



Disability Guide for Students

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1. Disability Statement

BIMM London is committed to ensuring that disabled people are provided with equal access to their chosen course of study and facilities at the College.

The College recognises the social model of disability, whereby the individual is understood to be disadvantaged not by their disability, but by social barriers, such as the physical environment, methods of communication and prejudicial attitudes.

The College is committed to working towards removing any barriers which might prevent a disabled person from actively participating in student life at BIMM London.

We provide advice and information for disabled students, and aim to enable disabled students to reach their full potential at BIMM London.

2. Welcome

The purpose of this handbook is to answer any questions you might have about the disability support available to students at the BIMM London.

BIMM London is committed to ensuring that disabled people are provided with equal access to their chosen course of study and facilities at the School and is working towards removing any barriers which might prevent a disabled person from actively participating in student life at BIMM London.

Disability support is available through the Student Support team who are able to provide advice and information to all disabled students. We provide a free and confidential service to all students and applicants.

We work with students with a wide range of disabilities, including but by no means restricted to:

- Specific Learning Difficulties (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD)
- Mental Health Difficulties (such as depression, bi-polar disorder)
- Long-term medical conditions (such as HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis)
- Unseen disabilities (such as diabetes, asthma, epilepsy)
- Sensory impairments (such as visual impairment, hearing impairment)
- Mobility or physical impairments (such as paralysis, arthritis).

3. Contacting Disability Support

Disability support is available through the Student Support team. Students may contact Student Support team in the following ways:

By telephone: +44 (0) 20 8749 3131

By email: studentsupportlondon@bimm.co.uk

By post: BIMM London, Effie Road, Fulham, SW6 1TB

In person ask for Student Support at Reception.

4. Specialist Services for Students

Student Support provides a number of services to disabled students. These include:

- Advice and information on disability support and reasonable adjustments at BIMM London;
- Advice and information on additional funding which disabled students may be eligible to apply for (such as Disabled Students Allowance);
- Advice and information on arranging an assessment for a Specific Learning Difficulty with an Educational Psychologist;
- Liaising with the Academic Administration team and Programme Leaders to implement recommended exam provisions;
- Assistance in arranging Non-Medical Helpers (such as note-takers, one-on-one support mentors);
- Providing Disability Cover Letters for students with Specific Learning Difficulties.

We can provide guidance and advice to students without evidence of their disability. However, we will not make any recommendations for support, and the College will not implement any reasonable adjustments, until the student provides evidence of their disability.

What happens when I declare a Disability or Specific Learning Difficulty?

Once we are aware that that you require learning support, you will be contacted for an informal meeting with your support advisor who will draw up an Individual Support Plan (ISP) with you. This plan will comprise of the barriers and challenges you face, adjustments BIMM can make and additional support available to you. This plan will be there for student services to use as a guide to working out which support is available and which you are entitled to. For example, extra time in written exams, scribe for visual impaired students etc.

In this meeting, you are also able to seek advice on but not limited to; Disabled Students Allowance applications and where and how to get an Educational Psychology Report (if needed).

5. Confidentiality

We operate a confidential service within the Student Support service, which means that information about a student and/or their disability is not passed on to third parties without student consent.

We encourage students to contact us as early as possible regarding their disability so we are able to ensure that they are provided with equal access to their chosen course of study and facilities at the College. Every student will be contacted at point of enrolment and given this guide and asked to complete a Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form (Appendix 1). The form can be amended by the student at any time.

We reserve the right to break the Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form in circumstances where the student is reasonably believed to be a risk either to themselves or others. Any decision to break confidentiality would be made by the Student Support Advisor and/or Head of Student Services.

Student Support may need to disclose information in order to help support you. However, the student has the right to limit their disclosure:

Full Disclosure

If a student allows full disclosure, then information will only be shared where necessary on a 'need to know basis'. Those with whom we may need to share information or request further information may include (but is not strictly limited to); your programme leader and tutors, the academic administration team who arrange your exams, Health and Safety staff, support workers, your Educational Psychologist, your Needs Assessor or your learning support provider. We always ask the people with whom we share your information to respect your confidentiality and to not pass your information on to anyone else unless they are also involved in your support.

Restricted Disclosure

You can choose to restrict (i.e. prevent) disclosure to individuals outside of Student Support or to only allow information to certain individuals. In these cases, Student Support will inform the student that this will limit the reasonable adjustments that can be put in place. The student is advised that should they choose to limit their level of disclosure, a failure by the College to make reasonable adjustments is unlikely to be grounds for any subsequent mitigation. Please be aware this may limit the level and type of support the College can provide for you. If you would like to discuss the different options and the effect on your support, please contact Student Support.

Under the Data Protection Act (1998) disability is considered to be 'personal, sensitive information'. We therefore provide a confidential service to students, which means that information about a student and/or their disability is not passed on to third parties without their consent. The Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form is a record of who you have or have not given your consent for Student Support to discuss your case with and, where appropriate, share relevant information. Any information held by Student Support can be kept for a period of six years, after your last point of contact with us, as required by the Data Protection Act (1998). After this date, the information held by Student Support will be appropriately disposed of.

6. Evidence of Disability

Evidence of a student's disability must be confirmed in writing by an appropriately qualified professional. Examples include:

- GP or Doctor's letter;
- Consultant letter;
- Dental surgeon letter;
- Psychiatric/psychologist letter or report.

All evidence must be contemporaneous and relevant to the period for which they are applying for adjustments.

