



Bishop Grosseteste University

Document Administration

Document Title	Responding to Access Needs Disclosure (Response and Support Procedure)
Document Category	Procedure
Version Number	2.1
Status	APPROVED
Reason for development	To outline the University's approach to supporting students through confidentiality
Scope	Applies directly to students at the University
Owner	The Hub – Student Advice and Wellbeing
Assessment (where relevant)	Tick relevant assessments: <input type="checkbox"/> Equality Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> Information Governance <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Governance
Consultation	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Trade Unions Via HR <input type="checkbox"/> Students Via BGSU <input type="checkbox"/> Any Relevant External Statutory Bodies
Authorised by (Board)	Senate
Date first authorised	July 2023
Date current version is effective from	16 September 2024
Date the next review is due to commence	September 2027 – unless required for review earlier
Document Location	University Website
Document Control	All printed versions of this document are classified as uncontrolled. A controlled version is available from the <i>University website</i> .
Alternative Format	If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact policy@bishopg.ac.uk



Version Control Table

Version Number	Date Authorised	Summary of key changes
1.0	10 th May 2006	Policy first issued and approved by University Council
2.0	July 2023	Updates made post university re-structure
2.1	September 2024	No change to content. Changes made to nomenclature only following University staffing restructure.



RESPONDING TO ACCESS NEEDS DISCLOSURE - SUPPORT PROCEDURE

1. Encouraging Access Needs Disclosure

- 1.1. Information about accessibility support is made available to prospective and current students. The following opportunities are utilised to disseminate information about accessibility support at BGU, and through partner organisations such as Assessment Centres and student funding agencies:
 - Open days
 - Interview days
 - Schools and Colleges Outreach Activities
 - Finance Workshops
 - Admissions Procedure
 - Registration/Induction
 - University website (Student Advice & Wellbeing pages)
 - University prospectus
 - One-to-One Interviews with Student Advice & Wellbeing staff

2. Access Needs Disclosure: Response and Support Procedure

Pre-Registration:

- 2.1. Applicant declares access needs on UCAS/Get into Teaching/BGU application form
- 2.2. Student Recruitment and Admissions notify Student Advice & Wellbeing (SA&W) of application forms received from students disclosing access needs.
- 2.3. SA&W check the student record to obtain contact details of applicants with access needs. An accessibility questionnaire is sent as an attachment to an email directing the applicant to Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) information available on the Gov.UK website. Applicants are invited to contact SA&W if they require information in an alternative format.

N.B. an Accessibility questionnaire and are sent to all applicants, irrespective of whether they have made BGU their firm choice, in the interests of best practice.



- 2.4. A confidential SA&W case file is opened for each applicant, detailing actions carried out and advice given.
- 2.5. Student Recruitment and Admissions contact SA&W in advance of interview days to confirm whether applicants that have declared access needs will be attending.
- 2.6. Applicant completes and returns the accessibility questionnaire with details of their condition and support needs and returns it with medical evidence. SA&W will provide a prepaid envelope for the return of the form
- 2.7. Once in receipt of the completed accessibility questionnaire, SA&W informs Student Recruitment and Admissions and the Programme Leader of adjustments the student requires at interview.
- 2.8. Adjustments are implemented at interview. SA&W staff are available to all candidates on interview days to discuss any matter (e.g. applying for DSAs).

SA&W will invite applicants to disclose their access needs on the day if they have not already done so. If a candidate discloses access needs during an interview, the tutor will make a note of whether that disclosure is limited (see 2.13 below) or not.

- The meeting between the applicant and SA&W provides an opportunity for the applicant to learn about the support available at BGU and for BGU to learn more about the applicant's needs.
 - Ideally, the applicant will already have been to an Assessment Centre, or will have completed an accessibility questionnaire before their visit. BGU and the applicant can discuss suggested adjustments (and their reasonability), and whether the Assessment Centre recommendations are complete or not, before Registration.
- 2.9. Access needs and provisional reasonable adjustments to study detailed in the Accessibility Questionnaire are circulated by SA&W to relevant staff for those applicants that have been offered a place at BGU.
 - 2.10. SA&W writes to all prospective students who have declared an SpLD advising them that the BGU Learning Fund can fund a diagnostic test if they have made a firm acceptance of their offer of a place, and they require a formal diagnostic report to secure DSA.



