental ability or mental health is likely to deviate from the condition typical of their age for more than six months and their participation in life in society is therefore impaired" (§2 para. 1 SGB XI). In the context of higher education, this could be students or staff with mobility, visual, hearing and speech impairments, with mental illnesses (e.g. eating disorders, depression, personality disorders), with chronic illnesses² (e.g. rheumatism, Crohn's disease or diabetes) as well as with lethargy and other partial performance disorders. The concept of disability on which the inclusion concept of the University of Potsdam is based, is intended to counteract a simplistic dichotomization into disabled and non-disabled people and, on the other hand, to emphasize that institutional structures and social barriers lead to people being hindered to varying degrees in participating in education and in the labor market. Disability is viewed intersectionally, i.e. in interdependence with other forms of discrimination.³

² Chronic illnesses include long-term or episodic (e.g. in relapses) health impairments. Chronic diseases can lead to a significant restriction of social participation and in this case acquire the status of a disability.

³ Disability-related discrimination occurs in interconnection and interaction with other structural

categories such as gender, ethnicity, age, class, nationality, sexuality and religious affiliation. This is implicitly considered in the measures formulated in this inclusion concept. In addition, within the framework of the Diversity Audit, specific goals and measures are developed in coordination with the inclusion concept in order to counteract these limited forms of discrimination.

1.2.2 Inclusion

The main difference between the term inclusion and integration is the focus on social barriers that need to be overcome in the interest of participation opportunities for all people. Whereas integration tends to focus unilaterally on fitting into an existing normative structure, inclusion focuses on a dynamic or the interactions between subject and group. Inclusion is therefore a continuous process that is never complete and must always be updated with regard to current social, political and pedagogical problems. For higher education institutions, this means that different working and learning conditions must be anticipated and taken into account when expanding or updating teaching and counselling services. Creating inclusive study conditions means doing justice to social diversity in the institutional sphere. This includes all members of the

of the university. In this way, every person with a higher education entrance qualification should be given equal access to the field of education and employees should be provided with an appropriate working environment. Existing barriers should be made visible and overcome, and new exclusions avoided.

1.2.3 Accessibility

A definition of accessibility can be found in §4 of the Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities Act (BGG): "Structural and other facilities, means of transport, technical objects of use, information processing systems, acoustic and visual sources of information and communication facilities as well as other designed areas of life are barrier-free if they are accessible to persons with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses in the generally customary manner, without any particular difficulty and in principle.



can be found, accessed and used without assistance. In this context, the use of disability-related aids is "permissible" (§ 4 BGG). These aids can be understood as personal aids and assistive technologies as well as the design of buildings and spaces that enable participation.

For the University of Potsdam, the question of accessibility is particularly important with regard to the historical building fabric of its three campuses and the development of uniform communicative standards, for example in the context of the website and in the provision of adequate working environments and learning materials.

With the idea of universal design⁴, the UNCRPD already provides an important impetus for the process oriented design of environments, surfaces and spaces in such a way that they can be used by all people without special adaptation (cf. Art. 2 para. 5 UNCRPD).

1.3 Emergence and goals of the inclusion concept

The inclusion concept of the University of Potsdam consists of four parts: a general section and three fields of action. The representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses led the general section and the section on fields of action for studies and teaching.

The project was developed by the staff of the ESF project "A University for All - Inclusive Studies" at the Central Student Advisory Service (ZSB) of the University of Potsdam. This was done in cooperation with the management of the Department of Student Affairs, the Coordination Office for Equal Opportunities (KfC), the Centre for Quality Development in Teaching and Studying (ZfQ) with the Career Service and University Studies departments, representatives of the faculties, the General Students' Committee (AStA) as well as numerous individual persons. These parts are the result of an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental effort to identify existing structural disadvantages for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness and to eliminate them. In particular, the experiences from the work of the ESF project "A University for All - Designing Inclusive Studies" (2018 - 2021)⁵ served as the basis for this. The University of Potsdam is thus implementing the measure formulated in the higher education contract in the area of study and teaching for the development and implementation of an overall concept for "Inclusive University" with the inclusion of existing projects (cf. MWFK & University of Potsdam 2019:12).

The preliminary results of the cooperation between the above-mentioned areas were presented to the university public in the online workshop "A university for all - on the way to an inclusion concept for the University of Potsdam" on 18 September 2020 and discussed with students and staff from various areas of the university. The final goals and measures formulated in this inclusion concept were implemented on 01.12.2020 thanks to funding from the State Disability Commissioner of the state of Brandenburg.

⁴ The Center for Universal Design (USA) has formulated seven principles that can be further specified for higher education: 1) broad usability, 2) flexibility of use, 3) ease and intuitiveness of use, 4) sensory information, 5) error

tolerance, 6) low physical effort, 7) size and space for access and use.

⁵ Predecessor projects, also funded by the ESF, have been running since 2008.

The results were presented to the public and the state as part of the online event "A university for all - the University of Potsdam on its way to becoming an inclusive university".

The section for employees of the university was developed by the representative for employees with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses together with responsible persons from the personnel department as well as the staff council and the officer for quality management in the administration (chancellor's office). This was done in close consultation with the representative body for severely disabled persons (SBV). This section documents and unites the interests of employees and employers in a comprehensive guideline for the structured removal of barriers in the working context of higher education. The basis for this section is the Ninth Book of the Social Code (SGB IX) and the associated regulations on the rehabilitation and participation of people with disabilities, whereby the formulated objectives and measures go far beyond the legally prescribed guidelines. The section on digital accessibility was developed together with the Centre for Information Technology and Media Management (ZIM). The results of the work of the Digital Accessibility Steering Group were also taken into account. The section on structural accessibility was developed by a working group together with the Building Administration, Security, Organization (BSO) department. The results of the Mobile Barrier-Free Working Group⁶ were incorporated into the development.

The inclusion concept describes an important step on the path of the University of Potsdam towards the implementation of an inclusive university (i.e. the removal of structural, constructional, communicative and didactic barriers), which is to be followed by others. The concept aims to:

- *Communicate inclusion as a university-wide and societal task both internally and externally,*
- *the aim is to counteract discrimination and create equal opportunities for the heterogeneous target group,*
- *anchor the understanding of inclusion on a structural, institutional and organizational level,*
- *to enable all students to complete their studies,*
- *provide adequate, scientifically based support services for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness,*
- *to provide employees with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses with adequate working conditions,*
- *increase the quota of employees with a severe disability by at least one percent,*
- *improve structural and technical accessibility, and*
- *implement an ongoing process of reflection and evaluation of the structures to be created.*

The present inclusion concept represents an overall strategy whose implementation is concretized by a milestone plan. The measures described there initially refer to the implementation period from 2021 to 2030.

⁶ The members of the working group are the elected representatives of the severely disabled, the representatives for students and employees with

disabilities and/or chronic illnesses, and the head of occupational safety in the BSO department.



2. Field of action study And teaching

2.1 Initial situation & actors

The results of the 21st Social Survey of the German Student Union (Deutsches Studentenwerk) in 2016 underline the need for universities to take better account of the group of students with disabilities and/or chronic illness. The proportion of students nationwide was

11 % (cf. Middendorff/Apolinarski/Becker/Bornkessel/Brandt/Heißenberg&Poskowsky 2017a: 36) and in the state of Brandenburg at 13% (cf. Middendorff/Apolinarski/Bornkessel/Brandt/Heißenberg/Naumann/Poskowsky & Becker 2017b: 30).

Compared to the 2012 survey, there was an increase of four percentage points for the whole of Germany (cf. Middendorff et al. 2017a: 36). For the University of Potsdam, it can be assumed that approximately 2,800 students (13%) have one or more health impairments that impede their studies. The group is diverse and confronted with inadequate spatial, technical and individual disadvantages on different levels. Many students who meet the formal criteria of the target group do not count themselves as such. In addition, uncertainty and shame are widespread, which inhibit the use of support services. There are also uncertainties on the part of teachers in dealing with the target group. A few figures should help to clarify and visualize the problem:

- 57% of the surveyed students with health impairments state that their studies are (very) difficult (cf. *ibid.*).
- At 47%, mental illnesses are the most common form of health impairment; 63% of students with mental illnesses state that they are (very) severely impaired in their studies (cf. *ibid.*).
- The proportion of students who are impaired due to a chronic-somatic illness is 18% (cf. *ibid.*).

Disabilities and chronic illnesses are closely related to longer study times, problems with the education system, and the



transition between study phases and dropouts. Preventing these scenarios is a fundamental part of the inclusion work described in this concept.

Students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses are also at a disadvantage when it comes to starting a career. Figures from the Federal Employment Agency show that unemployment is much more common among academics with disabilities than among academics without disabilities (cf. Bauer & Bäuerlen, 2016: 48). The 2014 education report, which focused on people with disabilities, also concluded that the employment rate of university and training graduates with disabilities was more than 20 percent lower than that of equally qualified applicants without disabilities (cf. Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2014: 186), even though severely disabled people have above-average qualifications (cf. Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales 2012: 22).

In addition to the aforementioned reasons that lead to disadvantages within the university, the more difficult access of disadvantaged students to internships, part-time jobs and stays abroad⁷ are also mentioned, which are very relevant for entering working life (cf. Niehaus & Bauer 2013: 32 - 33, 41, 45).

Since, according to the Framework Act for Higher Education (cf. § 2, Para. 1; § 7 HRG), it is an important task of higher education institutions to prepare students for the future

in order to prepare students for professional activities and this is also emphasized by the University of Potsdam in its mission statement on teaching (2020), practical phases and career entry, i.e. the interface between study and work, must be included in the inclusion concept.

The University of Potsdam is already facing up to the challenges of an inclusive teaching and learning culture at various levels and is looking for ways to implement inclusion as a cross-cutting issue in the areas of study and teaching. In order to create equal opportunities and to represent the interests of students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses, the University of Potsdam appoints an honorary representative for students with disabilities in accordance with GrundO §17; the corresponding area of responsibility is explained in Chapter 4 (cf. §17 Chap. 4 GrundO).

Relevant with regard to counselling and support for the target group in their everyday studies is the work of the ESF project "A University for All - Designing Inclusive Studies" (duration of the current project 2018 - 2021, previous projects from 2008). The project aims to strengthen the ability of students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses and in critical life situations to study and to counteract dropouts. It was part of the Disability Policy Package of the state government 2.0 (cf. Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, Health, Women and Family 2017: 28) and the current higher education contract (cf. MWFK & University of Potsdam 2019: 12). Within the framework of the project, numerous study support services were developed and offered, and the counselling services for the target group were meaningfully expanded. In addition, regular further training measures for various

⁷ The reasons given are the lack of accessibility, psychological barriers (e.g. prejudices of potential

interns and employers) and financial problems (cf. Bauer/Bäuerlen, 2016).

status groups at the university on the topic of "inclusive study". Due to the high fluctuation of students and staff and the overall increase in the number of students, there is a continuous need in the areas described.

