

Students with Disabilities Procedure

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Name of originator/author:	Assistant Director of Education and Training. Reviewed and updated by, DET Operations Manager/ DET Interim Operations Development Lead and Senior Quality Officer, Academic Governance.
Name of responsible /individual:	Brian Rock, Dean of Postgraduate Studies
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1 Introduction

The Tavistock and Portman is committed to promoting full participation of students with disabilities (including learning difficulties and long-term mental health issues) in all aspects of the academic and social life of the Trust wherever this is possible.

The Trust recognises its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Trust is committed to making anticipatory and reasonable adjustments in the provision and delivery of education and training. This policy has been developed with reference to the QAA's UK Quality Code.

The Trust's Single Equalities Scheme includes an action plan to ensure equality of access for all students, including those with a disability. Applicants to courses and programmes are encouraged to inform the Directorate of Education and Training of their additional support needs, whether or not they choose to disclose a disability at the time of application.

2 Purpose

This procedure articulates and outlines the Trust's Education and Training policy for managing the needs of students with disabilities in order to ensure they receive a positive learning experience, and are supported to achieve their learning objectives, throughout the duration of their study with the Trust.

This policy is also intended to meet our obligations under the equality legislation and to ensure we provide a safe, effective and positive working and learning environment for the delivery and receipt of education and training.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all applicants and, enrolled, suspended or intermitting students attending the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust on Trust premises and at National Centres. Where National Centres need to amend this policy for relevance and practical reasons, this policy should be used as the basis and the amendments must be agreed with the Trust. In exceptional circumstances an Associate Centre may have their own policy, which will need to be agreed by the Trust to be implemented with students studying on Trust courses.

In addition to this policy, the Trust has an Academic Procedure for Admissions which relates to fairness and equity in the application interview processes at the Trust; and an Academic Procedure for Assessment and Marking, which features fairness and equity in the assessment procedures, and inclusive design of assessment.

In order to provide the support and accommodations necessary, an applicant or student is encouraged to declare their disabilities at the earliest opportunity. Not declaring, or asking that this information not be shared with key people who would otherwise be able to offer support may affect the full and swift implementation of arrangements.

This policy supersedes any previous student policies or procedures specifically related to students with disabilities, from the start date indicated as 'date issued' on the front page of this procedure.

4 Definitions

Disability: The Trust adopts the definition of disability from the Equality Act 2010: a physical or mental impairment [such as a learning difficulty] that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on one's ability to do normal daily activities.

Learning Difficulty: Falls under 'Disability' but can be defined as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or other relevant cognitive impairment.

National Centre: An Associate Centre or an Alternative Centre of delivery at another location which delivers Trust courses.

Disclosing a disability: See section 6.2 below.

5 Duties and responsibilities

5.1 Student Disability Lead (Operations Manager)

The Student Disability Lead (SDL) has operational responsibility to lead on issues relating to the support of students with disabilities across the Trust. The SDL will be responsible for maintaining up-to-date disability procedures and processes for the team and monitoring the allocation of caseload across the team during busy times.

The SDL will be responsible for communicating and ensuring appropriate staff, particularly Library, Tutors and Course Administrators (CAs) receive information about the particular requirements of students with disabilities in a clear and timely manner, as well as information about systems and sources of support.

The SDL will provide day-to-day case guidance in managing complex disability-related matters and build a process of quality review of recommendations to support a coherent approach to disability support. The SDL will also undertake student case complaint resolution and manage risk to the Trust, when appropriate.

Feedback will be collected to monitor trends in service use, and ensure appropriate liaison with the relevant Trust's directorates and the disability team at the University Partner, where appropriate, in order to develop processes to support timely and

effective service delivery and to ensure consistency of support for students with disabilities.

The SDL will keep abreast of disability legislation and best practice in the sector in order to inform staff practice and ensure effective compliance with the Equality Act 2010, the QAA Code of Practice and HEFCE and other professional guidelines. In conjunction with relevant colleagues, the SDL will plan and organise training on general disability awareness and specific disabilities.

