

# Disabled Students Policy

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## Legal/regulatory requirements

This policy and its related procedures exist to ensure that the University meets compliance with the following:

1. The Equality Act 2010<sup>1</sup> which imposes a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to overcome any disadvantage experienced by disabled students.

### *Disability*

Under the Equality Act 2010, a student is disabled '*if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*'. 'Substantial' is defined by the Act as 'more than minor or trivial'. An impairment is considered to have a long-term effect if it has lasted for at least 12 months, is likely to last for at least 12 months, or is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person.

### *Discrimination*

The Equality Act 2010 protects students from discrimination, harassment, or victimisation as the result of a disability. Disability discrimination can include direct discrimination, indirect discrimination, failure to make reasonable adjustments, discrimination arising from disability, harassment, and victimisation.

### *Reasonable Adjustments*

Reasonable adjustments are variations or alterations made to university procedures, teaching or assessment practices to enable a disabled student to engage with their course, demonstrate their learning and participate fully in university life. Section 20 of the Equality Act imposes a duty on the University to make reasonable adjustments and remove barriers for disabled students.

In defining what is reasonable, universities are not required to reduce or change academic standards, nor is it required to compromise genuine competence standards.

2. Office for Students condition A1 of registration: Access and Participation Plan (APP).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance>

The University's APP<sup>2</sup> includes objectives for students with a declared disability for continuation/completion, degree outcomes, and progression.

### **Policy statement**

The University recognises its legal and regulatory responsibility towards students with a disability, long term health condition or specific learning difficulty and works to ensure inclusive practice is anticipated for all. To ensure that it is compliant with these requirements, the University will:

- Promote an inclusive, safe, and supportive environment for all students, free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation (as detailed in the University Dignity and Respect Policy and Procedure).
- Encourage applications from disabled students and provide them with clear information and advice.
- Encourage students to disclose any requirements as early as possible and provide accessible mechanisms in which to do so, and to help students understand how disclosure can better enable the University to fully meet their support needs.
- Fulfil its anticipatory duty by:
  - seeking to adopt an inclusive and accessible approach to all aspects of learning, teaching, and assessment. Where the anticipatory duty is not sufficient to support an individual disabled student, to implement reasonable adjustments up to and including consideration of individual programmes of study.
  - ensuring that our campus, student accommodation, digital estate and all other services and facilities are as inclusive and accessible as possible. Where the anticipatory duty is not sufficient to support an individual disabled student, to implement reasonable adjustments including those captured with Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans and Health & Safety Risk Assessments.
- Provide a professional Disability Service that delivers information, advice and support for disabled students, working with disabled students to create a Disability Action Plan detailing reasonable adjustments and recommendations and with colleagues to respond to queries and provide guidance in relation to the implementation of reasonable adjustments and recommendations.
- Treat any information relating to disclosure of a disability as sensitive information, as explained in the [University's Data Protection Guidance](#).
- Provide disability related training and guidance to enable staff to meet the requirements of disabled students.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **The Vice-Chancellor**

The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for ensuring compliance under the Equality Act 2010. Senior Managers implement and promote the principles and behaviours embedded in University policies and procedures. The Vice-Chancellor delegates responsibility for undertaking aspects of these duties through line management and identified roles.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bath.ac.uk/publications/access-and-participation-plan-2024-to-2028-and-fee-information/>

## **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC)**

This committee provides assurance to Council that institutional duty towards disabled students has been appropriately discharged.

## **Disability Service**

The Disability Service provides information and guidance for applicants, students and staff and coordinates the provision of support services for disabled students. In discussion with the student and in the context of their course, the Disability Service creates a Disability Access Plan (DAP) which recommends reasonable adjustments to meet the individual student's requirements. The DAP is made available to relevant academic and professional departments and reviewed as requested by the student. The Disability Service works collaboratively with academic and professional service colleagues to advise on the implementation of reasonable adjustments.

## **Academic Departments**

Staff working in academic departments are responsible for delivering an inclusive approach to learning and teaching and for ensuring that recommendations for reasonable adjustments outlined in DAPs are implemented, including in relation to in class tests or any assessment taking place outside of formal University assessment periods. Academic Advisors and Unit Conveners access DAPs and work with colleagues to implement reasonable adjustments. Heads of Department are responsible for ensuring the development of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans and Risk Assessments where required.

## **Placement teams and providers**

Placement teams work with disabled students undertaking a placement with regards to support and adjustments while on placement, working with the academic department, Disability Service, and placement provider/host university as required.

## **Centre for Learning and Teaching**

The Centre for Learning and Teaching provides guidance and information for teaching staff on meeting disabled students' learning requirements as part of an inclusive approach to learning and teaching. The Centre for Learning and Teaching also provides advice to Student Services and academic departments about teaching and learning support for individual students with complex requirements.

## **Academic Registry**

Academic Registry implements students' examination related reasonable adjustments, where possible, as recommended in their Disability Access Plans.

## **Campus Infrastructure**

Campus Infrastructure will advise on the cost and feasibility of proposed reasonable adjustments to the fabric and structure of the buildings to enable a final decision to be made. Once budgets have been agreed and funding allocated, Campus Infrastructure will carry out the works in line with its standard service level agreement. All new build and refurbishment projects will be implemented with the need to meet the requirements of the Equality Act, and will comply with planning, building regulations and any other relevant legislation. In addition, it will carry out periodic (usually every 5 years) access audits of the whole University estate. Campus Infrastructure will liaise with a nominated group of staff and students with mobility challenges to prioritise the approved works.

## **Residence Life**

Residence Life provide accessible accommodation and facilities for disabled students and works with the Disability Service to make reasonable adjustments for individual students.

## **Human Resources**

Human Resources ensures that line managers are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that members of staff have the necessary knowledge/skills and demonstrate the behaviors required to discharge their responsibilities under this policy.

## **Arrangements for delivery of the Disabled Student Policy**

The arrangements for delivery of this will be recorded within associated procedures. The procedures, alongside this policy, will be reviewed to ensure that they are kept up to date.

Education, Quality and Standards Committee (EQSC), in its delegated role from Senate, can amend the arrangements contained within procedures on the advice of Disability Services or Student Experience Advisory Board provided that reasonable steps are taken to inform all relevant parties of the changes.

## **Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if warranted by internal or external events or changes and any amendments approved by Senate.