At universities, Career Services are the central contact institutions that provide advice and information on the transition to a career. As early as 2009, the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) pointed out the need for Career Services to address the special needs of students with disabilities (cf. HRK 2013: 9). The counselling figures of the last few years show that students also bring up their psychological problems, physical impairments or chronic illnesses in the counselling sessions of the Career Service as a department of the ZfQ. However, the associated questions can only be addressed in a rudimentary way so far.⁸ There is still a clear need for action here.

Due to the intersectional understanding in the anti-discrimination work of the Coordination Office for Equal Opportunities (KfC), there are numerous points of intersection with regard to the field of action of inclusion. Furthermore, with the planned establishment of a department for inclusion in the General Students' Committee (AStA), heterogeneity-sensitive work is also becoming the focus of student self-administration. (Supra-)regional networking with other universities already exists and is to be expanded.

The topic of "studying with disabilities" is present on the university's central homepage, in on-site counselling and in the form of various information events and workshops. At each of the three university locations, there is a workroom for students of the target group, which is equipped with appropriate technology, such as Braille lines and printers, computers with special software for people with visual impairments or reading and spelling difficulties.

2.2 Goals and measures

Much has already been achieved on the way to a university "for all". However, in order to meet the needs of a growing university, what has been achieved must be appropriately secured in the future in terms of personnel, finances and structure. The understanding of inclusion as a crosscutting issue is still not sufficiently reflected in university practice. Against this background, objectives were formulated for the areas of legal regulations, inclusive teaching and examining, information and counselling services in the phases of study, further education and professionalization, support programs and evaluation, and measures were⁹ developed based on these objectives, which form the core of this part of the inclusion concept of the University of Potsdam.

2.2.1 Legal regulations

There are already a number of legally anchored possibilities to prevent disadvantages, resulting from reciprocal effects between study conditions and/or structure, and disabilities and/or chronic illness. These will be briefly presented in the following.

⁸ The evaluation of the Career Service's counselling figures shows that counselling sessions in which students specifically name their impairments during the interview (and thus can only be recorded by us) take longer on

average.

⁹ In the tables of measures, explicit reference is made to the objectives pursued (see corresponding letters).

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Individual compensation for disadvantages (NTA) has as its aim the prevention of disadvantages in the performance of study and examination achievements. They change the way in which performances are achieved, but not its substantive core and therefore cannot be a preferential treatment. In the General Regulations for the teaching and non-teaching Bachelor's and Master's degree programs, regulations have been laid down in this regard (§ 15 BAMA-O; § 15 BAMALA-O), with which the higher education institution follows the mandate of the legislator:

"The universities shall take into account the special needs of university members with children or caring responsibilities. They shall contribute to the social promotion of students. They shall promote cultural and artistic interests as well as sport in their area. They take into account the special needs of disabled university members and take the necessary measures for their integration in all areas. Appropriate measures shall be taken for the implementation of studies and examinations which, while maintaining equality, guarantee compensation for disadvantages and participation in studies without discrimination and on an equal footing" (§ 3 para. 4 BbgHG).

The right to compensation for disadvantages is regulated in the framework regulations (as well as for the subject Law in the examination regulations for the major field of study and in the intermediate examination), but not in the doctoral and habilitation regulations. There is a standardized application procedure, which is described in detail on the homepage of the University of Potsdam. In the run-up to the application

students can obtain advice on the application process from the Central Student Advisory Service or from a member of staff at the Office of Student Affairs/Office of Examinations in the Department of Student Affairs (for the degree programs administered there). Applications are submitted to the examination committees of the respective subjects and decisions are made by them. The subjects are responsible for implementing the equalization of disadvantages. The examination committees and lecturers also have the opportunity to receive advice on disadvantage compensation from the representative and the responsible staff members in the Central Student Advisory Service and to receive support in its implementation (e.g. with workspaces, assistance, technology). According to the results of the best2¹⁰ study, the approval rate for applications for compensation for disadvantages in the area of "Examinations, homework and other evidence of achievement" at the University of Potsdam is above average at 80.4% (cf. best2, special evaluation UP10). This is primarily due to the extended concept of disability, the work of the examination committees, and the advisory services offered by the commissioner. However, this also shows that not all students who have an equal right to compensation for disadvantages also claim it. Fear of coming out and/or disadvantages in later working life are among the fears of students.

Cases of hardship can arise both in connection with the application for a place on a degree program with restricted admission (cf. § 5 and 10 HVV) and when the examination deadline is reached after exceeding twice the standard period of study (cf. § 7a, Para. 2 – HVV 7, BAMA-O new version of 16.12.2020, § 7a par. 2 - 4 BAMALA-O) may be asserted.

¹⁰ The special evaluation is not published, but can be

requested from the representative for students with disabilities.

If attendance at courses is not possible for an important reason over a longer period of time, a leave of absence can be applied for in the re-registration period. The leave of absence is valid for the semester in which the application is submitted. In particularly justified cases, a leave of absence is also permissible outside of the re-registration deadlines (cf. the Matriculation Regulations of the University of Potsdam of 21 November 2018 as amended by the Statutes amending the Matriculation Regulations of the University of Potsdam of 8 July 2020).

Part-time study is an individual extension of studies in existing full-time degree programs, in which students spend no more than half of the expenditure planned for full-time study in the respective semester (cf. Regulations on Part-time study at the University of Potsdam 2010). The students integrate themselves into the normal study and course schedule. Part-time study is only possible in suitable degree programs. Students who apply for part-time study must give important reasons, such as the presence of a disability and/or chronic illness, for choosing part-time study and provide evidence of these reasons.

In the context of applying for a semester of leave and part-time study for health reasons, it is apparent that students are

often uncertain about which documents are required and in what form. This is why it sometimes happens that a semester of leave or part-time study has to be rejected because the documents submitted are not sufficiently informative, even though there could be a reason for leave. A more transparent presentation of the required documents is therefore necessary. In addition, it should be checked whether a contact person for the application for a semester of leave or part-time study can be appointed in the Student Office/ Student Secretariat - equivalent to the Student Office/Examination Office.

Goals:

- *Improving the visibility of information on existing legal regulations*
- *Develop structural improvements to reduce the number of necessary disadvantage compensations in the long term.*

Measures already implemented:

- *Structured procedure for applying for compensation for disadvantages*
- *The staff member specifically responsible in the examination office*
- *Counselling of students in the target group*
- *Advising audit committees on the subject of NTAs*
- *Information on the university's website about NTA, hardship and examination deadline*
- *Possibility to apply for leave semesters*
- *Possibility to apply for part-time study*

Possible measures	Responsibility for
Examine the possibility of applying for part-time study in each summer and winter semester, irrespective of the start of the first semester, taking into account the courses offered.	D2
Doctoral and habilitation regulations are supplemented, where necessary, with disadvantage compensation regulations, information on the application process is presented transparently	Faculties

2.2.2 Inclusive teaching and testing

The University of Potsdam is an attendance university where e-learning has a firm place (cf. Steering Group E-Learning of the University of Potsdam 2017). The spectrum of analogue and digital teaching, learning and examination formats used is broad and adapted to specific subject cultures. Courses can be assigned to various modules from different degree programs. Accordingly, the heterogeneity of the students in terms of prior knowledge, familiarity with the respective subject and communication culture and learning speed must be taken into account when planning and designing the teaching and examination programs. The university's active approach to this challenge is expressed in the teaching mission statement adopted in April 2020. Among other things, it commits itself to target-group-specific teaching and to student and competence orientation. The mission statement is an important step on the way to becoming an inclusive university.

However, with regard to the existing barriers in everyday study life at the University of Potsdam, which prevent students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses in particular from achieving their learning and study goals in a self-determined and effective manner, the measures formulated in the teaching mission statement are not sufficient. According to the special evaluation of the best2 study for the University of Potsdam

- *56.4% of respondents stated that they were affected in the areas of study organization, teaching and learning (e.g. due to inflexible timetables and the design of courses, completing group work, internships and studying abroad),*

have/had pregnancy-related difficulties (cf. best2, special evaluation UP)

- *Furthermore, 67.6% of the respondents stated that they have/had difficulties in the area of examinations, homework and other certificates (e.g. due to the type of examinations or time constraints) (cf. ibid.).*
- *According to the study, the most frequently mentioned impairment-related difficulties in studying at the University of Potsdam are: the density of examinations (40.4%), the prescribed workload per semester (36.4%), compulsory attendance/regular participation in courses (37.8%), the duration of examinations/deadlines for assignments (36%), the type of examinations/credits (e.g. written, oral (31.6%), repeating/postponing examinations or credits (27.6%), and the requirements for registering and deregistering from examinations/credits (31.6%). (e.g. written, oral) (31.6%), the retaking/postponement of examinations or certificates (27.6%) and the registration and deregistration procedures for examinations (24.9%) (cf. ibid.).*

Barriers that make studying more difficult and prolong it exist not only at the level of the didactic-methodical design of courses and examinations, but largely also in their structural organization. In the semester planning of the subjects as well as in the new conception of study regulations, corresponding factors are already increasingly being considered and implemented. Counselling practice has shown that students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses are better able to plan and cope with their examination workload if the entire available examination period is used and if there is a choice of at least two examination times for each examination from the outset. For the implementation of certain individual disadvantage compensations, it is helpful for teachers and students if the module description

shows up to three possible forms of examination and thus the framework of what can be changed in the provision of services is more clearly defined. Modules in which registration for the examination is organized independently of registration for the course can be studied more flexibly. They help students with episodic illnesses in particular to avoid or at least reduce delays in their studies. In the interest of the greatest possible accessibility in the organization of courses and examinations, the registration and deregistration procedures for courses and examinations via the campus management system Potsdam University Teaching and Study Organization Portal (PULS), the Office for Student and Examination Matters of the Faculty of Law or the Student Affairs Office of the Faculty of Digital Engineering (DEF) should be examined and, if necessary, made more inclusive.