The SDL will monitor this policy on an annual basis. Information about the effectiveness of this policy will be gathered and reviewed through the Trust student feedback process.

The SDL has a duty to report outcome of monitoring and evaluation of this policy to appropriate Trust committees, including the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and Management Committee.

5.2. Course Administrators (CA)

The Course Administration Team is responsible for the co-ordination of support for students with a declared disability. They act as an advisory first point of contact. Course Administrators will signpost students on disability-related matters, provide confidential, impartial advice and support to enable them to participate fully in their studies at the Trust.

Course Administrators will meet with students who have declared a disability to assist in identifying any disability support needs associated with enrolment, lectures, seminars, placements and assessments. They can advise the student about the support and adjustments that the Trust can offer

Course Administrators are responsible for maintaining accurate records covering aspects of agreed support/reasonable

adjustments for students with disabilities for audit, reporting, and complaints purposes. This includes recording requests for individual reasonable adjustments and the decisions arising from these requests.

Course Administrators will receive training and participate in relevant Trust's and/or University Partner meetings. Course Administrators should become familiar with the Trust's Equality Scheme.

5.3. Recruitment Advisors (RA)

Recruitment Advisors (RAs) have responsibility for putting in place (where possible) accommodations for students with disabilities during the application process – particularly around setting up interviews. This may involve ensuring wheelchair access, setting up an induction loop or other requirements ahead of the interview.

RAs should also ensure that if an applicant declares a disability, the Students with Disabilities Lead, Course Administrators, relevant Course Leads and Trust library are routinely notified within 28 days of a student accepting an offer. This will be done with consent from the student for as indicated on the application form; however, if a student denies consent this will affect some of the support that can be offered. Students and Applicants should be made aware of this.

5.4 Course Leads / Portfolio Managers

Course Leads and Portfolio Managers are responsible for ensuring the course team are aware (where this is necessary) of any special requirements in the learning and teaching environment. During validation, the Course Leads should ensure that they are fully aware of the Academic Procedure for Assessment and Marking relating to inclusive assessment (and course) design to enable students with differing needs to access, and take the most out of, the course, where possible.

Course Leads should also ensure that they make the most of Technology Enhanced Learning and other resources available to make their course as accessible as possible.

5.5 All DET Staff (Faculty and Administrative)

All DET staff should be aware of this procedure and if a student approaches them they should be able to direct them appropriately having consulted the Student Disability Lead (SDL)

6	Procedures
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6.1 This policy aims to address the needs of all students with visible and invisible disabilities. The Trust seeks to encourage students with disabilities to disclose their disability to access support where needed. Where a disability is not declared, the Trust aims to provide generic support and accessibility to all students, but cannot tailor to individual needs if these are not made known.

6.2 Declaring or Disclosing a Disability

6.2.1 By formally declaring a disability, the applicant or student is letting the Trust know that they may need some kind of support at some point whilst studying with the Trust, and the disability has been confirmed by an appropriate member of staff through either the outcome of a referral for formal assessment or documentary evidence. It may be that no support or accommodations are needed, but it means the Trust is enabled to consider the individual student's needs and make adjustments to ensure fairness and equity wherever possible. In order to put in place reasonable measures, engagement is needed from both the student and the Trust.

6.2.2 Alongside the declaration about any disability, there will be a record of whether any support has been offered to

the student and whether the student has accepted any support.

