

Statement of Practice:  
Disability Anticipatory Reasonable Adjustments for  
Students with Disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties  
2016-2017

Disclaimer: At the time publication the 'government's full review of Disabled Students Allowances is still ongoing. The University is aware that this has had substantial impact on the way a range of non –medical help support is delivered to disabled students who are funded by Student Finance England. Whilst some guidance has been issued, further guidance is anticipated and other funding bodies have still to make announcements. Library and Student Services is currently, on behalf of the University, conducting a continuous impact assessment of these changes to ensure that students continue to receive the support that is required for them to successfully apply and complete their chosen programmes of study.

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Defining Disability.....	3
3. Student Pre-entry information, Recruitment, Enrolment and Induction .....	4
4. Student Residential University Accommodation .....	4
5. University Campus Facilities .....	5
6. Libraries and Learning Resources .....	5
7. Information and Technology Service .....	6
8. Accessing Specialist Guidance and Services.....	6
9. Accessing the University's Physical Teaching Environment: Teaching Facilities and Classroom Technology .....	6
10. Accessing Teaching, Learning and Assessment.....	7
11. Accessing Placement Learning .....	7
12. Graduation .....	8
13. Development Plan .....	8

## 1. Introduction

The University is committed to supporting disabled students to participate in their programmes of study. The University seeks to embed policies and procedures which promote disability equality and where ever possible offer support through the provision of reasonable adjustments.

The University has a wide range of programmes which include professional teaching and health care courses. All students, regardless of disability, will need to be able to meet the professional competencies that are required by the different professions which are subject to national regulations and criteria. The University is not required and is unable to adjust the required professional competencies or level of competency. Individual guidance is available on reasonable adjustments that may be available to support students to meet the relevant professional guidelines. All students should be aware that the University is supportive of providing reasonable adjustments related to assessment methods/ demonstrations of the required skills/ and or learning outcomes.

The University is mindful of both its duties under the health and safety legislation to students and staff, as well as the current planned external changes to funding such as Disabled Students Allowance. The University is committed to increasing the level of anticipatory reasonable adjustments available to disabled students, to promote accessibility to teaching, learning and assessment and premises and is developing a five year plan in response to these changes. The University operates within:

- University Equality Statement (Equality Act 2010)
- University academic policies and processes.
- National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP) Ethical Guidance.
- DSA QAQ Quality Frameworks for the Provision on Non-Medical Help
- Quality Assurance Agency Chapter B4 : Enabling Student Development and Achievement
- Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements

## 2. Defining Disability

Whilst adhering to the legal definition of disability, the University defines disability in its broadest sense and in -line with the social model of disability, and offers support to students with a wide variety of disabilities including:

- Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) and Dyslexia /Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia
- Asperger syndrome
- Mental health conditions
- Medical conditions
- Sensory and physical impairments.

Many of our services are available to all disabled students; however some more specialised support services may be restricted to students who need to satisfy additional requirements stipulated by external funding bodies and/or professional bodies (e.g. PRSBs) external to the university.

### **3. Student Pre-entry information, Recruitment, Enrolment and Induction**

Students are encouraged to declare Disabilities/Specific Learning Difficulties within the admission processes e.g. on their application form or UCAS forms, and within the University's registration and enrolment processes. By declaring information within these processes the University is able to send students specific information and contact them to discuss needs. The University has clear policies and processes for admissions and enrolment that promote disability equality, including the following:

- All student recruitment events operate within physically accessible areas of the University
- All University campuses have accessible reception areas and designated accessible sanitation facilities
- Provision of extra time is available to students with a declared disability for all University administered student recruitment tests : 25 % extra time is available on the day subject to the provision of appropriate evidence of disability; for extra time beyond 25 % extra time and other adjustments, contact from students to arrange is required at least 10 working days in advance
- The University's web site meets W3C compliance levels
- All recruitment literature is available in alternative formats on request
- Specialist guidance is available to prospective individual disabled students during the recruitment process to discuss their support needs and is available in person, or via telephone, skype or email.
- Where the application is to professional courses, and the course includes professional placements, specialist guidance is also available. The purpose of this engagement is to explore with students what appropriate reasonable adjustments might be available to support placements. It will also take into account any professional competency requirements, as specified by professional bodies.

Support is available on request to assist disabled students in participating in academic-related university and course induction events on request, such as for welcome week and to assist students in finding their way round during the first weeks, including understanding University information and settling into University life.

### **4. Student Residential University Accommodation**

The University has as a minimum of:

- one adapted room for wheelchair-users in all its owned residential accommodation at each campus

- one room adapted for hearing impaired students which includes visual and vibrating pad for fire alarm and visual signalling for doorbell per residential block
- small fridges suitable for storing medication only, on request, for use in individual student rooms

## 5. University Campus Facilities

The University provides the following facilities

- At least one fully accessible shower/changing room in each campus-based sports centre
- Accessible access to all chapels/faith areas.
- Accessible catering facilities
- Accessible toilets at all University locations

## 6. Libraries and Learning Resources

The University provides Library facilities which:

- provide navigational aid via colour coded subject areas (some libraries have specialist collections which are not colour coded)
- have book spine labels that exceed compliance levels (black on yellow)
- provide assistance, to students who cannot access shelves to enable location of available items on agreed book lists, and more widely - for collection within 24 hours of request
- have quiet areas
- have video recorders that can be booked, with appropriate authority, for the visual recording of teaching and learning sessions by profoundly deaf students
- have a stock of digital recorders for short term loan to disabled students to enable individual recording of teaching sessions
- provide learning resources in a range of accessible formats, on request
- provide loan of - at least one:
  - digital recorder that is suitable for the use of visually impaired users e.g. large buttons

## **7. Information and Technology Service**

The service provides:

- An accessible work station in each library for private studying and e-resource search purposes that conforms to best practice.
- Read and Write software on all University student desktops and laptops

## **8. Accessing Specialist Guidance and Services**

The University provides a variety of specialist staff advisers within Library and Student Services who offer a range of guidance and support and interviews to disabled students (as well as staff ) including:

- An individualised disability/SpLD action plan which gives academic staff an overview of the impact of disability/SpLD and details the adjustments that are required. This will be shared, with a student's consent, with academic staff and placement providers. We aim to discuss all individual action plans fully with individual students, before circulation, to ensure that these adjustments reflect their needs, but in some cases we may need to circulate a draft action plan prior to the start of courses to ensure adjustments are in place. Support is offered to assist students in becoming independent learners and improve their employability skills..
- Access to a range of non-medical help services such as practical support, note-taking, specialist mentoring and study skills. To access these services students may have to have applied for Disabled Students Allowance through their funding body.
- Assistance with accessing Disabled Student Allowance.

If, because of the type of course students are studying, they are not able to access Disabled Students Allowance, specialist staff will assess student needs and award internal funding where necessary and if reasonable to do so

Other services that disabled students are able to access include specialist money advisers, and employability advisers.

## **9. Accessing the University's Physical Teaching Environment: Teaching Facilities and Classroom Technology**

The University teaching environment has

- 95% of teaching buildings accessible at ground floor level
- 90% of University teaching buildings accessible at levels above ground floor level
- All lecture theatres have at least one fully accessible seating place
- Lecture theatres and 60% of teaching spaces have wireless access to assist disabled students with the use of personal IT

The University is currently testing and assessing its Hearing Induction Facilities in lecture theatres. Please contact us for further details.

University teaching buildings are not generally allocated to specific departments or subject areas and all students may need to use all buildings within one campus over a period of time. Where students have specific environmental requirements, such as classrooms within short distances of each other please contact the university prior to arrival so that specialist advisers are able to liaise with Timetabling staff about any specific needs.

## **10. Accessing Teaching, Learning and Assessment :**

The University provides the following to assist students to access their learning:

- Where appropriate, teaching and learning preparatory resources for a specific teaching session will be available on the Virtual Learning Environment in advance
- Learning resources (e.g. reading/resource lists), to enable them to prioritise their reading through the classification of set texts, essential reading and further reading
- University Academic Regulations and processes that support and facilitate disability equality
- Scribes and readers to enable participation in formal examinations and timed assessments, where supported by assessment of needs/medical evidence and as outlined in individual disabled student action plans
- Scribes and readers within class based assessments (where requested and notified with evidence to LiSS at least 14 working days in advance)
- Permission is available for disabled/ SpLD students to audio record formal lectures and other teaching staff / tutor led sessions where this has been agreed as part of an individual student's disability/SpLD action plan. Profoundly deaf students who wish to video sessions should seek additional permission from academic staff and the BSL Interpreter but should not video student peers. All students should be aware that where, as a part of teaching session, sensitive material is discussed they may be requested to pause a digital recording and resume recording as advised by teaching staff.

## **11. Accessing Placement Learning**

Whilst reasonable adjustments are offered to enable and facilitate access to placement and placement learning, students will need to meet all professional competencies required by their professional bodies. For all professional courses students will need to attend a variety of types of placements and it is anticipated that students are able to travel 60-90 minutes. For disabled students we may be able to offer a range of adjustments, and work with the co-operation of the placement provider, to implement these. This may include:

- Travel and transport adjustments to attend placements, subject to the availability of placements.
- Awareness of the impact of a disability with no adjustments
- Placements taking account of physical accessibility factors, subject to placement availability
- Discussions and assessments at potential placement providers to help students negotiate adjustments to facilitate learning and full participation on placement. To assist with placement planning these discussions may start prior to the commencement of a student's course and adopt a case conference approach.

## 12. Graduation

The University offers a range of adjustments to enable students with disabilities to fully participate in their graduation ceremony. All our ceremonies take place at Carlisle Cathedral, a building of historic interest, with key physical accessibility features. The graduate procession starts at Tithe Barn where students collect their gown and walk to the Cathedral, and following this attend the Crown and Mitre Hotel for celebratory reception and photographs. Adjustments include:

- A portable ramp for access to Tithe Barn Street
- An integral Ramped Access to the presentation stage at the Cathedral
- An induction Loop system at the Cathedral
- Accessible Toilets all a locations

Further adjustments are available on request including pre-arranged visits, or discussions about individual requirements. Assistance is also available for guests with disabilities subject to advanced notification.

## 13. Development Plan

The University is developing a full five year plan for enhanced reasonable adjustments to promote independent access to our premises and learning and teaching activities.

For 2016-17 the plan will focus on enhancing inclusivity in teaching and learning and the use of technology to support access to learning.

This statement will be updated annually or as legislation changes to reflect these changes.

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