



## **Disability Policy For Students**

Core Documentation Cover Page

# Disability Policy for Students

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	Sept 2013 Academic Council	To provide a formal policy of inclusion at the UCO.	Student Welfare & Equality Manager	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Sep 2015 or in line with any legislative changes
V2.0	Oct 2016 PRAG Chair	Administrative Amendment to update staff contact details and role titles.	Student Support Manager	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Oct 2018 or in line with any legislative changes
V3.0	Jul 2017 PRAG Chair	Administrative Amendments to update institution name change from British School of Osteopathy to University College of Osteopathy and to update staff role titles.	Student Support Manager	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Intranet	Oct 2018 or in line with any legislative changes
V4.0	Jun 2019 EESC	Administrative Amendment to update Staff Role Titles.	Student Support Officer	All master versions will be held in: J:\0 Quality Team - Core Documentation Website	June 2022 or in line with any legislative changes

### Equality Impact

Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)	
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)	X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)	

**If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this policy, please email your comments to: [quality@uco.ac.uk](mailto:quality@uco.ac.uk)**

## DISABILITY POLICY FOR STUDENTS

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## 1. SCOPE

- 1.1 The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) is committed to a policy of “inclusion”, actively seeking to widen participation and to increase opportunities for high-calibre students with the aptitude and potential to become osteopaths to undertake a degree in osteopathy.

## 2. DISABILITY ISSUES

- 2.1 Students who have, or think they may have, a disability or special learning need are advised to disclose this to the Student Support Officer as soon as possible. Students may be entitled to Disabled Students Allowance and extra exam time. The Student Support Officer is based in room 3.08.
- 2.2 The UCO promotes equality for all and a copy of the UCO Single Equality Scheme and Plan is available in the library and on the UCO website.

## 3. DISABILITY POLICY FOR CURRENT UCO STUDENTS

- 3.1 In line with the Equality Act 2010; the UCO’s statement of its values demonstrates its stance on equality of opportunity.
- 3.2 The UCO is committed to a policy of “inclusion”, actively seeking to widen participation and to increase opportunities for high-calibre students, with the aptitude and potential to become osteopaths, to undertake a degree in osteopathy. Students from diverse ethnic and social backgrounds, UCO-leavers, mature ‘second career’ applicants and students with a range of seen and unseen disabilities are all warmly welcomed. Every application to the UCO is considered on its own merits.
- 3.3 The UCO currently has an estimated student population of around 490 of whom around 50, at the time of writing, have declared a disability of some kind. This ranges from specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia, to visual, hearing or mild physical impairment. It includes mental health difficulties and long-term conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, asthma or epilepsy, for example. Pain, fatigue or treatment side effects, for example, may also affect studies.
- 3.4 Disability issues come within the remit of the Student Support Officer.
- 3.5 If you have not discussed your disability or problems with a member of the support team earlier, please do not hesitate to do so at the earliest opportunity or indeed at any point during your entire course.

## 4. ACCESS AND THE UCO ENVIRONMENT

- 4.1 A considerable number of UCO patients are disabled, and therefore the Head of Estates has ensured the building's accessibility to all. There are automatic doors, a lift-hoist, and wheel-chair accessible lavatories. Lift buttons are marked with Braille. Students' Union facilities are on the ground floor and also fully accessible.
- 4.2 The Students' Union welcomes students with disabilities, and focuses effort on help, advice, fun and entertainment for all. They want everyone to enjoy equally all aspects of their UCO experience.
- 4.3 The UCO does not own student accommodation. Students rent privately, share houses or flats, or live in accommodation made available to the UCO by large agencies and Student Village.
- 4.4 Travel - Borough is very well connected by train, tube and bus services. A Freedom Pass may be available for certain forms of travel without time restrictions for London residents who are registered blind or disabled.

## 5. LIBRARY AND LEARNING RESOURCES

- 5.1 Extended book loans and book stands are available for disabled students. A Clearview magnification monitor is available for those with a visual impairment. Additional help in finding books and research materials is also provided upon request. Please discuss these particular needs with the library team.

## 6. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- 6.1 Under Health and Safety regulations the UCO strives to provide a safe and healthy environment for all staff, students and visitors. Should you have any concerns regarding this you should contact the Head of HR.

## 7. WHAT SUPPORT FACILITIES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ME?

- 7.1 General support is available to all students. Once you have begun your studies, you can gain advice and support from the course lecturers, clinic tutors, Students' Union and:
  - a) Academic Tutors: These tutors have been appointed to help you with personal and academic problems and to oversee the evolution of your learning portfolio.
  - b) The Student Counselling Service: The Counsellor can be found in Room 3.12 and is available 4 days per week, for 2 hours per day. The Counsellor can help you to cope with major or minor crises, or simply to clarify your own thinking in relation to your current concerns.

