

Policy for students with disabilities, v.5

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that the Institute treats disabled students as fairly as non-disabled students throughout the student life-cycle. The Institute will make all necessary arrangements and reasonable adjustments to ensure students with physical and mental disabilities have access to all the facilities of the Institute and take part in all aspects of the Institute's academic and social activities.

Definition:

Disability:

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. (DDA, 1995)

Scope:

This policy applies to all applicants to the Institute and all existing students, and applies to all sites of the Institute. Alternative arrangements will be put in place where physical access is difficult for unavoidable reasons to ensure students with disabilities avail the services.

General Policy

The Institute acknowledges that students with a disability are an integral part of an academic community. The special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 (SENDA) amended Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) to include a section on education. The Act makes it unlawful to treat disabled person less favourably than a non-disabled person for reasons related to his/ her disability. The Institute strictly adhering to the law is committed to make necessary and reasonable adjustments to ensure that a disabled student is not placed at a substantial disadvantage.

In combination with Equality of Opportunity policy and Widening Participation policy, the Institute encourages applications from people with disabilities. The Institute ensures that disabled students are treated fairly in the application process and the place of study is offered purely on merit. The Institute will provide necessary alternative arrangements to disabled students in teaching, learning and assessment.

The Institute, on regular basis, reviews the facilities, services, physical environment and equipment for their accessibility to the disabled students and continuously work towards improving the accessibility so that the Institute meets the needs of learning opportunities of all the students.

The Institute is currently working on a phased plan to identify and eliminate all forms of disability discrimination and to continually improve services to ensure an inclusive environment.

Admissions Process

The Institute recognizes students with disabilities should have access to the full range of academic, cultural and social activities the Institute offers. Disabled students, as all other students, are accepted by the Institute on the basis of academic attainment and potential to benefit from the programme to which they have applied.

Applicants are asked to disclose a disability on the application form when they apply by completing the relevant section on the application form. The Institute provides information in alternative formats should the student with a disability request the Institute to do so. Students are instructed how to view the information on the Institute's website suitable for students with various disabilities.

The application made by the applicant with disability is processed in a normal way on academic merit. A decision of the outcome of the process is conveyed to the applicant. In certain situations the Institute might need to interview the applicant before reaching to any decision about his/her application. The Institute arranges the interview in a manner by which applicant can best express himself. The applicants who are offered a place of study at the Institute are invited to discuss their special needs and how these can be met in best possible way.

The Institutes in its week long induction/orientation programme for the new entrants specifies the support and services offered to the students with disabilities.

Students who become disabled during studies or develop a long term medical condition.

If a student develops a disability, medical condition or specific learning

condition which may have an impact on his/her studies, the student must be encouraged to disclose his/her disability on the disability disclosure form. Appropriate adjustments will be put in place to meet the student's requirements.

If necessary the student will be referred, by a relevant member of staff or the Student Services to one or more of the following services:

- Their GP
- An appropriate dyslexia screening service
- Local walk-in centre

Any cost incurred on the disability assessment must be borne by the student himself or may be covered under the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA).

Registration with the Student Services

The Institute will offer advice to students regarding support for dyslexia and other disabilities through its Student Welfare function operated by the Student Services. The Student Services- offers advice and assistance regarding additional support to the students with disabilities when they are applying on arrive at the Institute and throughout their student life cycle at BITE. A Student with a disability needs to register with BITE and the Student Services. The registration should be done by filling in a registration form for disabled students in the induction week or on the day of joining the Institute if a student fails to attend the induction. As part of the registration process Students are required to provide evidence of their disability and/or specific learning difficulty. If a student becomes disabled after joining their program of study, the student must register any such disability with supporting documentation as evidence.