Many students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses are more dependent than their fellow students on the teaching and learning content not only being conveyed in the context of the specific course on site (or digitally independent of location), but also being available elsewhere and being able to work through it. For example, students with concentration difficulties or partial performance disorders such as dyslexia are only able to follow courses with a high, exclusively text-based information density to a limited extent, and students with social anxiety can only participate in-group work to a limited extent. Rooms, analogue learning materials and digital platforms for the exchange and provision of learning materials (e.g. moodle, Media.UP, Box.UP, Git.UP, Pad.UP, Zoom.UP) also often do not meet the requirements of freedom from barriers, so that they are not accessible for students with reading and writing disabilities,

motor or sensory impairments, and are not accessible or only accessible to a limited extent.

In order to be able to complete courses and examinations, students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses must therefore, in addition to the actual preparation for courses and examinations, also make some additional organizational efforts, for example by communicating their needs to third parties and applying for compensation for disadvantages. For the teachers, too, the implementation of individual disadvantage compensation, for example by providing individually adapted materials or organizing separate rooms with the necessary technical equipment and supervision for examinations, results in a corresponding additional effort. These barriers and the additional expenditure resulting from individual arrangements must be reduced in the long term through appropriate measures.

Goals:

- *Consistent implementation of analogue and digital target-group-specific, student- and competence-oriented teaching and corresponding examinations with special consideration of the needs of students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses (in the sense of a Universal Design)*
- *Reduction of known barriers on a structural-organizational and didactic-methodological level by making the study program more flexible in order to reduce the need for NTA in the long term.*
- *Systematic identification of hitherto unknown barriers in the area of teaching and testing*
- *Acquisition and/or provision of appropriate software as well as guidelines for the creation of accessible teaching and learning materials.*
- *Continuation and expansion of support offered for inclusive teaching and testing*

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Measures already implemented:

- Commitment to target-group-specific, student- and competence-oriented teaching and formulation of measures for implementation in the teaching mission statement
- Provision of digital learning platforms and collections of materials
- A guideline for the design of accessible courses and examinations is currently being developed.
- Support for teachers through central institutions (e.g. ZSB, ZfQ, ZIM) and student employees of the commissioner, for example in the implementation of compensation for disadvantages.
- Workrooms of the ZIM with a wide range of technical equipment can be used for examinations under NTA conditions (can also be used as a retreat for the target group).

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Development of a handout for teachers on the topic of "inclusive teaching and testing" as well as a checklist for inclusive teaching planning (according to Universal Design principles) (a, b, e)	Representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness, ZIM, ZfQ
Examination of the possibility of expanding the range of examinations (rotation every semester if possible) (b)	Fans
Examination of the possibility of targeted coordination within the subjects to utilize the entire examination period	Fans
Students have the opportunity to view information on the location, accessibility and equipment of rooms when booking events directly.	Study and Examination IT and BSO/ HGP
Already established digital teaching and learning materials as well as learning platforms and management systems are checked with regard to valid accessibility standards and, if possible, optimized or replaced by accessible alternatives (b, c).	ZIM, Study and Examination IT, Subjects
Examination of the various enrolment, registration and deregistration procedures for events and examinations (PULS, Office for Study and Examination Matters of the Faculty of Law, Study Department of the Digital Engineering Faculty) with regard to accessibility and the possibility of standardized queries on special needs/implementing NTA (c)	D2/Study and Examination IT, DEF, JurFak
When purchasing new digital teaching and learning materials, learning platforms and management systems as well as software licenses and technical equipment, attention is paid to accessibility (b, d)	ZIM
Provision of software and templates for the creation of accessible teaching and learning materials (d)	ZIM, ZfQ
Continuation of the advisory service for teachers on the topic of "Inclusive teaching and accessibility" (and on the implementation of NTA) (e)	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness
Continue to provide and maintain workspaces	ZIM

2.2.3 Information and counselling Offers in the phases of study

The 21st Social Survey of the German Student Union (Deutsches Studentenwerk) shows that students with health impairments have more discontinuities in their studies than those without impairments. They change their course of study and/or university more often and interrupt their studies more than twice as often. The average total duration of interruption is 2.8 semesters. The reasons given by them for interrupting their studies are acute health problems (57%), doubts about the meaning of their studies (29%), chronic illness/disability (27%) and financial problems (23%) (cf. Middendorff et al. 2017a: 37). These findings are confirmed by the experience of the Central Student Advisory Service, the subject advisory services, the examination boards, the Service for Families, and the psychological counselling service, among others. In addition to the above-mentioned reasons, excessive demands on students with regard to planning their professional future and the application process can also lead to a prolongation of the study period, in part due to a deliberate delay in the final examinations. According to Unger et al., students with disabilities explicitly complain about the lack of support in questions about their professional qualification profile and would like more counselling and information in the context of their specific impairment (cf. Unger/ Wejwar/Zaussinger & Laimer 2012: 229 - 230).

In summary, it can be stated that health impairments, mental illnesses, crises and numerous other causes of a reduction in the ability to study can occur in all phases of the study program.

A scientifically and didactically sound range of information and advice for the target group, oriented towards individual resources and target agreements, is therefore indispensable for the creation of an inclusive university.

A lot has already been done in this field of activity: The University of Potsdam supports its students through a professional network of counselling institutions in all phases of the study process - during orientation, application and enrolment, during the start of studies, in transitional situations and at the end of the study.

The adoption of the UNCRPD and the resulting increase in requirements for universities and the representatives for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses have changed their fields of activity and thus increased the workload. The representative is structurally involved in the planning and implementation of building measures and in the revision of legal regulations. The appointee advises the university management and administration on the structurally barrier-free further development of study conditions and the development of appropriate provisions. In doing so, they also support the implementation of compensation for disadvantages, for example in the coordination and provision of student employees to supervise examinations. They contribute to the professionalization of university members with regard to the interests of people with disabilities and their needs for overcoming internal university barriers through further training measures. They are a member of the inclusion team and participate in the steering groups for digital and structural accessibility as well as the student health management.

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They prepare statements at the request of the social welfare agencies (social welfare and youth welfare offices, student services (BAföG and barrier-free housing), communicates with doctors and therapists or clinics with regard to the preparation of statements or expert reports for disadvantage compensation or applications for hardship. They are involved in the selection of scholarship holders within the framework of the Potsdam University Scholarship and participate in the selection process for undergraduate and postgraduate degree programs with restricted admissions within the framework of the quota for exceptional hardship (hardship quota). Furthermore, the representative prepares information material for prospective students and students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses and organizes information events. They must cooperate with various structural units of the university and participate in networks of representatives in the state of Brandenburg and Germany. The work of the representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness can no longer be carried out as an honorary position due to the large number and complexity of the tasks mentioned. Corresponding compensation must therefore be provided for the area from which the representative is appointed.

Through the acquisition of third-party funding for the ESF project "A University for All - Designing Inclusive Studies" by the Student Counselling Centre, its counselling services have been expanded over the past six years to include a counselling service for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses, which is specialized and covers all study phases, on academic work and the organization of studies, and thus has been significantly improved. Information events are regularly organized by the project staff

and workshops for students as well as further training for teachers and administrative staff. Due to the increasing number of students and the special challenges posed by the Corona pandemic, the need for advice for specific target groups has increased noticeably, but the project staff are able to cope well with this by means of new advisory and event formats. The project's specific focus on consolidating students' core competences in academic work and in organizing their studies - especially after long interruptions to their studies and as a preventive measure - has so far been a unique feature of the University of Potsdam. Further funding of the long-standing project from third-party funds is no longer possible. The quality of the counselling and support services for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness can therefore only be maintained or expanded if the fields of activity of the ESF project "A University for All - Designing Inclusive Studies" are accepted as permanent tasks and transferred to the regular university structure within the Central Student Counselling Office in the amount of 40 hours/ per week. Otherwise, when the project ends at the end of March 2021, a large part of the existing counselling services will not be able to be maintained.

The existing counselling services have so far focused on students who are aiming for a Bachelor's or Master's degree or the first law examination. For doctoral students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses, the writing services in the ESF project "A University for All - Designing Inclusive Studies" and the doctoral coaching of the Potsdam Graduate School (PoGS) offer initial points of contact.



In addition, a stronger involvement of the ZfQ Career Service department in advising the target group, especially on questions of starting a career with a disability and/or chronic illness¹¹ and internships, is important, as this topic has been neglected so far.

The topic of studying with disabilities already has a permanent place on the website and on the university's social media channels (Instagram and Facebook), but it should be the subject of articles even more often. The ZSB publishes information material (flyers, posters) on the main aspects of the topic. In the framework of the events of the ESF project "A University for All - Designing Inclusive Studies" began with a diversity-sensitive text and image design for informative materials, which were designed for the target group

Goals:

- *Identify and eliminate structural disadvantages of the target group*
- *Counteract dropouts and significantly longer study times, accompany transitions between study phases*
- *Improving the compatibility of studies with the challenges of other areas of life*
- *Expansion and consolidation of existing information and counselling services*
- *Increase the public profile of inclusion as a core concern of the University of Potsdam; improve the visibility of existing services and structures.*
- *Reflection of design paradigms and dismantling of stereotypes in text and image from an intersectional perspective*
- *Encourage NTA adoption behavior*
- *Preparation for and support in starting a career*

Measures already implemented:

- *Information sessions by the representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness on the topic of inclusion and studying with disabilities and/or chronic illness at the University Information Day*
- *Consultation on the application for immediate admission under the exceptional hardship quota*
- *Advice and support in the realization of NTA by the representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses, e.g. by providing student assistants.*
- *Individual counselling and group offers within the framework of the project "A University for All - Inclusive Studies" on scientific work and study organization.*

¹¹ This includes support in the development of individual application strategies (addressing the impairment in the letter of application, interview

preparation) as well as profile enhancement by revealing and activating existing resources and competences.