- c) The Student Support Officer: The Student Support Officer is available at most times during the week to provide you with welfare and disability support and advice.
- d) Welfare Support: They should be your first point of call should you feel the need to discuss any problems you might be having in any sphere of your life regarding your personal welfare.
- e) Disability Advice: The Student Support Officer can assist you through your initial induction period to the UCO, liaise with UCO staff to assist them in meeting your needs, take you through the whole Disabled Students' Allowance process (see below), co-ordinate and monitor the effectiveness of the support provided, and continue to liaise with your SASSA Report Assessor if your documentary needs require adjustment.
- f) Student Learning Advisor: Study Skills/Learning Support Workshops are organised periodically by the Student Learning Advisor to coincide with particular needs or types of assessment for different year groups. You can also seek 1:1 general advice or support.

## 8. FINANCE

- 8.1 Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) helps home students on higher education and postgraduate courses pay any extra costs that arise because of a disability. DSA is normally paid by Student Finance England (England and Wales), the Students Award Agency for Scotland (SAAS) or, in Northern Ireland, your Education and Library Board to:
  - a) Undergraduate students
  - b) Foundation degree/HND students
  - c) Postgraduate students
- 8.2 If you are a student from abroad you are not usually eligible for the allowance.
- 8.3 DSA is not means-tested. This means it does not depend on your personal finances. You can receive DSA even if you do not qualify for help with tuition fees or the means-tested element of the student loan.
- 8.4 There are three parts to the DSA:
  - i. Specialist Equipment Allowance pays for equipment such as computers and software, tape recorders, specialist furniture (one amount to cover the whole period of study).
  - ii. Non-Medical Helpers' Allowance pays for specialist tuition e.g. dyslexia, for non-medical helpers such as sign language interpreters or communicators, note takers, or mobility-enablers. This allowance may be granted to meet such costs for each year of study.

- iii. General Allowance pays for extra books or photocopying, tapes, discs and so on. You can get this allowance to meet these costs for each year of study.
- 8.5 You can also apply for travel expenses if you have extra costs because of disability.
- 8.6 To apply for the DSA, contact Student Finance England or the Student Support Officer. We suggest that you apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance as soon as possible.
- 8.7 The Student Support Officer can advise you on:
  - a) Completing the application form
  - b) The supporting documents you must provide
  - c) The assessment process
  - d) Delivery and set up of equipment awarded
  - e) Authorising support arrangements
  - f) Any other questions you might have about DSA
- 8.8 'Bridging the Gap' is a helpful booklet about DSA. You can download a copy from:  
[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)
- 8.9 Follow the links for higher education; for further information on entitlements.

## 9. DYSLEXIA

- 9.1 We recognise dyslexia as a disability and offer support. The Student Support Officer can provide:
  - a) Screening (using the Lucid Lads software programme)
  - b) Referral to an Educational Psychologist for a diagnostic assessment
  - c) Funding through the Access to Learning Funds (for those screened as moderate to high possibility of dyslexia)
  - d) One to one tuition with a Dyslexia tutor

## 10. MENTAL HEALTH

- 10.1 Your mental well-being is important to us. Students with long-term or temporary mental health difficulties may access:
  - a) Student Support drop-in facilities
  - b) The Counsellor
  - c) Referral to appropriate sources of external advice and support

- d) Links with relevant community agencies or national organisations

## **11. DEAF STUDENTS AND STUDENTS WITH A HEARING LOSS**

- 11.1 If you require a note taker or communicator it is advisable you contact the Student Support Officer as soon as possible. They will arrange for this service to be in place for the start of your course and will help you apply for DSA funding.

## **12. STUDENTS WITH SENSORY, MOBILITY OR VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AND LONG-TERM SEEN OR UNSEEN MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

- 12.1 In line with the Disability Discrimination Act, the UCO is accessible to all students. There is adequate parking at the rear of the building and lift access to all floors.
- 12.2 Prospective students are advised to contact the Student Support Officer well in advance of their course, as so that the appropriate provisions (within reason) can be made for the course start date.
- 12.3 The Student Support Officer will also help you apply for DSA to fund assistance required, e.g. note-takers and computer software.

## **13. SPECIAL EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 13.1 The Student Support Officer can liaise with Registry and Faculty to provide special examination and assessment arrangements (reasonable adjustments). Particular arrangements will depend on the nature of the disability. We recommend you discuss assessment and exam arrangements at the beginning of your course. Evidence will be required.
- 13.2 Examples of possible arrangements include:
  - a) extra time allowances;
  - b) using a specific format like Braille, tape or large print;
  - c) using specialist equipment or software;
  - d) access to a separate room;
  - e) a person to take notes for you.

## **14. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 14.1 Information disclosed is treated in the strictest confidence. We strongly advise students who have, or think they may have, a disability, to inform the UCO as soon as possible. Information will be kept confidential. With your prior consent we will inform others to whom it is relevant of your condition and needs.



## 15. GENERAL AIMS AND ASPIRATIONS

- 15.1 Strategies are being devised to increase Disability Awareness in the whole UCO population.
- 15.2 In support of the UCO policy of equality for all, the Equality Committee meets regularly to discuss issues regarding equality. Disabled students, and those with a specific learning need, are encouraged to join this group.
- 15.3 The Student Support Department will continue to gather and disseminate information relevant to the inclusive education and training of students, making it available to all staff.
- 15.4 The information in this statement was correct at time of writing. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the UCO will (within reason) make adjustments so that facilities and learning can be accessed equally by all.