

The London Institute of Banking & Finance Code of Practice for Quality Assurance (Higher Education)

Appendix A: Students with Disabilities

A.1 General principles

A.1.1 The Equality Act 2010 identifies a disabled person as someone with "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". People with impairments can be disabled by social, attitudinal or environmental barriers.

A.1.2 Impairment covers physical impairments and impairments affecting the senses such as sight and hearing. It also covers mental impairments, including learning disabilities and mental illness. If an impairment is controlled by medication or special aids the person is still considered as disabled for the purposes of the Act. However, sight impairment that can be corrected by spectacles or contact lenses is not included.

A.1.3 Long-term means that the effect has lasted at least twelve months, or that it is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.

A.1.4 We are committed to ensuring that students with disabilities have access to a learning experience comparable to that of their peers and maps its provision for disabled students against established good practice. It recognises that the educational disadvantage and exclusion faced by many disabled people is not an inevitable result of their impairment(s) or health condition(s), but arises from social, attitudinal and environmental barriers. Our commitment is set out in our Equality and Diversity Policy.

A.1.5 We ensure that in all our policies, procedures and activities, including strategic planning and resource allocation, consideration is given to the removal of such barriers in order to enable disabled students to participate in all aspects of the academic and social life of the institution.

A.1.6 Our Equality and Diversity Policy sets parameters to ensure that the needs of individual students are identified either on registration or at any other time throughout the period of the student's registration, and that students are supported at all stages of their academic engagement with us.

A.2 Institutional and strategic management

A.2.1 Senior managers lead our development of inclusive policy and practice in relation to the enhancement of disabled students' experience across the institution.

A.2.2 Staff that are directly accessible to disabled students are consulted in the development of policy that impacts, or has a potential impact, on this group. Policies relating to inclusion are endorsed by the Academic Board.

A.2.3 Senior managers facilitate staff access to appropriate development activities and resources to ensure that inclusive practice is embedded throughout the work of the institution.

A.3 Planning, monitoring and evaluation

A.3.1 We collect information on disclosure of impairments and it is used appropriately to monitor the applications, admissions and academic progress of disabled students.

A.3.2 Should a student's study be interrupted by disability, the procedures detailed in this chapter of the code are followed to ensure that the student's academic progress is not unjustifiably impeded.

A.3.3 Cases are recorded in a non-prejudicial manner and details are held on the central student database. Under the terms of the relevant data protection legislation, any student can request sight of their record on payment of the appropriate fee.

A.3.4 Under the Data Protection / Privacy Statement, disclosure of information related to a student's disability, or any other aspect of personal data, is handled in a confidential manner. The central database, where such information is recorded, is programmed to provide access to specific aspects of student data to nominated staff only, thereby assuring the confidentiality of the information.

A.3.5 Information regarding a student's disability is only passed, with the student's consent, to third parties where it is necessary as a statutory requirement or to the provision of academic support, for example, in the preparation of study materials, to lecturers for teaching support or special arrangements through dispersed campuses or academic centres.

A.3.6 We operate systems to monitor the effectiveness of provision for disabled students, evaluate progress and identify opportunities for enhancement. Responsibility for ensuring that students with disabilities are not disadvantaged or excluded in any way lies with the Learning and Teaching Committee which considers an annual report on students with disabilities.

A.3.7 Due consideration is given to monitoring the effectiveness of provision for students with disabilities as part of our commitment to review all of our systems and processes so as to enhance the student experience.

A.4 Continuing professional development

A.4.1 We enable staff to participate in a range of continuing professional development activities in order to enhance their knowledge, reflect upon and develop their practice, and contribute towards a fully inclusive institutional culture.

A.4.2 Staff (including our academic community) dealing with any aspect of student support undergo training that includes information on inclusive practices and reflect differing requirements and varying prior experience. The subject matter is discussed at induction; supported through the Staff Handbook; and followed through in departmental training and development discussions that include encouragement to staff to engage in innovation in the context of inclusive practice.

A.5 Information for prospective students, current students and staff

A.5.1 Our publicity, programme details and general information are accessible and include explanations of how the entitlements of disabled students are met.

A.5.2 We provide programme and module specifications, entry requirements, general and academic regulations, study methods etc. via its website. All student contact is with the Student Support and Admissions Office whose details are clearly publicised and a response is provided in accordance with the Customer Service Statement.

A.5.3 Any disabled student requesting information is provided it in a format appropriate to their needs.