- 6.2.3 Anonymised data about declared disabilities may be used for quality assurance and equalities monitoring purposes.
- 6.2.4 An applicant will have the opportunity to declare any disabilities on the application form during the application process. There is an Academic Procedure for Admissions in place to guard against discrimination (intentional or otherwise) to applicants who declare a disability, and this will enable the Trust to a) ensure any needs are accommodated during the admissions process wherever possible and b) look at what might need to be put in place if the student is offered a place on the course.
- 6.2.5 All students will be offered the opportunity to discuss any accessibility concerns or needs on initial enquiry, at application stage, or attending interview, as part of the interview procedure.
- 6.2.6 Where an applicant declares a disability but states that they do not need or want any support from the Trust, this will be recorded and the student can at a later date approach the Student Disability Lead if they change their mind. If a student states that they do not want or need support, they cannot at a later date submit a complaint based on support required that has not been provided.
- 6.2.7 If an applicant has not declared a disability at the application stage, they have the opportunity to declare at enrolment, after they have accepted their place on the course.
- 6.2.8 If a student has not declared a disability during application or enrolment, either because they did not wish to or because it was undiagnosed at that point, they have the

opportunity to contact their Course Administrator or Student Disability Lead with this information throughout their course of study.

6.2.9 In order for the Trust to support the student with disabilities effectively, the student or applicant must declare a certified disability, An Applicant or Student with a disability cannot reasonably expect the Trust to be able to support them fully or appropriately if they do not formally declare their disability.

6.3 Confidentiality and Privacy

6.3.1 All students have a right to privacy and confidentiality. Any staff member who has been approached by a student, about a disability they may have, must not share this information unless expressly given permission by the student to do so. **Only when a staff member has been given permission to share this information or where the student/applicant has gone directly to the Student Disability Lead (SDL) or Course Administrator (CA) will this be recognised as formally disclosing a disability.** When this is the case, the member of staff should contact the SDL or relevant CA as soon as possible.

6.3.2 In line with Information Governance policy, declared or undeclared student disability data will be kept separate from normal student records data and protected by security protocols as can reasonably be expected in line with NHS data protection policies. The data and any other student disability information will only be accessible on a 'need to know' basis. As such, course teams and administrative staff should not share or discuss disability details except where it is necessary in order to support the student, and will not 'cc' anybody into emails except where this is essential. If a member of the course team wishes to discuss a disability issue, they should choose

the appropriate person to ask, and only disclose names or identifiable information where this is absolutely necessary.

6.4 Environment

6.4.1 The Trust is committed to the systematic review and improvement of physical access to our premises. The Trust system of ongoing review and maintenance will be communicated widely and will seek not to create new barriers. This will include consultation with people with disabilities. Where facilities are not accessible we will endeavour to make appropriate reasonable adjustments or arrangements which meet the needs of the user.

6.4.2 Although the Trust endeavours to make all its buildings accessible to wheelchair users, there remain facilities which are inaccessible.

6.5 Access to facilities and support

6.5.1 All students will be offered opportunities to disclose their access needs. The Trust will ensure that there is a designated member of staff to provide advice and support to applicants who declare a disability, students who disclose a disability and to staff who work with them.

6.5.2 The Trust will undertake annually to review and identify barriers to academic support services, including the consultation of students with disabilities on the accessibility of Trust facilities, general and education support services.

6.6 Information for applicants, students and staff

6.6.1 All publicity, course details and general information will be offered in accessible formats with sufficient time to allow for modification into alternative formats where necessary for familiarisation by students.

6.6.2 All publicity, programme details and general information will describe the Trust's commitment to listening and providing relevant advice, information and guidance for people with disabilities to participate in the courses and programmes offered. The Trust will include information in programme details regarding its commitment to meeting the needs of students who may require reasonable adjustments, to provide inclusive teaching practices and learning environment.

6.6.3 Information on how students with disabilities gain access to support is contained on the website and within course handbooks. This includes contact details for the SDL and CAs.

6.7 Taster Events

6.7.1 The Trust will meet its statutory and legal obligations to members of the public and potential applicants attending taster events and promotional learning activities. Members of the public and potential applicants are encouraged to inform staff in the Department of Education and Training, or the lead contact for the event or interview, of any individual access requirements prior to the event, by telephone or by completing the relevant section on booking forms. This allows staff to make suitable/appropriate arrangements to address the needs of the individual.