It is the responsibility of the student to provide Student Support with evidence of their disability.

Obtaining Evidence of a Disability

Where a student does not have evidence of a disability, we can provide advice and guidance on how to obtain it. We can assist students in arranging an assessment with an Educational Psychology, where the student believes they may have a Specific Learning Difficulty. The cost of an Educational Psychologist assessment is that of the student. Financial help is available to enrolled students through the BIMM Hardship Fund.

Diploma and non-UK BA/BMus students are ineligible to apply for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). Some support services and reasonable adjustments are still available at BIMM so you should speak to Student Support about your options.

Where a student requires written evidence of disability from a medical practitioner, we can provide the student with a letter to present to their practitioner, explaining why the College requires evidence of disability.

Temporary illness or injuries

Support for students who are pregnant, or have a temporary illness or injury, will be agreed and provided by Student Support. Students are advised to contact Student Support to discuss their circumstances.

7. Reasonable Adjustments

Under the Equality Act, the College also has an obligation to make adjustments for disabled students once it becomes aware or should be aware that they have a disability.

A “reasonable adjustment” is a change that the College can make to the way in which a course is delivered, or the way in which we carry out assessments to remove a disadvantage caused by a disability. Reasonable adjustments should be tailored to the needs of an individual student but support provisions are most commonly identified in accordance with recommendations made by an Educational Psychologist, or other medical professional.

Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Disability Cover Letters

Upon receipt of evidence confirming a diagnosis of a SpLD, we provide students with an electronic disability cover letter to attach to their assignments when they submit them (Appendix 2). The disability cover letter should be attached to your assessment as the first page and submitted as per normal, by deadline, via Moodle.

The aim of the disability cover letter is to identify work from a student with SpLD so it is marked appropriately. Marking guidelines have been written for the academics on how to mark work for those students with SpLD.

It is the student’s responsibility to attach a disability cover letter to each assignment. Work without a disability cover letter will not be marked with special allowances.

If a student loses their disability cover letter then it is their responsibility to contact Student Support at least 48 hours before the submission deadline to receive a new copy.

Extensions

Students may request an extension for coursework assignments on the grounds of their disability, as a reasonable adjustment.

Please be informed that evidence of a SpLD does not guarantee an automatic right to an extension.

Where a student has a disability, we do not recommend blanket extensions for all assignments. We recognise that where possible students should adhere to given deadlines, in the interests of their academic progress.

It is the student's responsibility to negotiate all extensions in advance of the submission deadlines with their Programme Leader and/or Head of Student Services. It is at the discretion of the Programme Leader and/or Head of Student Services as to whether or not an extension is granted.

Examinations/Assessments

The Student Support team will identify what reasonable adjustments need to be put in place for the individual disabled person in line with recommendations made by an Educational Psychologist, or other medical professional. The purpose of reasonable adjustments to the assessment format is to reduce any disadvantage a disabled student faces due to their disability.

The Student Support team will inform the Academic Administration department of what reasonable adjustments are to be put in place. The Student Support team must inform the Academic Administration department four weeks before the exam in order to guarantee that support can be provided.

8. Physical Accessibility

The College has a limited number of parking spaces available which have been especially reserved for disabled visitors. Parking is only available and free to blue badge holders. It is advisable that disabled visitors contact the College prior to travel to ensure that a parking space is available.

BIMM London is accessible to disabled students. There is an outdoor lift leading to the entrance and an indoor lift stopping at each floor. There is a fire refuge point on each floor in case of emergencies, linking to reception.

Student Support also work closely with facilities and provide an orientation/induction meeting for new disabled students who may have a visual impairment/blind, wheelchair users and/or experience mobility difficulties, to become familiarised with the College and facilities.

Students, who would like the orientation/induction meeting, must contact Student Support prior to enrolment in order for this to be arranged.

9. Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1 October 2010. The Act was brought in to integrate, simplify, clarify and further strengthen former discrimination legislation. It is important to note that the vast majority of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has simply been transferred over into the new Act.

Someone has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.

Substantial means that it has more than a minor or trivial effect on his/her ability to do normal day to day activities. Long term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted, or is likely to last 12 months. There are special rules for people who have recurring or fluctuating conditions who can also qualify.

Persons who are registered blind, have a severe disfigurement, Multiple Sclerosis, HIV or cancer will automatically qualify for protection under the Act. They do not have to satisfy the test outlined above.

How does the Act protect disabled persons?

The Act protects students from:

- **Direct Discrimination** - Treating a person worse than someone else because he/she has (or had) a disability/is perceived to have a disability or is associated with someone who has a disability.
- **Indirect Discrimination** - Using a policy or practice which impacts worse on a particular group and which cannot be objectively justified.
- **Discrimination Arising from disability** - Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with his/her disability when this cannot be objectively justified.

The Equality Duty

The Act introduced an equality duty, which came into force on the 6 April 2011. It is very similar to the previous disability equality duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. It means that the College needs to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons and to take steps to eliminate discrimination and harassment against disabled persons.

If you would like to find out more information about the Equality Act, you can do so on the Equality and Human Rights website: www.equalityhumanrights.com.

Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form *Appendix 1*

Please use BLOCK CAPITALS to complete this form.

Student ID:

First Name:

Last Name:

Date of Birth:

Telephone:

Address (including Postcode):

Email:

Course:

Year of study:

I agree that my learning support and other disability-related needs can be disclosed to appropriate members of BIMM London staff to enable the provision of reasonable adjustments.

Signed.....

Date.....