A.5.4 Disabled students receive information that sets down the arrangements and / or adjustments made to enable a disabled student to commence and complete the period of study. In addition a copy of the Single Equality Scheme is made available to students and staff (including our academic community).

A.5.5 Changes to policies and procedures are made available to staff through publication on the website.

A.6 Admissions processes and policies

A.6.1 In the first instance, contact is established through the Student Support and Admissions Office who liaise with appropriate internal staff to ensure that students' needs and circumstances are considered and, where applicable, addressed.

A.6.2 Students may alert us to a disability at any time throughout their course of study. However, it is beneficial to the student for us to be alerted as soon as possible, and before registration, so that any additional support, where appropriate, can be identified and implemented.

A.6.3 The operation of admissions processes and application of entry criteria include consideration of the duty to promote disability equality.

A.6.4 In line with our Equality and Diversity Policy, all applicants are given equitable consideration in terms of selection and admission procedures with staff trained to enable them to deal with the diversity of the student population.

A.6.5 Disabled applicant's requirements are identified and assessed in an effective and timely way, taking into account the applicant's views. Adjustments to entry criteria may be made where it can be shown that a disabled applicant will be capable of meeting the programme learning outcomes once accepted.

A.6.6 The details contained in our Customer Service Statement apply as much to disabled students as to any other candidates. The support needs of disabled students are handled in conjunction with the student on an individual basis to ensure that their requirements and views are taken into account and the nature and extent of reasonable adjustments agreed are appropriate to enable the student the opportunity to achieve the required standard.

A.6.7 All staff dealing with student admissions, recruitment and selection undergo appropriate training that includes disability and diversity awareness and the imperative to offer students equality of access and provision.

A.6.8 The allocation of a trained staff member as the main contact point for a disabled student is designed to ensure that their needs are effectively catered for and drawn to the attention of colleagues, e.g. in the Programme team and Faculty, as appropriate.

A.6.9 We have appropriate systems and processes to ensure that student applications, admissions and academic progress are monitored and evaluated, especially in respect of those with disabilities.

A.7 Enrolment, registration and induction of students

A.7.1 We will ensure that arrangements for enrolment, registration and induction of new entrants meet the entitlements of disabled students.

A.7.2 Enrolment, registration and induction arrangements are set out in the Higher Education prospectus and student handbook. Such information is available in a variety of formats, such as large font or Braille, if required to meet specific needs.

A.7.3 New students are provided with information about our processes for responding to the disclosure of impairment and how disclosures not already made can be documented.

A.7.4 It is recognised that established induction arrangements at collaborative partners may require adjustment to cater for the needs of a disabled student. Where such a need arises, we act as the liaison point between the student and the collaborative partner. In any event, the collaborative partner is made fully aware of the student's needs following registration, and alternative tuition support will be offered via distance learning if it is unable to accommodate those needs by way of reasonable adjustment.

A.8 Curriculum design

A.8.1 The design of new programmes and the review and / or revalidation of existing programmes include assessment of the extent to which they are inclusive of disabled students.

A.8.2 All programme specifications for higher education programmes are scrutinised in terms of 'accessibility' to disabled students as part of the design process.

A.8.3 Programme and module specifications, which are made available in specific formats if required, provide appropriate and sufficient information to enable students with disabilities and we support staff to reach informed decisions about what is required in terms of completion of the programme or module.

A.8.4 Appropriate and reasonable adjustments to assessment methods may be made to enable disabled students to demonstrate that they have met the required learning outcomes.

A.8.5 We do not offer any programmes that include fitness to practise requirements. Should we introduce such programmes in the future we will take into account the entitlements of disabled students.

A.9 Learning and teaching

A.9.1 Both the design and implementation of learning and teaching strategies, as well as the learning environment, recognise the entitlement of disabled students to participate in all activities provided as part of their programme of study.

A.9.2 Staff (including members of the academic community) are required to ensure that learning and teaching practices are inclusive of disabled students and to use a range of methods whilst seeking to work in partnership with individual students to understand the implications of their impairments and adapt their approaches.

A.9.3 Where students receive face-to-face tuition, particular consideration is given to the needs of disabled students to ensure appropriate access to teaching facilities.

A.9.4 We seek to ensure that disabled students have equivalent learning opportunities to other students through reasonable adjustments that enable the delivery of programmes of study through e-learning.