6.8 Admission Criteria

6.8.1 The Trust offers a range of postgraduate course and Continuous Professional Development activities. It will seek to make explicit, and transparent, the process and criteria for admitting students on its programmes. The Trust will endeavour to ensure that such criteria and processes for admitting students do not create unnecessary barriers to applicants and students with disabilities.

6.9 Selection of students

- 6.9.1 Offers of a place of study at the Trust are made on the basis of clear criteria as described in the Academic Procedure for Admissions. The Trust will ensure equitable consideration of all applicants in the selection and admission of students.
- 6.9.2 Applicants are encouraged to disclose any disability on application to the Trust. In order to ensure student disability information does not affect admission decisions, disability information which is disclosed in the application will not be made known to the interviewer unless the applicant chooses to divulge it.
- 6.9.3 Whether or not an applicant has disclosed a disability on the application form, all applicants will be contacted by the Recruitment Advisors to ascertain their access needs for the interview via an appropriate wording on an interview letter. Reasonable adjustments will be made in terms of these needs.

6.10 Admission of Students

- 6.10.1 Where the applicant has disclosed a disability, they will be offered the opportunity to discuss their support requirements to help identify any accessibility issues prior to the start of the course. Consideration of the student's access needs should be made to allow time for students with a specific learning disability to have early access to reading lists or other materials, where appropriate to do so, and in time for the course start date. RAs are required to inform CAs or SDL where an applicant with a disability has accepted their offer of a place on a course, providing consent has been given.
- 6.10.2 Appropriate information about systems and sources of support will be distributed to all relevant staff. Relevant

training will also be identified, where required. In doing so, applicants' support needs will be identified and assessed in an effective and timely manner, and an action plan drawn up.

6.10.3 The Trust will make reasonable adjustments to the application process where possible, except in relation to essential competence standards or criteria. These are academic, medical or other standards applied to determine whether a student has reached a particular level of competence or ability. The Trust will endeavour to ensure all applicants have an understanding of the learning objectives and competence standards of the course, and are provided with clear information about where it is not possible to offer any adjustments.

6.10.4 All applicants are required to demonstrate that they have met the required admissions criteria for any course in terms of academic qualifications, previous or current professional or other work experience required and the criteria for personal suitability to enter clinical and other professional training programmes.

6.11 Enrolment, Registration and Induction

6.11.1 Processes and systems for enrolment, registration and induction of new students (including students with accepted prior learning – APL/APEL) will accommodate the needs of students with a disability.

6.11.2 The Trust will encourage individual students to disclose their disability if they wish. If a student suspects they have a disability they will need to undertake a professional assessment to confirm this, which will enable them to provide suitable supporting evidence for a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) application, or evidence of a specific learning disability to include after the cover sheet of all written assignments for assessment which is

provided by the CA or SDL. Professional assessments of students' learning disabilities are available through the Trust. Fees for assessment are payable by the student. The Trust aims to meet the assessed requirements within a reasonable time period. If a student chooses to apply for a DSA their supporting evidence and application will be considered by an Assessment Centre which is part of the Disabled Student Allowance procedure. The Trust is not normally responsible for providing computers, dictation-led word processing software, recording devices, interpreters or note takers. Students with disabilities are advised to apply for Disabled Students' Allowances so that any specialist equipment, assistive software and/or human support needs can be considered and recommendations for these to be funded by these allowances included in the Assessment of Need.

6.11.3 The Trust may be able to identify and assist with temporary assistance requirements whilst applications are being processed. The student will inform the CAs of any such short-term needs.

6.11.4 A representative from the Trust Library will be available prior to admission by arrangement with the library or on new student enrolment days, to discuss student's library needs. The Library has a separate web page for students with learning difficulties which identifies accessibility options and a range of helpful information for students with a learning or physical disability.
(<https://library.tavistockandportman.ac.uk/>)

6.12 Learning and Teaching

6.12.1 Students are encouraged to discuss their access and additional learning support needs with their personal and/or organising tutor where possible. They are also encouraged to use the support of the CAs.

