

DISABILITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Introduction

- 1 The University recognises that central to this policy is the University's responsibility for the academic standards of all awards granted in its name and the quality of learning opportunities for students. This policy sets out the scope of the University Disability and Inclusion policy.

Responsibility for implementing this policy

- 2 Ultimate responsibility for the development of clear and effective processes and procedures associated with the quality assurance and maintenance of standards of academic provision and overseeing their application lies with the Academic Board.

Expectation

- 3 The University has in place, and monitors and evaluates, arrangements and resources which enable students to develop their academic, personal and professional potential.

Key aims and principles

- 4 The University provides high quality education for all who seek access to its courses. In accordance with its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy, the University is committed to facilitating access to students who have support needs arising from any of the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010 (EA 2010), including disability. The University also facilitates access to students who require reasonable adjustments by reason of other illness or condition, including temporary arrangements where needed.
- 5 The University is committed to a positive student experience by creating an inclusive learning and teaching environment, removing barriers to learning by adopting, where possible, Universal Design for Learning principles. The University complies with its anticipatory duty under the EA 2010 by considering the needs of students at all stages of the student life cycle. It aims to reduce the need for individual adjustments by creating an inclusive environment for students to learn and succeed.

- 6 The University also complies with its obligations to provide vocational education such that students successfully completing its courses meet the appropriate competency standards required by the relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) and the learning outcomes of the programmes.

Course Demands Information

- 7 In accordance with the Programme Design, Development and Approval Policy and associated policies and protocols, Course Demands Information will be prepared for each course offered by the University. This will provide an overview of the structure of each course, including the teaching and learning methods used, number of expected hours per week of study required under the Prepare, Engage, Consolidate (PEC) model and the nature of assessments used on the course.
- 8 The Course Demands Information will be made available publicly on the University's external website.

Sharing Information about a Disability, Health or Mental Health Condition

- 9.1 Applicants and students are encouraged to share information about a disability, health or mental health condition with the University as soon as possible and preferably at application.
- 9.2 Applicants and students can contact DIS to arrange campus visits prior to their enrolment with the University. These visits will be with either a member of the DIS Team or a Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) with knowledge of the campus.
- 9.3 Where an applicant shares information that indicates they have complex needs and would require significant adjustments to facilitate their learning, or share information about a disability within six weeks of their planned start date, Admissions will refer the application to the Disability and Inclusion Service (DIS) who will advise whether the applicant's needs can be accommodated prior to a decision on the application being made.

- 9.4 In the case of 10.3, DIS will make contact with the applicant and, by discussion with the applicant, review of medical and diagnostic evidence and/or reference to the Course Demands Information and the Estates and Facilities Department, determine whether the student's needs can be accommodated in time for their planned start date.
- 9.5 Where the applicant's needs can be accommodated in time for the planned start date, DIS will inform Admissions to proceed with the offer. Where it is determined that the applicant's needs cannot reasonably be accommodated in time for their planned start date, DIS will advise the applicant to defer their place to the next available start date or for up to a maximum of one year so that the necessary adjustments can be made.
- 9.6 In the event that a student declines to disclose their disability in their application and it later becomes apparent to the University that adjustments may be necessary to meet the student's needs, or the student shares information about a change to their condition, where practicable adjustments will be put in place promptly.
- 9.7 Where a student shares information about a disability or health condition for the first time to a member of University staff, the staff member is then deemed to have received the information on behalf of the University and must pass this information on to DIS immediately. This enables the University to ensure support is offered promptly.
- 9.8 Where a student shares information about a disability or health condition part-way through the academic year, DIS may advise them to intermit their studies for a period of up to one year in order for a full assessment of their needs to take place. This will always be done on the basis of advising on the best outcome for the student. In the event that the student decides not to follow the advice of DIS, this will be noted by DIS but the student's wishes will be respected.
- 9.9 Evidence for adjustments for assessments must be received at least 28 calendar days prior to the start of any assessment period to allow adjustments to be put in place.

The University of Law Inclusion Plan (ULIP)

- 10.1 The University of Law Inclusion Plan (ULIP) is a document outlining the support and adjustments that have been agreed with the student following a

review of the evidence and information provided by the student about their condition/s and the impact of those condition/s on study. For further information about the types of evidence that can be provided please refer to the Accessibility and Inclusion Procedures.

- 10.2 In drafting a ULIP, DIS will consider whether:
- the adjustments are likely to significantly reduce or prevent the substantial disadvantage faced by a disabled student while maintaining relevant academic and professional standards
 - the adjustments are reasonable
 - the adjustments do not endanger the health and safety of the disabled person or other people
 - the adjustments do not substantially disadvantage other students or other people
- 10.3 The ULIP will include a number of sections, outlining the adjustments agreed with the student, in line with section 9.3 of the Disability and Inclusion Procedures.
- 10.4 If the ULIP contains provision for a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), the student will be required to meet with the campus Estates and Facilities Team in order to agree the PEEP. This provision will not apply to Online students.
- 10.5 If the ULIP includes the provision for the student to work with an Assistance Dog or Therapy Animal, the provisions of the Assistance Dog and Therapy Animal Policy will apply. This provision will not apply to Online students.
- 10.6 All students have the right to make audio, but not video, recordings of lectures and teaching sessions. Please refer to the Audio Recording of Large-Group Teaching Sessions Policy and Student Intellectual Property Policy for more information.
- 10.7 A ULIP will usually be in place for the duration of the student's course of study, unless paragraph 11.8 applies. It can be reviewed at any time on the request of the student or if their circumstances change.
- 10.8 A ULIP can be put in place to allow for temporary arrangements, for example to assist a pregnant student, a student with broken limb(s) during an assessment period or a student waiting for diagnostic or medical

evidence. This list is not exhaustive. A temporary ULIP will have an expiry date clearly marked on the plan.