A.9.5 Where programmes of study include work placement and / or work-based learning, consideration is given to the nature and extent of reasonable adjustments that are needed to enable disabled students to participate. Where appropriate, students are given advice concerning the different funding streams available to support their learning in this context.

A.10 Academic assessment

A.10.1 Academic assessment practices ensure that disabled students are given the opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes and competence standards.

A.10.2 We have in place policies and procedures that allow disabled students equality of opportunity in terms of the achievement of learning outcomes. These are explained in more detail in Chapter 7: Assessment of this code.

A.10.3 We use a range of assessment methods and regularly reviews the operation of reasonable adjustments to ensure their effectiveness and that they operate with minimal delay and disruption to the individual student.

A.10.4 Assessment criteria and allocation of marks are set in a fair, non-discriminatory way and made clear and transparent to students as early as possible.

A.10.5 The format of feedback to students is adjusted where necessary to ensure that it is fully accessible to disabled students.

A.10.6 A student's inclusive learning plan identifies areas of adjustment or arrangements required to allow completion of all parts of the assessment methodology for the chosen programme of study.

A.10.7 Our assessment centres are monitored by the Assessments team with provision made for disabled access and special equipment or arrangements for students requiring assistance.

A.10.8 We monitor the consistency and comparability of inclusive assessment practices across modules and programmes as part of our annual monitoring.

A.11 Academic support for disabled students

A.11.1 The Programme team provides general study support for all students. We ensure that additional, appropriate support is provided for disabled students that is accessible, consistent and reasonable.

A.11.2 Academic support for disabled students is a partnership between those involved, for example, the academic community and / or dispersed campuses or academic centres. The information on individual cases is shared appropriately.

A.11.3 Disabled students with specific issues related to curriculum access and / or academic progression are able to contact the Student Support and Admissions Office who will liaise with other staff as appropriate.

A.12 Information and communication technology (ICT)

A.12.1 We have the capacity to investigate the range of ways in which disabled students can be aided by ICT and to provide students and staff with the information to enable them to make the best use of assistive technologies.

A.12.2 We acknowledge the importance of ICT as a means of enabling disabled students to engage fully in its programmes of study. It encourages ICT staff to focus on user needs as part of their service provision and ensures that accessibility and usability are key concerns in ICT management processes. We recognise that a fully accessible and inclusive ICT service that caters for a wide range of potential entitlements by disabled students is a desirable aim that fulfils its obligation to anticipate disabled students' entitlements.

A.13 Access to student services

A.13.1 Disabled students have access to the full range of student services that we provide.

A.13.2 We offer a range of support services to all students, irrespective of any disability. Designated members of staff have been identified to help meet the specialist advice and support needs of disabled students. These staff members are drawn from a number of departments across the organisation, which ensures that expert knowledge is available at all points of the student's interaction with us.

A.14 Additional specialist support

A.14.1 We ensure that there are sufficient designated members of staff with appropriate skills and experience to provide specialist advice and support to disabled applicants and students and to the staff who work with them.

A.15 Careers education, information and guidance

A.15.1 Disabled students have access to careers education, information and guidance that supports their progression to employment or further study. Further information regarding career education, information and guidance can be found in Chapter 6: Student Support and Guidance of the Code.

A.16 The physical environment

A.16.1 We strive to ensure that all students are able to access the physical environment in which they will study, learn, live and take part in the social life with us.

A.16.2 We ensure that facilities and equipment are as accessible as possible to disabled students.

A.16.3 Students are advised to inform us of any special needs on registration for, or as they arise on the course of a programme of study, thus allowing it to consider any additional adjustments required to the physical environment in which the learning will take place. Our Student Support and Admissions Office work together with other departments and, where appropriate, the dispersed campus / academic centre, to co-ordinate the reasonable adjustments required.

A.17 Institutional procedures

A.17.1 We ensure that information about all policies and procedures that affect students' ability to complete their studies and assessments is available in accessible formats and is communicated to students.

A.17.2 We review at regular intervals the impact of its policies and procedures with the involvement of disabled students and ensures that when such procedures are changed disabled students are not disadvantaged by their operation.

A.17.3 We ensure that policies and procedures are operated in a way that does not lead to disadvantages to disabled students that arise from the nature of an impairment.

A.17.4 Staff operating the policies and procedures have access to specialist advice about the impact of particular impairments on the ability of students to fulfil any requirements.

A.17.5 Where appropriate reasonable adjustments will be made to procedures to take account of a student's impairment.

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