

Policy on Students with Disabilities

Introduction

We are committed to promoting full participation for disabled students in all aspects of the academic and social life of the University of East London. We have initiated an ongoing process of reviewing and developing our policy and practices for promoting full inclusion for students and staff with disabilities and we consult regularly with them as part of this process. We are a multi-site university with premises that vary considerably in age, accessibility and potential for modification. We have undertaken a review of our entire estate and we have drawn up a phased programme for improving access. We are now working through that programme.

Our policy is based on the *QAA Code of Practice for the Assurance of Academic Quality and Standards in HE, Section 3, Students with Disabilities (1999)*. The main elements of our policy are listed below and address the needs of all students with disabilities, including research students, overseas students and work-based learning students.

1. Environment

- We are committed to the systematic review and improvement of physical access across all of our sites. Where physical or sensory barriers limit access to services we will endeavour to provide the service at a suitable alternative venue.

2. Access to facilities and support

- Students with disabilities will have access to the same range of support services as are available to their non-disabled peers.
- We will ensure that there are sufficient designated members of staff, appropriately qualified and experienced (based on HEFCE guidance on Base Level provision), to provide specialist advice and support to disabled applicants, students and to the staff who work with them.
- All facilities and equipment will be made as accessible as possible

3. Information for applicants, students and staff

- All publicity, programme 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 or personal support workers, and early application for support.
- All publicity, programme details and general information will describe the opportunities available for disabled people to participate in the activities offered and the support available to enable maximum inclusion in these activities.

4. Selection and admission of students

- In selecting students, we will ensure equitable consideration of all applicants.
- Disabled applicants' support needs will be identified and assessed in an effective and timely way, taking into account their views.
- Arrangements for enrolment, registration and induction of new entrants will accommodate the needs of disabled students
- We will enable individual students to disclose their disability, offer them a professional assessment of their study support requirements, and seek to meet those requirements within a reasonable period of time.

5. Learning and teaching

- Programme specifications will be reviewed to ensure they are inclusive, responsive to student needs, offer maximum flexibility and are free of unnecessary barriers to access.
- All academic support services and guidance will be accessible and appropriate to the needs of disabled students.
- Programme delivery will take into account the needs of disabled students and be adapted to accommodate their individual requirements.
- We will ensure that, wherever possible, disabled students will have access to academic and vocational placements including field trips and study abroad and that adequate support mechanisms are in place for these.

6. Examinations and assessments

- Assessment and examination policies, practices and procedures will provide disabled students with opportunities equal to those of their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.
- Where study or assessment is negatively affected as a direct result of a disability-related cause, we will make reasonable adjustments to ensure the academic progress of the student is not unjustifiably impeded.

7. Staff development

- Induction and other relevant training programmes will include disability awareness/equality and training in specific services and support.
- All staff will be required to undertake appropriate disability awareness/equality and training in specific services and support.

8. Communication

- We will ensure that appropriate staff will receive information about the particular requirements of disabled students in a clear and timely way.

9. Confidentiality

- With the student's explicit permission, disability-related information will be shared among appropriate staff, but only at a level of detail necessary to ensure the student's requirements are met.
- We will develop a policy on confidentiality and disclosure of information which will protect students' privacy and permit disclosure necessary for the provision of effective support and/or to ensure health and safety.

10. Complaints

- Information about complaints and appeals policy and procedures will be offered in accessible formats and communicated to students in a timely manner. It will cover complaints arising directly or indirectly from a student's disability.

11. Monitoring and evaluation

- We will monitor the applications, admission, academic progress and patterns of impairment presented by disabled students.
- We will monitor the effectiveness of our provision for students with disabilities, identify opportunities for enhancement and ensure modification of practice as necessary.

12. Quality assurance and course validation and review

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

13. Franchised courses

- Partner providers will be advised to provide their own policy which should be consistent with the UEL policy in relation to all students and applicants enrolled on courses franchised by UEL.

14. Overseas students & applicants

- A budget will be allocated to the disability service to meet the support needs of overseas students ineligible for HEFCE funding
- Applicants declaring a disability will be invited and enabled in consultation with staff to assess and identify their study support requirements
- Prior to offering a place to the student we will endeavour to advise the student of an estimate of the cost of the support required, possible sources and procedures for securing this support, the contribution that we may make to the cost and alternative sources of funding

15. Emergency Evacuation

- the policy for emergency evacuation will be reviewed to ensure appropriate coverage at every site
- it will be distributed to all staff and students and offered in accessible formats
- the policy will be revised in the light of systematic and regular practice, monitoring and review of the procedures identified in the policy