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Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Study orientation	
Continuation of the information events on the topic of Inclusion in teaching and studies (d), (e)	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness
Continuation of the information events on the topic of Studying with a disability/chronic illness, e.g. at the university information day (d), (e)	ZSB
Links in the general Online Self-Assessment (OSA) to the study orientation of the University of Potsdam on the following topics "Study with impairment" (b), (e)	ZfQ Career Service Division, OSA Development Team
Application & Enrolment	
Comprehensive counselling on the overall context of application and enrolment for target group (b), (d), (e)	ZSB
Identify accessibility of proficiency tests and adapt if necessary (a)	Representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness in cooperation with the relevant offices
Study entry	
Counselling on entering and organizing studies (c), (d), (e)	ZSB in cooperation with the responsible persons from the
Welcome event for target group at the beginning of each winter semester (c), (d)	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness
Course of studies	
Create empowerment offers (e.g. meeting opportunities and exchange of experiences) for target group (a), (d)	Representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness, KfC
Improve information offers on stays abroad or motivate target group (c), (d)	International Office
Continuation of regular group writing opportunities for students and doctoral students (a), (b), (c), (d)	ZSB
Development of prevention offers on the topic of "health in studies" (a), (b), (c), (d)	Representative for people with disabilities and/or chronic illness, University sports and the "Student Health Management" project

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Development and implementation of information offers on internships, part-time jobs, alternative practice acquisition and stays abroad improve or motivate target group; resource-oriented individual counselling and support for real career orientation (a), (h)	ZfQ Career Service and University College International Office
Design and provide support services for students who wish to resume their studies after a longer interruption (e.g. due to illness, care and child-raising periods) (a), (b), (c), (d)	ZSB
Graduation and transitions	
Creation of a short webcast video on the website for students with disabilities on the possibilities of support when entering the profession (low-threshold and contactless provision of information; without having to come out to counselling centers) (a), (e), (h)	ZfQ Career Service Division
Development of concepts to increase employability or promote entry into the primary labor market; counselling on possible transitions (Ba, Ma, PhD, abroad, start-up, etc.) and the respective individual application strategies and profile development and presentation; coaching on attitude and dealing with the impairment in job interviews (a), (h)	ZfQ Career Service Division
Presentation of successful career entries of graduates with impairments at the University of Potsdam on the career pages of the Career Service (a), (e), (h)	ZfQ Career Service Division
Networking with the Central International Placement Office (ZAV), the Information and Counselling Centre for Studies and Disability (IBS), the University of Potsdam's Partner Circle, counselling centers for people with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses and special employers with exclusive career entry programs and trainee positions for graduates with severe disabilities (h)	ZfQ Career Service, representative for students and staff with disabilities and/or or chronic illnesses
Promotion	
Needs assessment and development of counselling services for doctoral students with disabilities and/or chronic illness (a), (b), (c), (d)	ZSB in cooperation with the responsible persons from the departments
overarching	
Design and dissemination of target group-oriented information materials (e), (f)	ZSB, Representative for Students with Disabilities
Revision, expansion and maintenance of the overview website "Inclusive study" (e), (f)	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness, Student Marketing Officer, Press and Public Relations Office

2.2.4 Further education and professionalization

As already formulated at the beginning, inclusion is a cross-sectional task that should be addressed at all levels of the university and considered and anchored in all its structures. Accordingly, it is important that all members of the university be given the opportunity to further educate themselves on the topic of inclusion and to professionalize their actions in this regard. Due to the sometimes high fluctuation of staff at the university, the continuity of corresponding offers must be ensured as well as their visibility.

Due to the increasingly heterogeneous student body, the demand from teachers for further training in the area of diversity-appropriate teaching has risen in recent years. The university has already taken up the issue and taken it into account/organized it in the continuing education program. In addition, in its mission statement on teaching and in the proposals for measures to implement the mission statement on teaching at the University of Potsdam, the university has formulated its intention to increasingly meet the needs of teachers for further training measures in higher education didactics and support offered for the practical implementation of internal differentiation within learning groups, for target-group-specific teaching, as well as for student and competence orientation. To this end, teachers are to be continuously supported by central institutions, and existing support services are to be expanded. Student and competence orientation should be integrated into the methodology of continuing education programs. The measures formulated are suitable for improving teaching practice at the University of Potsdam; however, for the creation of an inclusive university,

additional in-depth reflection with regard to the existing barriers in organizational and administrative structures at all levels of the university is necessary.

Since 2008, students who are being trained as tutors and mentors at the Zessko and at the ZSB have attended a module on the topic of inclusion that is integrated into the training and designed by the representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness. In this way, the idea of inclusion is carried into the student body.

Goals:

- *Establishing inclusion as a crosscutting theme in existing and future further education and training courses for the various status groups at the university.*
- *Increase the visibility of specific training and further education offers on the topic of inclusion.*
- *Continuation and expansion of the specific training and further education programs on various aspects of inclusion for the different status groups at the university.*
- *Comprehensive collection of materials for self-study and practical implementation of various aspects of inclusion at the University of Potsdam.*

Measures already implemented:

- *Further education and training for teachers on e-teaching, e-learning and other higher education didactic topics with a focus on diversity-appropriate teaching via ZfQ, sqb and the PoGS*
- *Further training for teachers on compensating for disadvantages and other aspects of an inclusive university by the representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses and the staff of the project "A university for all" - making studying inclusive" via sqb.*

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
External providers of further education and training at the University of Potsdam are encouraged to consider inclusion as a cross-cutting issue (a)	sqb, consultant for quality management in administration
Continuous internal and inter-university training and further education for teachers on the design of inclusive and diversity-friendly teaching and examinations (especially on the universal design approach)	ZfQ, Department of Teaching and Media, sqb, external-providers
Existing specific further education and training offers on the topic of inclusion are more strongly networked and advertised (b)	ZfQ, sqb, PÖ, Faculties
Continuation of existing specific training and further education offers for teachers and administrative staff: inside on the topic of inclusion (especially on compensation for disadvantages, applications for hardship, communication in conflict situations) (c),(d)	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness, ZSB
Continuation of the module on "Inclusive University" in the Training for tutors and mentors, e.g. of the Zessko and Student advisors in the ZSB (c),(d)	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness, ZSB
Training on the development of accessible teaching and learning materials (e.g. in software applications) (d)	ZIM, Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness
Development of materials on the topic of inclusion (guides/handouts/teaching videos) for self-study (e.g. on NTA, design of accessible teaching and documents) (e)	Representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness ZIM, ZfQ

In-house training for staff in administration and technology on disadvantage compensation and other aspects of an inclusive university by the representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illness and the staff of the project "A university for all - inclusive studies".

All trainings for the mentors and tutors trained by the Zessko and the Faculty of Humanities as well as for the student advisors in the ZSB include a compulsory module on the topic of inclusion at the University of Potsdam conducted by the representative for students with disabilities and the staff of the project "A University for All - Inclusive Studies".

2.2.5 Support programs

As already explained, students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses are more likely to exceed the standard period of study than their fellow students. Although the BAföG Act provides for funding beyond the maximum funding period in certain cases (§ 15 paragraph 3, number 1 and number 5 BAföG), the application procedure and the provision of the relevant evidence is often experienced by students as emotionally stressful and time- and energy-consuming. Students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses who are not entitled to BAföG funding or whose entitlement to it has expired are more likely to find themselves in a situation of financial need because it is not or only partially possible for them to pursue employment that secures their livelihood. Semester abroad and unscheduled internships

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are undertaken much less frequently in view of the complex organization, the financing and the extended study time without.

Furthermore, with regard to financial support and scholarships, students and doctoral candidates with disabilities and/or chronic illness fall through various grids because they cannot meet set criteria such as a certain age limit, standard period of study, outstanding grades, internships and experience in the country.

Due to a lack of funding and limited employment opportunities alongside their studies, as well as longer study durations, the hurdles for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses to take up a doctorate are particularly high.

The group is thus disadvantaged with regard to their participation in education and their professional opportunities.

Goals:

- *Seeking cooperation with the Potsdam Student Union in applying for and receiving funding from the emergency fund.*
- *Targeted support for students and promoters with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses*

Measures already implemented:

- *Involvement of the representative for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses in the selection of applicants for the Potsdam university scholarship*
- *Career Service and Universitätskolleg advise students on the application documents, e.g. for the Potsdam University Scholarship.*

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Reviewing and, if necessary, modifying existing funding programs	PoGS, ZfQ Career Service and Student Representative with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses
Promotion of stays abroad (studies and internships)	Provide information materials and "best practice"/experience reports, International Office/ZfQ- Career Service area

2.2.6 Evaluation

"In September 2019, the University of Potsdam became the first German state university to be re-accredited without any conditions and has now once again proven that its quality assurance system in the area of study and teaching is suitable for achieving the qualification goals. This means that the University of Potsdam is entitled to carry out the accreditation of study programs internally until 30.09.2027." (Centre for Quality Development in Teaching and Studies at the University of Potsdam 2020).

As a system-accredited higher education institution, it ensures that the goals it has set for itself in teaching and learning are achieved

and will be carried out. In the process, it will also be examined whether the goals in teaching and studies stated in the mission statement, which are also applied here in the inclusion concept, are being achieved.

Within the framework of the student panel, information is currently being obtained on individual students' study paths, evaluations, motivations and competences. On this basis, statements can be made about the influences of individual and study-related factors on the study paths and career transitions of students for different cohorts. The data from students with disabilities/chronic illnesses are particularly relevant with regard to the further development of this concept.

This overall concept serves as an instrument for promoting equal opportunities and participation for students and staff with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses. Therefore, in addition to the concrete implementation, the continuous evaluation and further development of the concept with the participation of the entire university will play a central role. Among other things, the staff of the Central Student Advisory Service and the Inclusion Team will offer regular case consultations and interventions as well as regular needs-oriented discussions in the faculties, central institutions and student bodies.

Goals:

- *Further or continuous gain in knowledge about the course of studies of students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses at the University of Potsdam.*
- *Consideration of the goals stated in the inclusion concept at the level of the study programs within the framework of internal accreditation*
- *Exchange, reflection and further development on the measures described in the inclusion concept*

Measures already implemented:

- *Participation in the study best2 - Impaired Studying of the German Student Union (DSW)*

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Reviewing and, if necessary, supplementing the criteria for internal accreditation with regard to the topic area "inclusive higher education institution"	ZfQ, Higher Education Studies Division
Participation in the surveys of the German Student Union (Beeinträchtigt studieren)	Inclusion team in cooperation with the ZfQ
Review and, if necessary, further development of the student panel with regard to students with disabilities and/or chronic disease	ZfQ, Higher Education Studies Department, Inclusion Team, if necessary external experts
Systematic evaluation of counselling concerns and complaints with the aim of reducing problems	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness
Regular: Case consultations with teachers, subject advisors and examination boards	Representative for Students with Disabilities and/or Chronic Illness, ZSB

2.3 Summary of resources needed

1	Establishment of additional counselling capacity in the ZSB with a work focus on inclusion	2 x 20h/week TVL 13
1	Relief from other tasks for the Commissioner	to the extent necessary
2	Acquire third-party funding to establish a project position with corresponding additional counselling capacity in the Career Service	1 x 30h/week TVL 13
2	Budget for external experts	5.000,00 € p.a.