- 10.9 If a student transfers to a different course of study or to a different campus, a new ULIP will be required to take into account different assessment methods and course competency requirements or different environmental factors.
- 10.10 The University understands that students may share information about a disability or condition but also indicate that they have no specific requirements. In this case, the student is asked to confirm this in writing. Should the situation change at any point in the future, the student should contact DIS as soon as possible for advice and guidance.

Confidentiality and student data

- 11 All personal information disclosed by students in their application or online enrolment forms is treated as confidential to the University. Information disclosed on application becomes part of the electronic student record. Effective support and sometimes health and safety issues necessitate disclosure of arrangements to key staff by way of appropriate reports and evidence. Information is shared on a 'need to know' basis to facilitate support. The ULIP will detail who the information will be shared with and the purpose for sharing that information.
- 12 Information provided is treated confidentially and will not be shared with third parties outside of the University, except where required by law, or with the express consent of the student.

Funding

- 13.1 As part of the ULIP process, eligible students will be supported to make an application to the relevant funding authority for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). It is advisable to start this process as early as possible as the process can take up to three months to complete and in some cases during peak periods, longer.
- 13.2 Where a student has made an application for DSA but the Needs Assessment has not been received at least 28 days prior to the start of the course, DIS will assess whether:
- Interim funding for a period of up to six weeks can be arranged from University funds to ensure that support is provided; or
 - It would be in the student's best interests to ensure success to defer their enrolment to the next available enrolment point, or up to one year
- In all cases, DIS will work directly with the student in an attempt to achieve the best reasonable outcome for the student.
- 13.3 Where a student is not eligible for DSA funding, or their needs will exceed the level of funding available through DSA, DIS will follow the Funding Procedure outlined in the Disability and Inclusion Procedures.
- 13.4 If a student is loaned equipment from the University, this equipment remains the property of the University and must be returned upon completion of the course. If equipment is not returned at the end of the course, an invoice will be raised and the student will be expected to reimburse the cost of the equipment.

Disability Review Panel

- 14 In cases where the request for adjustment to the assessment regime compromises the learning outcomes or competency standards of the relevant course and / or the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), the student does not agree with the adjustments being offered; or funding is not agreed the Disability and Inclusion Service Manager will convene a Disability Review Panel (DRP) in accordance with section 11 of the Disability and Inclusion Procedures.

- 15 The DRP will consider the evidence provided and adjustments requested by the student with reference to the PSRB requirements to decide whether adjustments can be made that are compatible with the PSRB requirements; and/or whether university funding is appropriate in the circumstances.
- 16 If the PSRB does not approve the adjustments, the DRP must notify the student and provide a Completion of Procedures Letter and details of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator..

Disability Appeal Panel

- 17 If the student is dissatisfied with the outcome of the Disability Review Panel they may appeal to the Disability Appeal Process¹. The appeal must be submitted within 14 days of notification of the Disability Review Panel's decision. Appeals submitted outside of this timescale will only be considered in exceptional circumstance. All other appeals submitted after 14 days will be considered out of time and a Completion of Procedures Letter issued.
- 18 An appeal may be only be made on the following grounds:
 - a) Further evidence in support of the adjustment is available which was not available earlier in the process;
 - b) The Disability Review Panel did not follow the processcorrectly and this has had a detrimental impact on the student;
 - c) The decision reached is perverse.
- 19 Academic Registry will convene a Disability Appeal Panel which will consist of three members of trained staff, at least one of whom must beat Executive Manager level or above. The Panel may also include an External Examiner as nominated by the relevant Board of Examiners.
- 20 The Disability Appeal Panel will consider the appeal and Academic Registry will notify the student of the decision within seven days of the panel meeting. This notification will include a Completion of Procedures Letter and details of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator.

Responsibility for the provision

- 21 Responsibility for the implementation of this provision lies with the University's Academic Registry (Programme Approvals) and Student Support and Wellbeing Departments.

Monitoring and evaluation of the provision

- 22 Responsibility for reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of Disability and Inclusion Policy lies initially with Student Support and Wellbeing. Formal responsibility for monitoring and evaluation of this provision lies with the Academic Board.

Version history:

Version	Amended by	Revision summary	Date
V1.0	Head of Careers Service	Initial drafting group	31/05/13
V1.1	Head of Tutors – Chester and Manchester	QA group	05/07/13
V1.2	External Consultant	Coherence activity amendments	21/08/13
V1.3	Student Officer	Review	17/09/13
V1.4	VP – AGQS	Review	18/09/13
V1.5	Academic Registrar	Review	24/09/13
V1.6	Academic Board	Approval	03/10/13
V1.7	VP – AGQS	Sign-Off	19/12/13
V1.8	Disability Support Service Manager and Group Legal Counsel	Updates to reflect update to service name and ensure compliance with appropriate legislation	21/11/14
V1.9	Head of Quality Assurance	Amendments as per Academic Board approval	18/12/14

V2.0	Head of Disability Support Service	Full Review	18/11/15
V2.1	Academic Board	Approval	10/02/16
V2.2	Head of Disability Support Service	Minor amendments	20/04/16
V3.0	Disability Support and Inclusion Service Manager	Full Review	05/11/19
V3.1	Head of Student Support Services	Minor amendments and updating; inclusion of more detail on Disability Advisory Group, Disability Review Panel and Disability Appeal Panel	30/10/20
V4.0	Head of Student Support and Wellbeing	Major re-draft and split document in to Policy and Procedures documents	11/04/2024
V4.0	Academic Board	Approval	18/07/2024