OPERATIONAL OUTCOME	OUTPUTS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	TIMING	RESPONSIBILITY
Systematic review and improvement of physical access	Access audits all sites- biannual updating Annual plan of priorities & strategy for removal of barriers System to ensure ongoing repairs & maintenance does not create new barriers Budget allocation	Record of achievements & action planning for inclusion in Facilities Services business plans and annual monitoring Evidence of consultation with users	Audits completed 2001, review of progress in 2003	Director of Facilities CMT
Access to facilities and support services	Review & identify barriers to academic support services Draft plan of priorities & strategies to improve access to guidance	Include achievements and action planning for next session in relevant services' plans and monitoring reports Evidence of consultation with users	Sept 2003-	Directors of LSS, LDS, Student Services CMT
Information for applicants, students and staff	All publicity, programme details and general information to be offered in accessible formats; To describe the opportunities available for disabled people and the support available	Marketing and all Schools to review all materials & revise text to ensure information is clearly included and systems to deliver alternative formats are advised to all staff	From 2003-2004 intakes	Head of Corporate Marketing, Heads of Schools

<p>Selection and admission of students</p>	<p>Students will be enabled to disclose their disability with confidentiality protected Disabled applicants' study support requirements will be discussed prior to, or at, admission to identify any factors that may impact on our ability to meet need or ensure course completion and the student's ability to access the required support in time for the desired start date. Arrangements for enrolment, registration and induction of new entrants will accommodate needs A full assessment of study support requirements will be provided by disability staff within 10 days. Study support requirements identified at this assessment will be met within a reasonable period-</p>	<p>Clear method of disclosure offered in all literature and oral contact plus policy for confidentiality Information to be distributed to all admissions staff about systems & sources of support at start of each semester. AQIP's to review all admissions material and systems to ensure students are invited & enabled to identify requirements Disability service offers assessment of need within ten days & aims to secure all reasonable support requirements within ten days- staff data recorded and student feedback through annual questionnaire</p>	<p>Sept 2003</p>	<p>All Heads of Schools Admissions unit Programme leaders Disability advisers and Access Centre</p>
<p>Learning and teaching</p>	<p>Programme specifications will be reviewed to ensure they are responsive to student needs, offer maximum flexibility and are free of unnecessary barriers Programme delivery will take into account the needs of disabled students access to academic and vocational placements including field trips and study abroad and that adequate support mechanisms</p>	<p>Schools to arrange staff development and guidance for all teaching staff on this; ensure student feedback and consultation is used systematically to monitor & improve access.</p>		<p>Heads of Schools School Registrars Programme leaders Disability service</p>
<p>Exams and assessments</p>	<p>Assessment and examination policies, practices and procedures to provide for reasonable adjustments- move responsibility to School Registrar, tutors and disability assessor/adviser</p>	<p>Clarify and simplify system for enabling identification & provision of student requirements. Monitor and evaluate it through AQIP and student feedback through annual questionnaire</p>	<p>Sept 2003</p>	<p>Dyslexia coordinator; School Registrars</p>
<p>Staff development</p>	<p>Induction and all training programmes will include disability awareness/equality All staff will be required to undertake appropriate disability awareness/equality training</p>	<p>Staff appraisals School monitoring Staff Development Service annual report</p>	<p>2004</p>	<p>Heads of Schools , Directors of Services Personnel Services CMT</p>
<p>Communication; Recording and confidential information</p>	<p>All appropriate staff will receive information at a level necessary to secure appropriate provision Appropriate records will be kept on all students with disabilities in line with Data Protection Act Policy on confidentiality and disclosure will be developed and used for provision of effective support and/or to ensure health and safety</p>	<p>Policy on information sharing & recording will be distributed to all Heads of School and School Registrars , implemented and monitored through AQIP & annual services monitoring</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>CMT</p>

Monitoring and evaluation	Monitor applications, admission, academic progress and patterns of impairment effectiveness of our provision opportunities for enhancement	Corporate Marketing plans and reports AQIPs Disability service monitoring report		Head of Marketing QA Disability Co-ordinator
Quality assurance and course validation & review	Quality assurance procedures will require evidence of provision full participation in all aspects of teaching and learning for students with disabilities, & annual monitoring of this provision.	AQIPs		QA Heads of School Directors of Service
Franchised courses	Providers will be advised to provide their own policy consistent with the UEL policy	Validation processes		QA
Overseas students & applicants	A budget will be allocated to the disability service to meet the support needs of overseas students ineligible for HEFCE funding Applicants declaring a disability will be invited and enabled in consultation with staff to assess and identify their study support requirements Prior to offering a place to the student we will endeavour to advise the student of an estimate of the cost of the support required, possible sources and procedures for securing this support, the contribution that we may make to the cost and alternative sources of funding	Overseas applicants self assessment forms will be developed and used to review & assess support requirements – annual report on these to be drafted with international office Student Services annual monitoring		CMT International office Disability co-ordinator
Emergency Evacuation procedures	Policy for emergency evacuation to be reviewed to ensure appropriate coverage at every site Distribution to all staff & students & offer in accessible formats Policy to be revised through systematic & regular practice, monitoring and review of the procedures identified in the policy	Health & Safety annual report and action plan		Occupational Health & Safety Adviser