3. *Field of action* *Employees*

3.1 *Initial situation, actors & structures*

As one of the largest employers in the state of Brandenburg, the University of Potsdam has a special responsibility with regard to inclusive thinking and action. According to the Brandenburg Disability Equality Act (cf. Section 1 §2 BbgBGG) of 2018, the university is obligated to prevent discrimination against people with disabilities and to ensure equal participation - this means in concrete terms that all employees with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses must be guaranteed equal opportunities and non-discriminatory participation in working life.



Since a large number of the corresponding clinical pictures have a long-term course and manifest themselves in the ageing process, people who are at risk of disability must also be included in these considerations.

The inclusion work described in this section of the inclusion concept focuses in particular on the group of severely disabled¹² and equal employees of the UP as well as all employees with a degree of impairment below 50. With the adoption of the inclusion agreement of XXX, the framework conditions for the promotion of employees with a severe disability or equal status have been established.

In accordance with the German Social Code (SGB IX), the representative body for severely disabled persons (SBV) supports the interests of employees with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses. The SBV also advises employees on issues such as applications for declarations and applications for compensation for disadvantages. It supports employees in their return to work after a break due to illness as part of the company integration management (BEM). The SBV is also involved in recruitment and appointment procedures (cf. § 178 SGB IX).

The employer's representative for people with disabilities supports and monitors the employer with regard to compliance with the legal obligations and promotes general inclusion work.

¹² Impaired persons with a GdB of at least 50 are defined as severely disabled persons. The degree of disability is a measure of the severity of the impairment caused by a disability and is determined in the state of

Brandenburg by the Land Office for Social Affairs and Supply (LASV) on application.

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They are, alongside the representative for impaired and/or chronically ill students and the SBV, a core member of the inclusion team. In their role, they are the link between impaired and/or chronically ill employees and the SBC and the employer. Their tasks are similar to those of the inclusion officer, who is required by law under section 181 of Book IX of the Social Code. Section 166 of Book IX of the Social Code also makes the adoption of an inclusion agreement mandatory. Such an agreement is to be adopted this year for the University of Potsdam. It was developed together with the stakeholders in the field of inclusion and the General Staff Council (GPR) and is intended to help improve the working conditions of employees with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses at the university.

Existing measures to improve working conditions for the target group are currently largely related to occupational integration management (BEM) and, in individual cases, to support, for example from the areas of self-management and health promotion.

3.1.1 Information about the target group

In order to present as accurate a picture as possible of the target group, it is first necessary to make a distinction between the groups. In addition to severely disabled persons with a GdB of 50 or more and persons who have the same status as them (group 1), the target group also includes persons who have a GdB of less than 50 and who do not have the same status as them, but are nevertheless impaired (group 2). This also includes people who consciously or unconsciously suffer from a chronic or mental impairment (group 3) or people who are threatened by disabilities (group 4). The identification of groups 2 and 3 is essential in order to include the non-registered impaired employees in the calculation of the severely disabled rate, if applicable. In addition, there is the group of those who are at risk of disability/ impairment (group 4). Preventive measures must be developed and implemented for this group.

At present, there are few figures and information that is more detailed available, especially on the aforementioned groups of people 2 to 4 at the University of Potsdam, from which concrete measures can be derived.

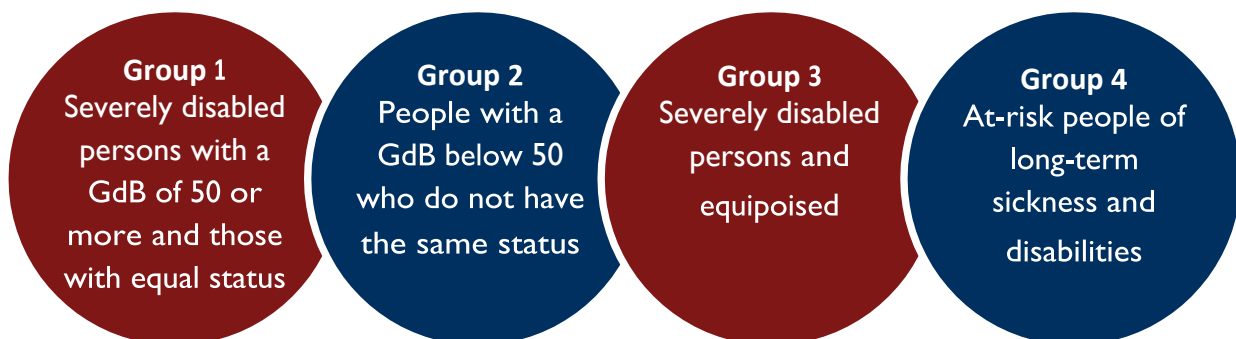


Fig. 1: Classification of the target group into four clusters (own representation)

At the end of 2019, there were around 7.9 million severely disabled people living in Germany. As the reports of the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis) show, this was around 136,000 or 1.8 percent more than at the end of 2017. It is also apparent that the percentage of severely disabled people increases with age. If one looks at the group of people with severe disabilities according to the type of impairment, more than half of all impairments are not visible. According to statistics from the city administration of the state capital Potsdam, these include mental and nervous disabilities, as well as impairments of the internal organs, the cardiovascular system and the musculoskeletal system (LHP, statistics and elections 2017). Diseases from these areas are predominantly chronic and can cause severe consequential and long-term damage. In 2018, 15.9 percent of disabilities in Potsdam were also due to mental, nervous or emotional illnesses (cf. Arbeitsgruppe Planung und Steuerung 2018). The aforementioned disabilities lead to considerable impairments in the lives of affected people even below a GdB of 50 and thus below the threshold for severe disability.

Psychologically induced sick leave and early retirement are on the rise in Germany (cf. brochure on the 3rd Health Report of the RKI, 2015: 43). According to the Robert Koch Institute (RKI), 33.3 percent of the population are affected by at least one mental disorder each year. It can be assumed that the number of people with mental disorders is rising. It can be assumed that 33 percent of mental illnesses occur in comorbidity. Common comorbidities are anxiety, depression and addictive disorders (cf. brochure on the 3rd Health Report of the RKI, 2015; Klinikum Ernst von Bergmann gemeinnützige GmbH 2017).

In Potsdam, the number of days due to incapacity for work (AU days) and the number of early retirements due to mental disorders are increasing (2016 statista.com).

The University of Cologne surveyed all employees in technology, administration and science on the topic of impairments in an online survey from December 2019 to February 2020. Of 857 employees surveyed, 333 stated that they live with one or more long-term health impairments (just under 40 % of the participating employees).

One in five of the employees with health impairments (8.3 %) has a severely disabled person's card or has been granted equal status. In the survey, most of these employees (85.3%) stated that their impairments were not or not at all noticeable. The interviewees stated that they were rather reserved or even not very open with their supervisors and colleagues regarding an open attitude to their impairment. Some fear repercussions for their interaction with them or their performance, or suspect negative consequences such as discriminatory behavior.

The University of Potsdam employed approximately 3,000 full-time staff in 2019. Officially, 60 people are listed as severely disabled. In addition, there are 19 people with equal status and two people with multiple disabilities. For 2019, the severely disabled rate was 2.41 percent. The statutory quota for severely disabled persons is five percent, which means that the University of Potsdam would have to pay a compensatory levy of over 150,000 euros annually. However, since the university is an institution of the state, the state's rate for severely disabled persons is decisive for the compensatory levy.

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In order to be able to analyze the situation of the target group even better, it is worth taking a look at the age structure of employees and the figures in the absence reports of the health insurance funds.

Proportion of permanent employees by age group

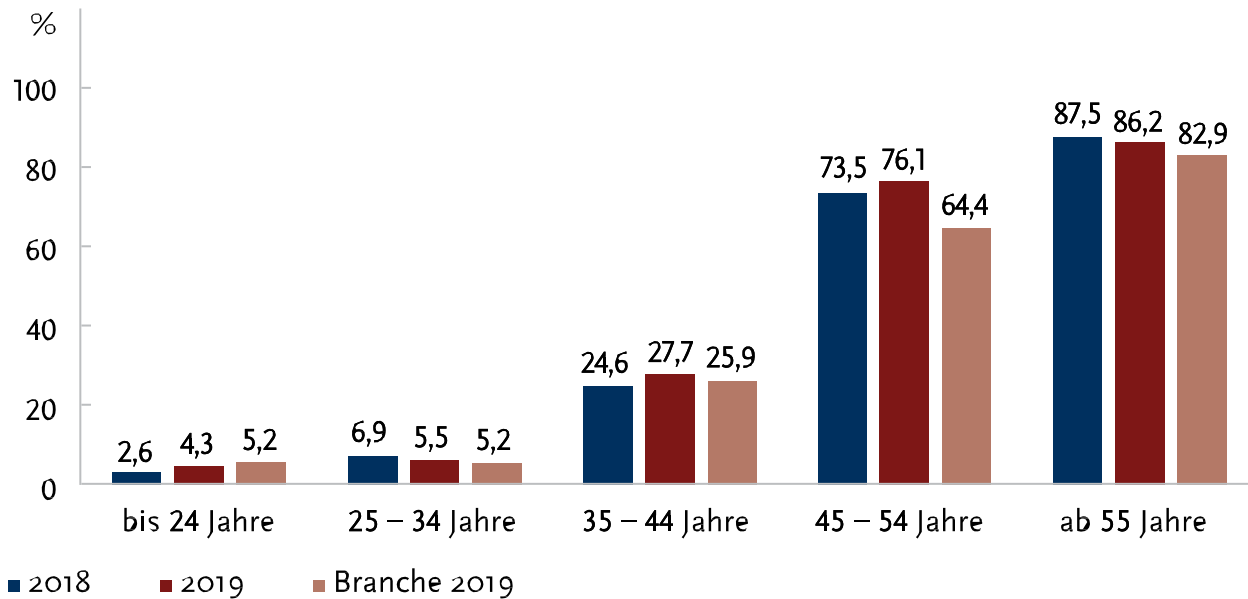


Fig. 2: Proportion of permanent employees by age group (Techniker Krankenkasse 2020: 16)

According to the 2019 TK Mistime Report, it is predominantly young people aged between 30 and 39 who work at the University of Potsdam. These are primarily academic staff from teaching and research on fixed-term contracts (corresponds to about 70 percent of all employees). The remaining 30 percent of employees are older workers with permanent positions. These are mainly found in organization, administration and company management.