- 6.12.2 Course specifications will be reviewed to ensure they are inclusive, responsive to student needs, offer maximum flexibility and are free of barriers to access. Academic support services will be accessible and appropriate to the needs of students with disabilities.
- 6.12.3 Course delivery will take into account the needs of students with disabilities and as far as is reasonably possible be adapted to enable equality of access to the curriculum. This will include a review of course specifications to ensure they are responsive to student needs, offer maximum flexibility and are free of unnecessary barriers.
- 6.12.4 The Trust will ensure that, wherever possible, students with disabilities will have access to academic materials and placements that adequately support their learning and support needs.
- 6.12.5 Where an academic disability support related needs is identified that may be met by the provision of lecture notes and further curricular materials these will be provided.
- 6.12.6 When it has not be possible to put in place a requested adjustment then the applicant/student will be provided with a written confirmation of the decision and the reasons for this. If it is possible for The Trust to offer alternative adjustments then these will be included in the document, in accordance with the Equality Act.
- 6.12.7 The student/applicant will be advised about the appeal procedure or Trust's complaints procedure should they wish the decision to be reconsidered.

6.13 Assessments and Vivas

6.13.1 Assessment policies, practices and procedures will be in place to ensure that students with disabilities are not placed at a significant disadvantage when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding during the assessment of learning outcomes. Discussion, advice and guidance will be provided to ensure that reasonable adjustments are identified and implemented.

6.14 Quality assurance and course validation and review

6.14.1 Quality assurance procedures will require evidence of provision made in all courses to ensure full participation in all aspects of teaching and learning for students with disabilities, and the annual monitoring of this provision.

6.15 Promotion of Disability

6.15.1 It is the duty of the SDL to ensure that the Trust's responsibilities are discharged in meeting the needs of students with disabilities from the point of admission to completion of their programme at the Trust. This duty will include actively publicising the support available to students with disclosed disabilities through a range of communication media including 'Moodle', the Trust's chosen virtual learning environment.

6.16 Library and learning resources

6.16.1 The disability support librarian has responsibility for supporting the needs of users from admission and throughout their stay at the Trust.

6.16.2 The Library has a duty to provide equitable access to resources and a range of services for users. Details of library services for students with disabilities are available on the Disabled Users' page on the library website.

6.16.3 Specialist library staff will meet with students who have declared a disability, to discuss their access to library

resources. The library will offer tailored individual support for students with disabilities where this is required.

6.16.4 The Library encourages early notification of student support needs to ensure such additional aids or adaptations are in place.

6.16.5 The Library will canvass students with disabilities' views through surveys as well as less formal channels so as to enable improvement of the service it delivers to students with disabilities.

6.17 Emergency Evacuation

6.17.1 Trust policy for emergency evacuation will be distributed to all staff and students and offered in accessible formats. The policy for emergency evacuation will be revised in light of systematic and regular practice, monitoring and review of the procedures identified in the policy.

7. Training requirements

7.1 Trust-wide induction and other relevant training will include disability awareness/equality and training in specific services and support. This training will include the option for students to incorporate the special learning needs notice, which provides guidance to the marker, as page 2 of any submitted work.

7.2 All staff including Student Disability Lead (SDL), Recruitment Advisors (RAs) and Course Administrators (CAs), library and tutors will be required to undertake appropriate disability awareness/equality training. This will include regular awareness training, with relevant members of staff at the National Centres as well as Trust staff.

8. Process for monitoring compliance with this policy/procedure

8.1 Monitoring and evaluation

The Trust will monitor student applications, admission, academic progress, and consider any aspects that may be adversely impacting on the opportunities available to students with disabilities.

The Trust will review the effectiveness of its provision for students with disabilities regularly in order to identify opportunities for enhancement and ensure modification of practice. This will include monitoring complaints received and implementing relevant action plans in a timely manner.