The registration form can be obtained in the following ways:

- from student help desk
- from the Institute's virtual learning environment (NEETED)
- ordering by email / post

Examination Arrangements

In order to enable a student with disabilities to demonstrate his knowledge and the achievement of learning outcomes in the examination, the institute will make special exam arrangements for disabled students who have registered their disability/s with BITE and the Student Services. The student must fill in the **Special Needs for Exam Form** before 7th week of teaching and submit it to the Student Services. An email will be sent to the student confirming the special exam arrangement. Therefore appropriate interventions can include the provision of an amanuensis, the use of computers and allowing additional time to complete examinations. The need for special exam arrangement will be recorded on the Student Record System so that the student is not required to complete additional forms prior to their exams. However, if the disability is rectified in the interim the student must inform the Student Services and their Programme Leader.

Financial Support

If a student has a disability, they may be entitled to claim extra financial help whilst studying. Where applicable, the Institute provides guidance and advices to apply for the financial help.

Student will be appropriately advised to apply for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) grants to help with the extra costs that may face because of a disability.

Requirement for the Disabled Student Allowance

To apply for financial help, forms can be found on the [Directgov](#) website. Additionally, students must have UK residence status, i.e. student must have been born or lived in the UK for three years and have "leave to enter or remain". DSA is not available to international students including students from EU.

Students will need to provide evidence of additional requirements and/or medical conditions such as a letter from GP or a hospital consultant's letter. If the student has Dyslexia, he/she will need to provide post-16 evidence of this condition from a suitably qualified Educational Psychologist

If a student qualifies for DSAs, he/she is paid on top of any standard student finance. He/she can apply to Student Finance England for DSAs when applying for student finance.

ICT Support

The institute is committed to narrow down the digital divide between disabled and non-disabled students by continuously developing its ICT facilities to suit the students with disabilities. On request, IT Services are able to support students with a disability or specific learning need. In addition to our 'standard desktop' each 'Adapted PC' offers a range of assistive software providing screen magnification; text to speech output, auto-fill and word prediction. The PCs are located across BITE campuses.

The Institute's IT Services Disability Advisor provides information and training to the student requesting to use these PCs.

Teaching- Learning Experience

The institute ensures that the members of staff who are involved in delivering lectures and other academic activities are made aware of the student's disability. They are required to make necessary arrangements to meet disabled student's requirements.

The members of staff are required to upload the lecture slides and lecture notes in advance on the e-learning platform NETED and wherever necessary in accessible formats.

A student with a disability may be given extra time and may be given a convenient place to demonstrate his knowledge and the achievement of learning outcomes in all the classroom assessments that may or may not add towards his final grades.

The institute recognises that knowledge is not the only outcome of the Higher Education. BITE organises a suite of lectures and workshops on developing employability skills. The Institute provides guidance and advices to all the students to develop employability skills. Students with disabilities are provided advice about career choices and job opportunities. They are also made aware of their legal entitlement regarding their employment rights. The institute's policy is to prepare disabled students for the employment and make best use of the knowledge gained in their course of study.

Information Dissemination

Staff and students are made aware of the policy and the facilities at the time of recruitment and enrolment respectively. The policy statement is made available to general public through the Institute's Website.

The Institute makes it sure that on request the information about courses ,services, study material, assessment documents and any other communication provided to the new applicants and existing students with disabilities is in accessible formats. The Institute's website follows accessibility criteria set by the W3C Web Accessibility Initiatives and has passed its compliance checks.

The disability policy and facilities are included in every student handbook handed out to the students on the induction day. During the induction the policy is made clear by BITE's student support service.

Disclosure and Confidentiality

The Institute positively encourages the disclosure of disabilities to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to meet the needs of individual students. Non-disclosure of disability may result, in some cases, in the Institute being unable to appropriately meet individual needs.

The Institute believes all students have the right to confidentiality to protect their interests and ensure a relationship of trust is maintained between student and staff. It is the policy of the Institute that no information regarding a student's disability shall be

shared either directly or indirectly with any other department of the Institute, or any external agency or person, without that student's prior, expressed consent; except where issues of safety or legality apply.

Review

The policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

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