The average case duration by age group

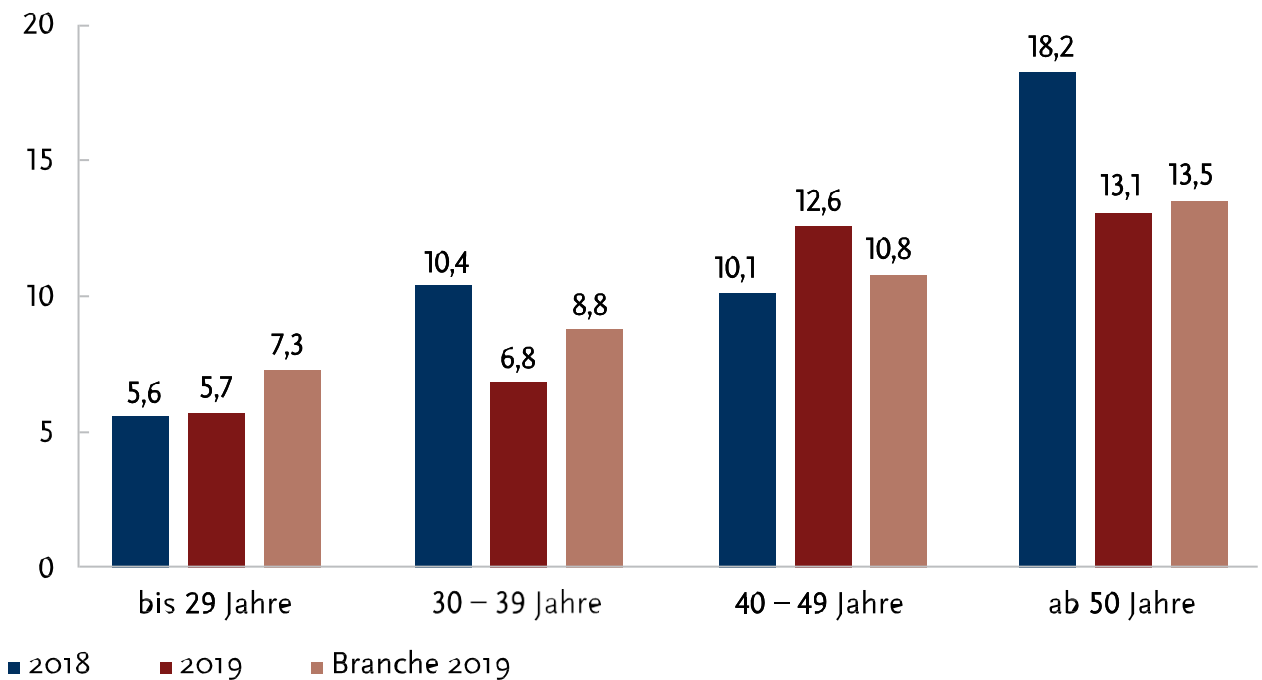


Fig. 3: Average case duration by age group (Techniker Krankenkasse 2020: 32)

When analyzing sick leave, it is noticeable that the average case duration per sick note becomes longer the older the employees are.

A long duration of illness is characteristic of long-term and chronic illnesses.

AU frequency and duration

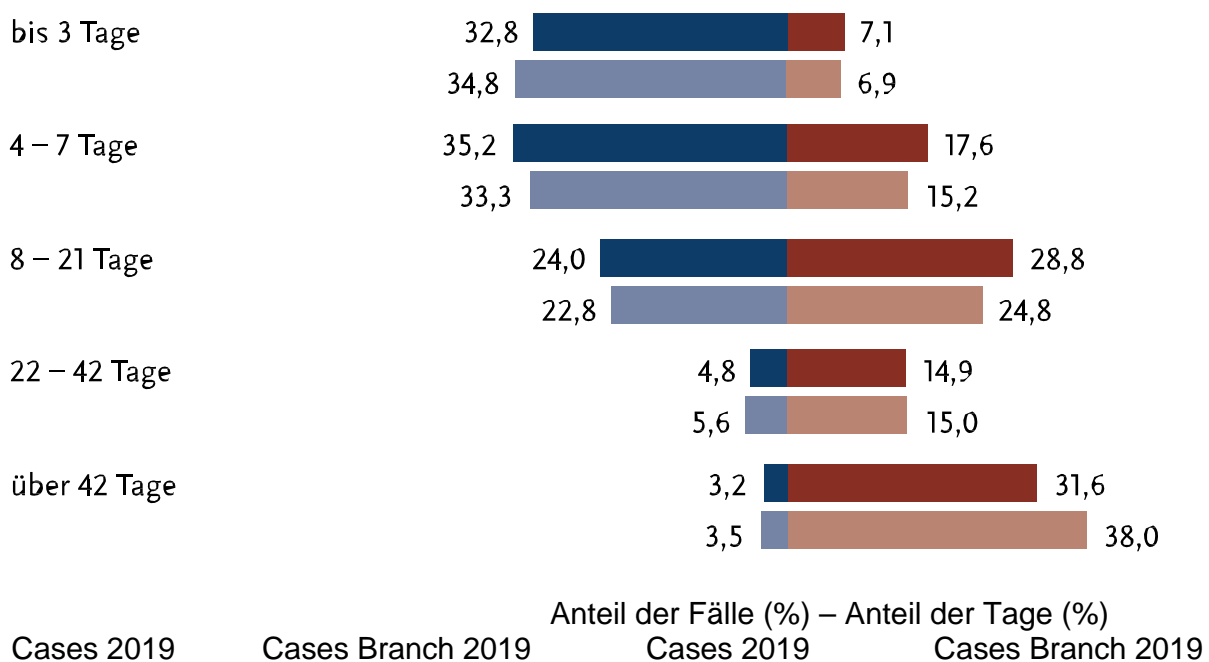


Fig. 4: Frequency and duration of sick leave (Techniker Krankenkasse 2020: 29)

Figure 4 shows that a relatively large number of cases of incapacity to work (AU cases) are associated with few days of illness. It is also evident that relatively few cases involve a high and long duration of illness with up to more than 42 days. This also includes chronic or mental illnesses, which can also lead to long-term impairments. In these cases in particular, it is important to examine whether targeted prevention could prevent the long absence due to illness. Maintaining the workforce is not only in the interest of the employees, but also interesting from an economic point of view.

Distribution of AU days among the max. ten most important ICD main groups according to share of total AU days in your company in 2019

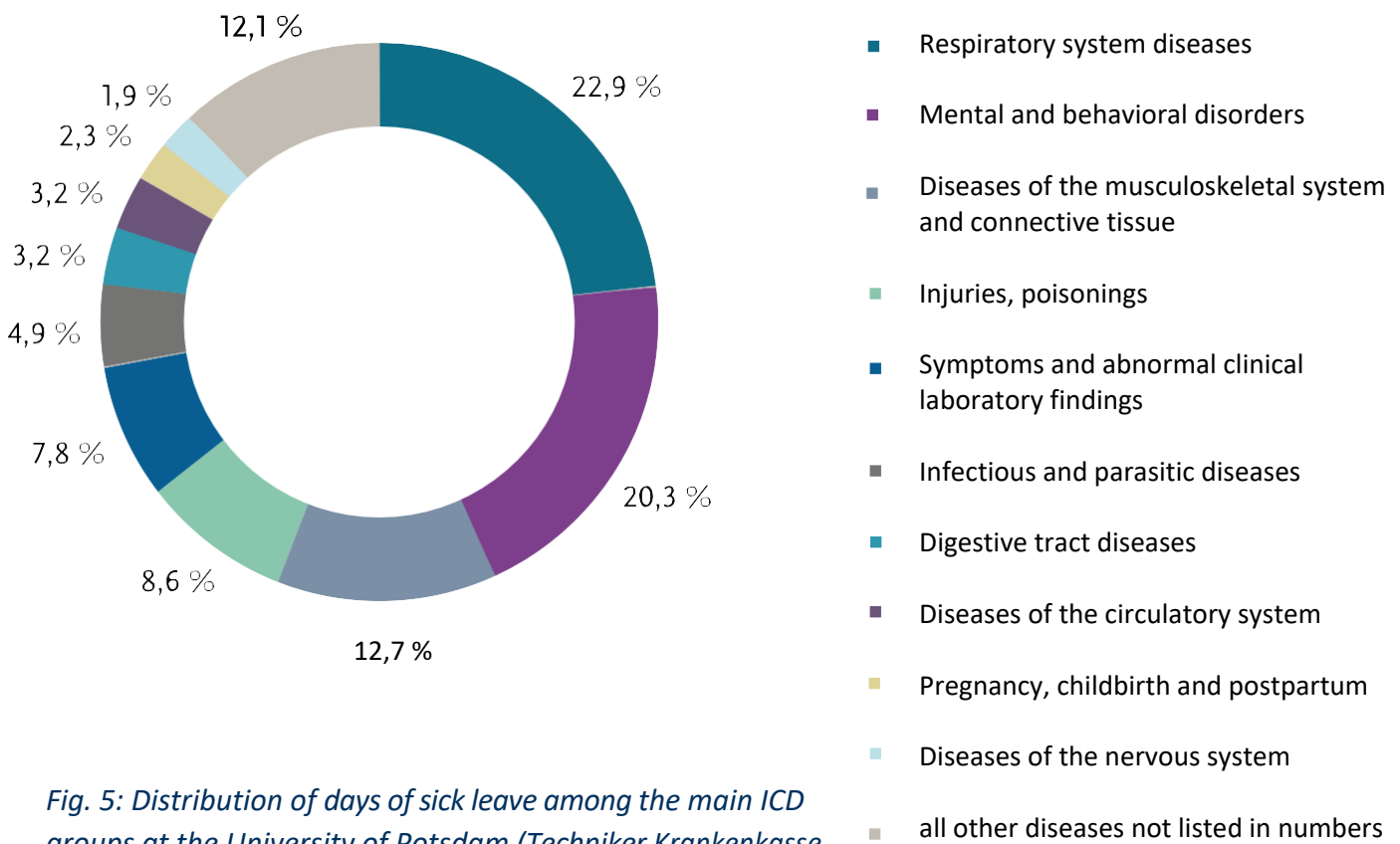


Fig. 5: Distribution of days of sick leave among the main ICD groups at the University of Potsdam (Techniker Krankenkasse 2020: 42)

The TK report also shows that almost the same number of employees suffer from mental illness and half as many suffer from mental illness. The main reason for this is that people with musculoskeletal disorders are more likely to be absent from work at than those with respiratory disorders.