8.2 Student Feedback

The Trust's student surveys will include specific questions for students with disabilities to answer, around support provided and their experience in general. Satisfaction of students with disabilities will be analysed, in key areas such as overall satisfaction, assessment and feedback, and learning and teaching. The results of these will be considered at Academic Governance and Quality Assurance and Learning and Teaching Committee (at the least), and actions will be generated relating to any issues that arise.

8.3 Data management

In order to maintain accurate data on students with disabilities, the library has a duty to provide details of students with disabilities who declare themselves to the library within 14 days of this information being made available to them. Similarly the Education and Training Directorate will provide the library with details of all students who disclose a disability within 28 days of the student accepting a place on the Trust course or as soon as it is made known to the SDL or the CA or the RA. These exchanges will need to take into account any requests for confidentiality made by the student. Where a student does not wish information to be shared with any of these parties, the

student will be informed of the potential impact this may have on the support available to them.

8.4 Data Protection Act

Appropriate records will be kept on all students with disabilities in line with the Data Protection Act. All matters relating to students with disabilities will be managed confidentially by the SDL, CAs, RAs, tutors, library and all staff who have access to data.

8.5 Annual Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and action plans developed and implemented as a result of the review.

9. Equality impact statement

This policy has been screened using the Trust's Equality Impact Tool and has been found not to discriminate against any group of persons. The EQIS is shown at Appendix 1

10. References

QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education
Data Protection Act 1998
Freedom of Information Act 2000
Equality Act 2010

11. Associated documents

Academic Procedure for Assessment and Marking
Academic Procedure for Admissions
Marking Cover Sheet for students with learning difficulties

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

FORM ONE – INITIAL SCREENING

Name of policy

Policy, function, or service development being assessed: Students with Disabilities Procedure

Name of person carrying out the assessment: Beverley Nicholson

Please describe the purpose of the policy, function or service development. This policy articulates and outlines Trust policy for managing the needs of students with disabilities in order to ensure they receive and achieve a positive learning experience throughout the duration of their stay at the Trust. This policy is intended to meet our obligations under equality legislation and to ensure we provide a safe, effective and positive working and learning environment for the delivery and receipt of education and training.

Does this policy, function or service development impact on patients, staff and/or the public?

YES (*go to Section 5.*)

NO If NO, this is usually an indication that the policy, function or service development is not relevant to equality. Please explain that this is the case, or explain why it is relevant to equality even though it does not impact on people:

Is there reason to believe that the policy, function or service development could have an adverse impact on a particular group or groups?

NO – specifically designed to overcome adverse impacts and outline our responsibilities to do so

If **YES**, which groups may be disadvantaged or experience adverse impact? **Age** – especially younger and older people YES / NO

Disability – people with impairments YES / NO

Gender – women, men, transgender people YES / NO

Race – people of different ethnic groups YES / NO

Religion and belief – people of different faiths and beliefs YES

/ NO **Sexuality** – especially lesbian, gay, and bisexual

people YES / NO **Other** YES / NO

6. If you answered **YES** in section 5, how have you reached that conclusion? (Please refer to the information you collected e.g., relevant research and reports, local monitoring data, results of consultations exercises, demographic data, professional knowledge and experience)

7. Based on the initial screening process, now rate the level of impact on equality groups of the policy, function or service development:

Negative / Adverse impact: Low

High . (i.e. high risk of having, or does have, negative impact on equality of opportunity)

Medium.....(i.e. some risk of having, or there is some evidence of, negative impact on equality of opportunity)

Low . (i.e. minimal risk of having, or does not have negative impact on equality)

Positive impact: High

High (i.e. highly likely to promote, or clearly does promote equality of opportunity)

Medium... (i.e. likely to promote, or does have some positive impact on equality of opportunity)

LOW ... (i.e. not likely to promote, or does not promote, equality of opportunity)

N.B. A rating of 'High' negative / adverse impact' means that a Full Equality Impact Assessment should be carried out (see Form Two)

A rating of 'Medium negative' or 'Low' positive impact may mean that further work has to take place, especially where the policy, function, service development is designed to promote equality of opportunity

Date of next review: March 2019