

Disability Policy

Introduction

The School of Advanced Study welcomes all students who are academically qualified and motivated to benefit from the programmes offered through the member Institutes. It aims to provide an environment where everyone can access its programmes and activities- conferences, workshops and seminars, library provision and teaching programmes.

The School welcomes applications from anyone regardless of disability. Central to the Student Disability Policy is the intention to take account of individual need and to work with disabled students to find appropriate and practical solutions to problems that might arise.

The School comprises ten prestigious research Institutes. Seven of these teach and offer doctoral supervision. The School welcomes just over 300 postgraduate students registered each year, with approximately 5% declaring disabilities. Each of the Institutes in the School forms its own academic community, with between 15 and 80 students. Tutorial, lecture and seminar sizes are relatively small, so that people know and support each other.

Definitions of Disability

The Equality Act (2010) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people and places a positive duty to promote disability equality. Legally disability is described as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term (normally longer than 12 months) adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Examples could be:

- physical disability (e.g. limitations to dexterity or mobility)
- sensory (visual, hearing)
- impairment mental health difficulties chronic illness (e.g. asthma, epilepsy, diabetes)
- medical conditions, which may cause pain or other symptoms, which affect your studies (e.g. side effects of treatment, poor attention, poor concentration)

- Asperger's Syndrome/Autism Spectrum Disorder specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia).

The School recognises its responsibility to make anticipatory and reasonable adjustments to all policies, procedures and provision of services, including teaching and learning, and actively seeks to widen the participation of disabled people in higher education.

Disability Services

The School has an external Disability Service who provides information, advice and support on disability issues to all School of Advanced Study students and potential students. The Disability Advisor also advises staff on improving accessibility of the curriculum and teaching as well as buildings and facilities.

All students who disclose a disability will receive the guidance document 'Information for Disabled Students' and the Disability Advisor will make contact with them to discuss the support available. A Support Form will then be developed outlining the support required for the student whilst at the School. With the permission of the student this information is passed on to the relevant staff.

The Disability Advisor will also provide information on the Disabled Students' Allowance

Students can seek confidential advice and support from the Disability Advisor at any point. No information will be passed to academic departments or other parts of the university without the permission of the student. However, if information is not provided by the student this may restrict the adjustments that are able to be made.

Admissions

Prospective students with any kind of disability are encouraged to visit the School before accepting an offer, if at all possible. Whilst all teaching Institutes are fully accessible, students need to feel comfortable with the location and environment.

Offers of places to study at the School of Advanced Study are made on academic merit. There are no reductions to academic fees made for students declaring a disability.

Admissions tutors are expected to seek advice from the Disability Advisor whenever there is a concern about the impact of a disability on a student's ability to follow a course.

Learning and Teaching

The Disability Advisor will liaise with academic staff on a student's behalf if requested and will provide a Support Form detailing the student's needs. However students themselves are encouraged to discuss their support needs with their personal tutor or supervisor wherever possible.

The Disability Advisor will make recommendations for support during the course, these can include:

- arranging for non-medical help (i.e. specialist tutors, mentors, note takers, transcription support)
- recommendations regarding examination arrangements
- recommendations regarding extensions and deferrals
- advice about physical access to courses
- advice to staff regarding disability awareness
- advice about the Disabled Students Allowance

Advice on producing material in alternative formats can be obtained from the Disability Advisor.

Assessment and Examinations

The School of Advanced Study has a policy of providing special assessment and examination arrangements, where necessary, for disabled students. Students are encouraged to discuss their needs with the Disability Advisor as soon as possible. Any adjustments required can be included in a Support Form

Examples of special arrangements include:

- Access to a Support Worker
- Extra time for exams
- Rest periods in exams
- Separate invigilation
- Alternative format exam papers

Students requiring adjustments to be made prior to taking unseen examinations, must make this situation known at least one month prior to the date of the examination'

Monitoring

The School seeks formal feedback from the Student body on an annual basis and informally at frequent times throughout the academic year. We encourage students to share their experiences of this provision with us with the aim of continually improving the services we offer.

In line with our Widening Participation and Equality and Diversity strategies, data is collected on the numbers of students declaring a disability. Students should be assured that personal details are not disclosed.