

Statement of Practice:
Disability Anticipatory Reasonable Adjustments for
Students with Disabilities and Specific Learning Difficulties
2020

Disclaimer: Please note that this statement is accurate at time of publication. The University is waiting for updates from the government on i) the replacement of DSAQAG following its closure in December 2019 ii) clarity following interim changes to mitigate against the impact of Covid 19 on some services to disabled students iii) Any further changes to Disabled Students Allowance for 2021/22. The University is registered provider of certain types of non – medical support help such as study skills\ mentoring for students with specific learning difficulties, autism and mental health conditions and is maintaining its compliance to sector standards.

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Defining Disability.....	3
3. Student Pre-entry information, Recruitment, Enrolment and Induction	4
4. Student Residential University Accommodation	5
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	7
10. Accessing Teaching, Learning and Assessment.....	7
11. Accessing Placement Learning	8
12. Graduation	8
13. Development Plan	9

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, & health care courses , vocational and non –vocational degrees and apprenticeship programmes. All students, regardless of disability, will need to be able to meet the professional competencies and learning outcomes required by their chosen courses and required to meet the standards of their intended professional awarding body, many of 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 and its commitment to support the health and well being of its staff and students. The University is committed to continuous improvement in 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)
- The European Union (EU) Directive on the Accessibility of Websites and Mobile Applications(2018)
- 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 university or on accessible virtual platforms 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 , though an increasing emphasis is placed on digital information via the web site
- Specialist guidance is available to prospective individual disabled students during the recruitment process to discuss their support needs and is available via phone , through on line meetings and at many recruitment events
- 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
- the University is happy to discuss on a case by case basis , other reasonable adjustments , that students may require.

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 University provides a range of assistive technology (AT) to promote and enable any disabled student to independently access their learning.

These includes equipment for loan such digital audio / video recorders/ and for use on the premises accessible work stations including height adjustable desks/ adapted key boards / tracker mice at each campus site.

The University provides assistive software on all student PCs and laptops in the libraries and computer rooms via a folder on the desktop titled Assistive Software, which includes:

- Read & Write Gold from Text Help! (text-to-speech, reading & writing support)
- Mind View - Mind-mapping software
- Claro Read Pro Suite – Screen reader, Screen alteration software
- Audio Notetaker – Sound file and Note-taking software

The University also has Dragon Naturally Speaking, Dictation software available as well specialist magnification software (Zoomtext) on request.

The student intranet at My. Cumbria Assistive Technology page provides full information on all software available and training guides. The site also includes useful Apps and free assistive software that can be downloaded to personal equipment.

8. Accessing Specialist Guidance and Services

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

- All disabled students are invited to complete an online questionnaire about the impact of their disability on their well being, and support required to access to teaching, learning and assessment whilst undertaking their programme. Based on responses to this a draft individualised disability/SpLD action plan is developed including an overview of the impact of disability/SpLD, initial adjustments required and interim support allocated. The document is shared, with a student's consent, with academic staff and placement providers to implement the support.
- The Disability/SpLD action plans may be reviewed with the support of the student /academic staff and other professionals as required, submission of evidence of disability/SpLD and further assessments of needs within other internal /externals process e.g application to Disabled Students Allowance. A Full Disability Action Plan then ensure that support remains appropriate to the students needs.

- Support is offered to assist students in becoming independent learners and improve their employability skills. This may include non-medical help services such as practical support, note-taking, specialist mentoring and study skills and / or access to specialist equipment . To access these services students may have to have applied for Disabled Students Allowance through their funding body.
- Assistance with accessing Disabled Student Allowance , other external funding streams as well as the University own funding mechanisms
- Disabled students are able to access other services such as specialist money advisers, and or 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, such as Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy , including one line learning.

- Scribes and readers to enable participation in formal examinations and timed assessments, where supported by assessment of needs/medical evidence and notified to the Disability Service in line with assessment deadlines(generally 8-10 weeks prior to the University assessment periods).
- Scribes and readers within class based assessments (where requested and notified with evidence and 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 specific 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 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 has a policy of continuous reviewing of its student offer for disabled students and support.
- The University has successfully completed project to improve access to IT infrastructure via provision assistive technology.
- The current focus is for support services is in continuing to respond to the needs of increasingly diverse disabled student (apprenticeships)and ensuring initiatives in developments in online learning meet the needs of all disabled students.
- The University has a number of ongoing policy and service reviews during 2020/21 and will on completion of these conduct a full review of the disability statement and the offer to disabled students .

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