Distribution of days of sick leave among the most important main ICD groups according to share of total days of sick leave

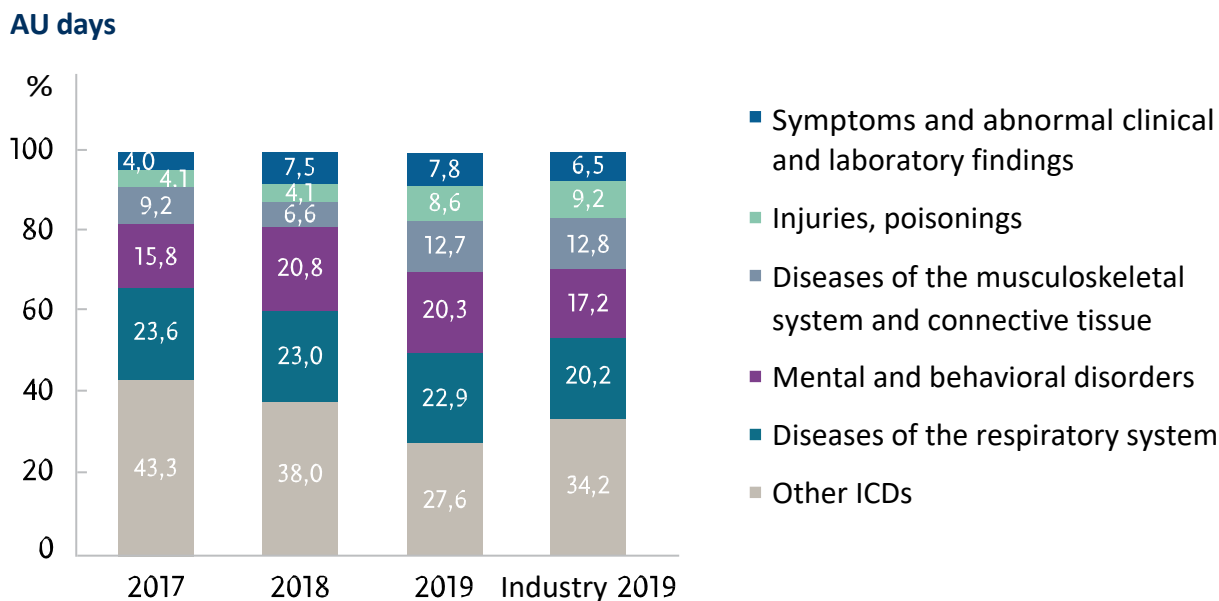


Fig. 6: Distribution of days of sick leave among the main ICD groups (Techniker Krankenkasse 2020: 41)

Figure 6 clearly shows that these figures are similar to those for the sector as a whole. The developments within the university thus reflect the development of society as a whole.

3.1.2 Needs

In the previous section, current data was presented in connection with the specific target groups. Can the University of Potsdam meet the resulting challenges? Of the above-mentioned sub-groups 1 - 4 of the main target group, support for severely disabled persons is currently provided primarily through individual support from the SBV. Impaired persons who do not reach this level or are not registered are currently not taken into account.

There is no institutionalized psychological counselling for employees. The way in which company reintegration measures (BEM) are implemented should be intensified.

Information and counselling services are currently not sufficiently available or communicated. Specific support services for those affected in all sub-groups and further awareness-raising measures (including for managers) should be initiated. Formalized procedures for anti-discrimination are not yet in place.

3.2 Goals and measures

With the help of inclusion work, legal requirements are to be met and exceeded.

In the following section of the University of Potsdam's inclusion concept, specific goals and measures of inclusion work for employees with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses within the framework of university development are presented.

FIELD OF ACTION EMPLOYEES

Consistent implementation of the goals contributes to the University of Potsdam's role as a role model for good working conditions in the state of Brandenburg. Successful and sustainable inclusion work in accordance with the identified needs expresses the university's commitment to its employees. Measurable and visible results increase the competitive advantage and improve the external image of the university.

In the long term, inclusive conditions lead to higher employee satisfaction and work motivation. This makes more efficient and potential-oriented personnel management possible. Long-term sick leave due to chronic and mental illnesses can be reduced.

3.2.1 Status quo determination

The registration of severely disabled employees is obligatory by law and the quota of severely disabled persons must be sent regularly to the Integration Office via the Ministry of Science, Research and Culture (MWFK) this is currently done via Department 3, provided that a severely disabled employee or employee with equal status reports there accordingly. Currently there are no additional structures or a multi-way system for recording impairments of all degrees. The reporting of the available figures to the officers entrusted with inclusion work currently only takes place at irregular intervals. An evaluation of the status quo regarding the impaired employees is advisable.

This does not only apply to the severely disabled and those with equal status, but also to people with impairments below GdB 50 as well as to chronically and mentally ill employees and those at risk of disability.

Quarterly reporting by the D3 on current impaired and assimilated employees	ZfQ, Higher Education Studies Division
including "clustering" of employees according to certain criteria	D3, representative for severely disabled employees, inclusion team
Search for studies and projects on impairments at the workplace/among employees at universities/at the University of Potsdam	Representative for severely disabled employees
Analysis and, if necessary, optimization of occupational integration management (BEM) and preparation of a leaflet	Lead D3 in consultation with BGM and inclusion team
Conduct impairment surveys	Representative for severely disabled employees with experts in teaching and research
Positive publicity: advertising regarding the disadvantage compensation, checking the possibility of disadvantage compensation for persons with a GdB below 50	D3
Engaging in dialogue: Inclusion cafés	Inclusion team
Draft and distribute checklists for the GdB application and recognized impairments	Representative for severely disabled employees

3.2.2 *Quality assurance and Professionalization*

The signing of the inclusion agreement lays the foundation for joint inclusion work. So far, there has only been an occasional exchange between the individual participants without pursuing concrete common goals. Regular networking meetings and active networking within the university but also beyond the structures of the university in strong networks of the city, the state and the federal are necessary to develop and implement common goals and measures, learn from each other and develop comprehensive standardizations.



Professionalization for the topics of disability and chronic illness are essential for the reduction of discrimination and exclusion. For staff in technology and administration, it is relevant to deal with the increasing heterogeneity of the student body and inclusive thinking so that, for example, administrative processes can be reflected and adapted and communication barriers can be dismantled. Creating openness for the topic is therefore a fundamental task and must always be considered in the long term if inclusion is to succeed. Currently, there is no developed awareness-raising strategy that includes all stakeholders. Easy access to information, media presence of the topic and transparent communication chains support education and counselling equally.

Equal participation, if possible without outside help, is only possible if barriers are constantly removed, individual compensation is found and transparent, standardized and easily accessible information and counselling opportunities are available. Corresponding structures and programs in the respective fields of action play a major role here. In addition to specific offers on the topic of inclusion in studies and teaching as well as in administration, in view of the large number of other further education and training offers and the limited time resources of staff members of the various status groups, it is important that the topic is linked to other topics as far as possible and is thus included in many offers. In addition, all staff members should have access to information material on the implementation of inclusive structures in the various fields of work at the university.

FIELD OF ACTION EMPLOYEES

Regular meetings of the Inclusion Team	ZfQ, Higher Education Studies Division
Regular meetings of Potsdam and Brandenburg universities	D3, representative for severely disabled employees, inclusion team
Regular exchange with universities nationwide	Representative for severely disabled employees, SBV, inclusion team
Appointment of a Grants Officer	Inclusion team
Involvement of counselling centers such as the EUTB, the individual counselling centers such as Autismus e.V., DBSV, Achse e.V., PSD etc.	SBV, representative for severely disabled employees
Revise the relevant university websites and publicize existing support and counselling services, e.g. Occupational Health Management (OHM)	Web administrators of the corresponding groups
Stronger presence in the Steering Committee on Health - mandatory reporting point	Representative for severely disabled employees, SBV
Networking with BGM - common theme for actions within the university 2021: Diversity and health	Representative for severely disabled employees, KfC, Head of BGM
All publicly effective and cross-sectoral large-scale events should be carried out with barrier-free concepts	Organizer, representative for severely disabled employees
Regular consultation and education of all employees (inclusion workshop) to enable the active participation of employees	Representative for severely disabled employees, inclusion team, BGM
Continuous training and networking opportunities for all employees with a specific field of work in inclusion/diversity	Internal/external providers
Participation in the Diversity Audit	Inclusion team, KfC

3.2.3 Increase in the rate of severely disabled persons

The unemployment rate for severely disabled people in Germany in 2018 was 11.2 percent (cf. statistics of the Federal Employment Agency 2020: 4). The comparable general unemployment rate was 6.5 percent. The statutory employment quota for persons with disabilities in companies is at least 5 percent.

The University of Potsdam, with its current 81 employees with disabilities and their peers, currently has 2.41 percent. However, the actual percentage of employees with disabilities is possibly higher. It can be assumed that there are employees who do not know about their impairment or do not report it

because they are not aware of their entitlements or because they are worried about possible disadvantages in the work environment after disclosure. Similar fears may also lead to the concealment of impairments during recruitment procedures. In addition to a general inclusion-friendly recruitment culture, there is a lack of structures to reach suitable people with disabilities in a more targeted manner or to facilitate their path to a successful application procedure. Places for disabled trainees should also be considered. With its diverse fields of work in the non-academic and academic sectors, the university wants to help give more people with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses a chance on the primary labor market.

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Creation of inclusive apprenticeship places with regulations on employment contracts	D3
Examination of the possibility of taking over temporarily employed severely disabled persons in permanent positions (takeover if possible)	D3
Creation of a funding guide by researching nationwide and international projects with a focus on higher education funding and integration opportunities for people with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses	D3, Representative for Severely Disabled Employees, KfC
Further development of the job advertisement process with involvement of the SBC, early appointment procedures	Representative for severely disabled employees, D3, SBV
Training and employment of people with disabilities and/or chronic illness, through targeted approach, the granting of work placements and the proactive establishment of inclusive workplaces	D3, Representative for severely disabled employees

3.2.4 *Improving the flow of information, advice and visibility*

Currently, impaired employees mainly receive counselling through the SBV. Cooperation with the employer's representative, Department 3 and the student representatives should increase the synergetic effect and visibility of inclusion work at the University of Potsdam. In addition to content-related networking, structured and clear media networking can enormously increase the accessibility of the target group. Thereby it is a matter of not only organizational aspects, but about the way the target group is addressed, as they often do not feel addressed by phrases such as "disability" or "illness".

In terms of university health management, measures that relate to employees with psychological limitations and disabilities are also increasingly coming into focus. For the sake of sustainability and with regard to future developments, it is also necessary to document the utilization in order to be able to create adapted offers.