Post-Registration:

- 2.11. Students are advised during Induction talks of support available through SA&W, Learning Development and DSA.
- 2.12. Students' completed Notification of Access Needs documents are submitted to SA&W during Registration.
- 2.13. Notification of Access Needs are processed according to the type of disclosure received:

Unlimited Disclosures:

- SA&W provides copies of Access Needs Notifications received from students making an unlimited disclosure of their access needs to relevant programme administrative staff – the information is then logged on the student record by Admissions for general access by staff.
- If a student makes an unconditional disclosure of their access needs to a member of staff in any department, the member of staff should request the student completes an Access Needs Notification (the form is available on the SA&W Blackboard module) and this should be forwarded to SA&W.
- Students have the opportunity to give consent for BGU to disclose information about their access needs to placement providers on the Access Needs Notification form

Limited Disclosures:

- SA&W retains Access Needs Notifications for students that have made a limited disclosure, in order that follow-up work can be undertaken. This will include consideration of whether the student represents a risk to themselves or others, (e.g. in a placement setting) or whether there may be an impact on the health and safety of the student or others. (If there is sufficient evidence of a risk to the student or others, it may be necessary to breach confidentiality.)
- If a student discloses their accessibility needs to a member of staff and requests that confidentiality be maintained (that no further members of staff should be informed), the member of staff concerned should keep a confidential record of the student's request and write to the student:



- a) Recommending the student seeks further assistance (via SA&W) and;
- b) Informing the student that their limited disclosure means BGU may not be able to make a comprehensive response to their needs.

The member of staff should contact SA&W, to find out what level of response can be given to the student's needs, in the absence of a full disclosure being made – the student's individual identity should not be disclosed to Student Support without the student's express permission.

If the member of staff is concerned that the student is a risk to themselves or others, or there may be an impact on the health and safety of the student or others, (e.g., in a placement setting) they should contact SA&W and discuss the matter without making reference to the identity of the individual student involved. (If there is sufficient evidence of a risk to the student or others, it may be necessary to breach confidentiality, but this should not be done without consultation with SA&W in the first instance.)

- Students who have made a limited disclosure are contacted to discuss their condition and support needs, and issues surrounding the limitations to responding to a limited disclosure, including the associated implications for placement settings, where appropriate.
- Students who have not given consent for BG to share information about their access needs with placement providers will be contacted by the Programme Team and the implications (e.g., limited support in the placement setting) will be discussed.

2.14. Student Recruitment and Admissions update the student record with information on Access Needs Notifications received from SA&W.

2.15. SA&W can offer guidance about the sort of support which may be available through DSAs. Students wishing to apply for DSAs are offered assistance throughout the process e.g. completion of the DSA form, supplying medical evidence to the appropriate funding body, making appointments with assessment centres and ordering equipment.

- SA&W notifies the relevant programme administrative staff once DSAs have been awarded to a student.



- 2.16. SA&W's programme lists are updated using information from students' access needs notifications where an unconditional disclosure has been made. The programme lists are cross-referenced with other information SA&W has on file such as the accessibility questionnaire.
- 2.17. Students are invited to provide a copy of their Assessment Centre Report to SA&W. Upon receipt of the report, SA&W reviews the adjustments which have been suggested, highlighting any adjustments which may be problematic to the student, and discussing further.
- 2.18. SA&W disseminates (with the student's consent) the suggested reasonable adjustments (from Assessment Centre/Educational Psychologist/Health Professional reports) to all relevant parties within BG: e.g., Academic Co-ordinators, Partnerships Office (for matters related to placements*) Accommodation, Library, Learning Development, Student Recruitment and Admissions – as applicable on a need to know basis.

** Information related to a student's access needs should only usually be given to placement providers with the student's express consent. Exceptions to this protocol can be made if a health and safety risk assessment indicates risk to the student or others.
- 2.19. Adjustments are implemented by relevant BGU departments and programme teams, including liaison with placement providers where appropriate, and subject to the student's consent for information to be shared (please refer to paragraph 2.13).
- 2.20. A copy of the Support Agreement is sent to the student to sign and return, together with a copy for the student to keep. The Support Agreement sets out the support which BG will implement for the student.
- 2.21. SA&W regularly monitors the situation of all students with access needs (unless the student has indicated this is not necessary), making contact at the end of each semester in order to obtain feedback about effectiveness of support/adjustments put in place. Feedback is monitored, and is used to inform the SA&W's accessibility action plan. Feedback may also be used in the Annual Monitoring Report presented to the Academic Enhancement Committee. This is collated by the Head of Student Support and SA&W will ensure that any feedback used is done so confidentially.



- 2.22. Students are encouraged to contact SA&W at any point in the academic year if they have any questions about the support they are receiving.
- 2.23. Programme lists and case files are updated at the end of the academic year to indicate whether students are continuing their studies or have left or completed their course.
- Students progressing to further programmes of study (e.g. PGCE and BA (Hons) top-up year programmes) are contacted over the summer and advised they may require a top-up assessment from their Assessment Centre
 - Academic Co-ordinators are notified of access needs of those students progressing to a further programme of study
- 2.24. Confidential SA&W case-records are updated on an ongoing basis to keep a record of all work done with and for the students.
- 2.25. Students declaring access needs during the academic year receive advice and support as detailed above; in addition to this, SA&W notifies School Offices to update the student record if an unconditional disclosure is made and adds details to the course lists for dissemination.