FIELD OF ACTION EMPLOYEES

Quick and easy contact with those affected through concrete provision of information and advice at inclusion cafés, SBV office hours and inclusion workshop, flyers, brochures, checklists	Representative for severely disabled employees, SBV, inclusion team
Revisions and links on the websites BGM, Diversity, SBV, own homepage inclusion team ("pinboard")	SBV, BGM, KfC, Inclusion Team
Establish complaints management - already implemented in the course of online access freedom through link similar to data protection	ZIM, representative for severely disabled employees
Peer counselling	Representative for severely disabled employees, SBV and
Planning, implementation and evaluation of an inclusion day alternately at the different locations	Inclusion team, decision-makers

3.2.5 Expand prevention

Special attention in the context of inclusion work is needed by all those employees whose impairments are mild, possibly even reversible, or whose progress could be slowed down. Employees with chronic or mental illnesses or employees whose disabilities are accompanied by secondary illnesses also need measures to reduce the risk of disability to limit the progression of the disease. At this point, those who consciously or unconsciously experience negative effects on their health in the long

term due to unfavorable living conditions or behavioral patterns must also be considered. Coordinated packages of measures and a common orientation towards the corresponding goals are basic prerequisites for successful implementation.

Improving the ergonomics of workplaces	Representative for severely disabled employees, SBV, BGM, company doctor
Within the framework of health management, demand-oriented counselling and active support services for employees to preventively and sustainably secure the ability to work	Representative for severely disabled employees and BGM, steering committee Health
Action days and annual themes together with the BGM and the area for equal opportunities under the motto "Inclusion and Diversity"	BGM, KfC, Inclusion Team
Revision of the BEM measures (responsiveness and implementation sensitivity)	BGM, representative for severely disabled employees
Psychological counselling services for employees	BGM, representative for severely disabled employees

3.2.6 *Strengthen awareness, Reduce discrimination*

The unequal treatment of people with disabilities often happens subtly or even unconsciously. In addition to bureaucratic solutions such as quotas and compensatory solutions, the social aspect of cooperation must be focused on more strongly. It is a matter of

appreciation and working towards making diversity the norm. In addition to general awareness-raising work, there must also be specific awareness-raising measures for key persons, who in turn influence other groups with their behavior. In addition to management and teaching staff, peer-to-peer effects should not be underestimated.

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Introduction of the Heavy-In-Order Badge Cover	Inclusion team
Public relations with banners, posters, flyers and online platforms etc. (e.g. red card for the disabled parking spaces)	Inclusion team, representative for severely disabled employees
Award of an Inclusion Prize	Inclusion Team, University Society
Action day - with age suit, wheelchair course, blind glasses, etc.	Inclusion team, BGM, KfC
Travelling exhibition roll-ups "Role models"	Inclusion Team, Representative for severely disabled employees, KfC, BGM

3.2.7 *Summary of required resources*

1	Relief from other tasks for the Commissioner	to the extent necessary
2	Support from occupational health management (with psychological counselling services)	to the extent necessary
3	Budget for external experts, if necessary by acquiring third party funding	5.000,00 € p.a.
3	Material resources	Min 5.000,00 € p.a.
3	Training, travel and further education costs for the commissioner	2,000.00 p.a.



4. *Field of action*

Accessibility

In order to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and to participate fully in all aspects of life, State Parties shall take appropriate measures with the aim of providing persons with disabilities with equal access to the physical environment, to means of transport, to information and communication, including information and communication technologies and systems, and to other services.

The rights of persons with disabilities must be guaranteed in all facilities and services open to or provided for the public in urban and rural areas (Art. 9 para. 1 UNCRPD).

Achieving accessibility is a dynamic process that can only be carried out gradually, taking into account the principle of proportionality. Accessibility is a target for the design of all areas of life. Specifically for individual regulatory areas, they are defined by European and DIN standards, general technical standards and based on the Equal Opportunities Act.

4.1 Digital accessibility

The creation of accessibility in the area of internal as well as external communication is a complex issue that requires continuous cooperation between the administration, the central institutions and the faculties. As a result of the decentralized structure of the University of Potsdam, the concept of accessibility on the University's website has been taken into account in a very heterogeneous manner. As part of the implementation of the EU directive 2016/2102 on barrier-free access to the websites and mobile applications of public bodies, the Digital Accessibility Steering Group is responsible for the implementation of the directive. First of all, a comprehensive stocktaking is necessary in order to identify problems and concrete needs for action. In the context of quality development and assurance of digital and analogue communication, access to information without special hurdles for students and staff with disabilities/chronic illnesses is to be implemented as a guiding principle.



FIELD OF ACTION ACCESSIBILITY

There are already various measures in this area: the ZfQ and the ZIM have been working, among other things, on improving the means and possibilities of inclusive digital study. There is successful cooperation between the Central Student Advisory Service and the ZIM in the realization of compensation for disadvantages through technical aids for the preparation of examinations and other study tasks and suitable premises for this purpose. The University Library offers a digitization service. Contact persons and appropriate information material are available for the most important questions about studying with a disability.

In the area of public relations and on the university's internal social media channels, the topic of studying with a disability already has its place, but must be given more consideration. The area of employees in this form is still not being

taken into account. With the help of a diversified text and image design, the University of Potsdam contributes to the dismantling of stereotypes and invisibilities not only of the target group "people with disabilities".

Goals:

- *Improve or standardize the accessibility of websites, mobile applications and information materials, making information on all key issues easily available.*
- *Increase the visibility of existing services in existing structures.*
- *Depending on the impairment, all university members are to be supported promptly with suitable technical aids without major bureaucratic hurdles. The resources required for the measures cannot yet be clearly determined and must be supplemented later when each specific measure is implemented.*

Possible measures	Responsibility for implementation
Checking platforms/learning management systems used with regard to accessibility	ZIM
Obligation to purchase barrier-free software	ZIM
Translation of the homepage of the university homepage in Easy language and embedding of sign language as a video	PÖ
Check websites of the University of Potsdam for accessibility and adapt them if necessary	all editors for websites of the University of Potsdam
Overview website: "UP inklusiv" with thematically relevant information from all fields of action	Representative for students and employees with impairments and chronic illness, SBV
Development of accessible guides and teaching videos for the creation and provision of accessible teaching materials, documents and forms	ZIM, ZfQ, Zentrale Abteilung, Commissioner for students and employees with impairments and chronic illnesses
Training courses on digital accessibility	ZIM, sqb, Chancellor's Office, external providers, ZfQ

4.2 Barrier-free campus

Removing barriers is the central task of an inclusive university. In this context, architectural accessibility is not only relevant for a certain group of people. The University of Potsdam is convinced that everyone benefits from accessibility. Therefore, it has set itself the goal of making all buildings barrier-free in the long term and enabling everyone to participate without restrictions. Due to the historical and partly listed buildings as well as the different spatial conditions of the three locations, access and accessibility are difficult.

Mobility for university members with impairments or chronic illnesses is currently problematic in some cases. Furthermore, there is a lack of signage in Braille and/or in easily readable form in the buildings. Guidance systems for the blind are missing almost everywhere. For students and employees with hearing impairments, the ZIM offers technical solutions for participation through lending devices.

A working group in the area of BSO is already taking stock. A further working group has been tasked with recording and taking stock of the structural requirements. The goal is to create a web-based, barrier-free presentation of the campus with information on accessibility. The current state of accessibility at the University of Potsdam will be made available, as a map for all three campuses on the University of Potsdam's website after the inventory has been completed. This will give everyone the opportunity to use a traffic light system to get an idea of accessibility before visiting a seminar room or office, so that they may organize help if necessary. Over the next few years, the rooms that are difficult to access will gradually disappear from the map as barriers are removed. The university is looking into installing new lifts and electronic doors, among other things. The next step will be to install guidance systems for the blind. A shortage of space is also an obstacle for a university that has set itself the goal of inclusion. However, the various new buildings by 2030 are also an opportunity for accessibility. The existing public transport connections between the three campuses are good.



Goals:

- *Create an overview of existing barriers*
- *Facilitate access to and within buildings*

Consideration of accessibility in all building projects, involvement of commissioners and SBV	HGP
Consideration of barriers via room allocation system	Time-Edit
Development of a feedback system on accessibility problems (lifts, lighting, other technology)	BSO/HGP
Conception and provision of a web-based accessible presentation of the campuses with information on accessibility	BSO, Digital Accessibility Steering Group, Mobile Accessibility Working Group
Creation of a concept for a guidance system for the blind	BSO, representative for students with disabilities/chronic illness, representative for severely disabled employees
Implementation of tactile guidance systems at all university locations (application by adhesive method)	BSO, HGP, Representative for Students with Disability/Chronic Illness, Representative for Severely Disabled Employees
Support and advice on applications for aids and workplace equipment	Representative for students with disabilities/chronic illness, Representative for severely disabled employees, D3, SBV
Examination of the technical and constructional possibilities for the implementation of elections that are as barrier-free as possible	Room allocation office, election committee

5. Next steps

This inclusion concept was presented and discussed at the follow-up event "A university for all - the University of Potsdam on the way to an inclusive university", which took place on 1 December 2020 in the Audimax on the New Palace campus. This was followed by a resolution in the Senate on 17.03.2021.

Inclusion work is to be anchored as a multi-faceted, permanent task at the strategic and operational level. With the adoption of the "Inclusion Agreement for the Integration of Severely Disabled People at the University of Potsdam", the composition of the inclusion team is determined, which takes over the prioritization of measures on the strategic level and centrally controls and coordinates the implementation of measures. Furthermore, the inclusion team is the central point of contact for suggestions for further inclusion measures. To support and advise the inclusion team, internal and external experts should be involved in specific topics. The authors of the inclusion concept would like to thank the administrative departments of the University of Potsdam that have already been involved for their contributions and participation in the development of the concept.

The implementation status of the measures as well as the achievement of objectives is to be reported and evaluated in the context of the half-yearly discussion rounds of the inclusion team. At the end of the implementation period (until 2030), the overall evaluation will take place for the purpose of securing results and monitoring success. On the basis of the evaluation results, the inclusion team will continue to discuss which measures are to be continued as permanent tasks, which measures are to be adapted in a more target-oriented manner or which measures require a longer implementation period. These should be taken up again with the previous implementation results as a starting point for a follow-up concept.

The inclusion concept is an important milestone for the University of Potsdam on its way to becoming an inclusive university. In addition to the implementation of this concept, the authors would like to appeal to all university members to think and act inclusively together.

At the operational level, the next step is to develop the projects for implementing the measures in a timely manner. The evaluation instruments with which the achievement of objectives is to be made measurable, are also to be defined.



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