



**UNIVERSITY
ACADEMY 92**
MANCHESTER

Disability Policy

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1

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		Procedure
		Code of Practice
		Guidance
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	X	Student Affairs
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1.1 Outline the legal definition of 'disability' as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and University Academy 92's commitment to disabled students.
- 1.2 Identify how students and applicants may disclose a disability to University Academy 92 (UA92).
- 1.3 Outline eligibility criteria for disability support, Disabled Student's Allowances (DSA) and how to register with the Inclusive Support service at UA92.
- 1.4 Identify the types of support available to students through Inclusive Support (institutional support) and through DSA (government funded support).
- 1.5 Outline the screening procedure if a current student suspects they may have a Specific Learning Difficulty.
- 1.6 Provide information and guidance in relation to the Inclusive Curriculum at UA92.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all current students and apprentices registered on a UA92 course.
- 2.2 Applicants who have selected UA92 as their first or second choice of higher education institution will be contacted and offered an appointment to register with the Inclusive Support service prior to enrolment.
- 2.3 This policy does not apply to colleagues or visitors; however, we foster an inclusive environment and offer an accessible campus at UA92. Colleagues and visitors are invited to contact our People team (people@UA92.ac.uk) if they require reasonable adjustments to be made due to disability.
- 2.4 Advice on how to use this policy, and procedures identified within, is available from the UA92 Student Well-being Officer.
- 2.5 UA92 will keep a record of all communication students, apprentices and applicants make with the Inclusive Support service and/or the UA92 Student Well-being Officer directly and any documentation provided will be kept on file e.g. medical evidence. A record of

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disability disclosures made via applications will also be kept on record. Records will be retained in line with the UA92 Data Retention Policy.

3. Policy statements

- 3.1 UA92 firmly believes that disability should not create a barrier to learning and academic success. As an organisation we seek to champion and support disabled students to achieve their goals. UA92 endeavours to provide an inclusive environment for all, demonstrated in our values, ethos and culture, and through provision of an accessible campus.
- 3.2 UA92 recognises and values it's duty of care to all disabled students and is committed to ensuring reasonable adjustments are made to reduce disadvantage related to participation and access to the curriculum.
- 3.3 The UA92 Inclusive Support service intends to provide both institutional support and to help students access Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA), a government grant providing support and services to disabled students in Higher Education.

4. Definitions

- 4.1 The term 'disability' as used in this policy, refers to the legal definition set out in the Equality Act 2010. According to the Equality Act, a person is disabled if they have a

physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

- 'substantial' means more than minor or trivial
- 'long term' means the effect of the impairment has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least 12 months (there are special rules covering recurring or fluctuating conditions)
- 'normal day-to-day activities' includes everyday tasks such as eating, personal care, walking, shopping etc.

Some impairments are automatically treated as a disability; people with HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis are protected by the Equality Act from the point of diagnosis and people with some visual impairments are automatically deemed to be disabled.

- 4.2 The term 'reasonable adjustment' as used in this policy, refers to the definition set out in the Equality Act 2010, which is to avoid as far as

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possible, by reasonable means, the disadvantage a disabled student experiences because of their disability.

- 4.3 'Disabled Students' Allowances' (DSA) is a government grant provided to pay for equipment and support required by disabled students in Higher Education. This can include equipment, assistive software, non-medical helper support e.g. study tutors and mentors, travel and general allowances. Students and applicants can apply for DSA via student finance providers.

5. Disclosing a Disability

- 5.1 Applicants who disclose a disability on their application to UA92 will be contacted before enrolment to invite them to register with the Inclusive Support service.
- 5.2 Current students are able to disclose a disability at any stage throughout their time at UA92 by;
- Emailing InclusiveSupport@UA92.ac.uk
 - Attending a well-being drop in
 - Booking and attending a 1-1 well-being appointment with the UA92 Student Well-being Officer; this can be done via The Helpdesk, emailing InclusiveSupport@UA92.ac.uk, or contacting the UA92 Student Well-being Officer directly via Microsoft Teams.
- 5.3 Information about how to apply for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) is provided on Microsoft Teams (well-being channel) and available without having to contact the Inclusive Support service directly, if that is preferred (please see appendix 10.1; DSA Application Process).

6. Registering with Inclusive Support

- 6.1 All disabled students are eligible for institutional support at UA92 arranged through the Inclusive Support service, which sits within the Student Well-being service. Institutional support refers to support for students in relation to learning, teaching and assessment at UA92.
- 6.2 To access support, students are required to provide medical evidence to confirm diagnoses, longevity and impact on daily activities (please see appendix 10.2; Medical Evidence Requirements, for more information about eligibility). UA92 may accept DSA Study Needs Assessments as medical evidence in some instances.

6.3 Once sufficient medical evidence has been provided, the student or applicant will be invited to attend a registration appointment with the Inclusive Support service (please see appendix 10.3; Inclusive Support Flowchart, for an overview of the Inclusive Support service).

6.4 The registration appointment will typically involve;

- a discussion about the impact of diagnosis/es, specifically in relation to support requirements in higher education
- creation of a Learning Support Plan (LSP), to include information about diagnosis/es, impact on study and reasonable adjustments to be made by UA92 colleagues
 - reasonable adjustments made will be in relation to learning, teaching and assessment, including exams if applicable (please see 'Examination Reasonable Adjustment Policy' for more information)
 - LSPs will be shared with academic colleagues and personal development coaches with the student's permission
 - It is the responsibility of the student to share their LSP with placement providers if they so wish
- help to apply for DSA, ongoing monitoring and support throughout the application process and help to access approved support
- provision of an assessment memo if appropriate (for students with Specific Learning Difficulties), so markers can give due consideration when marking assignments
- creation of a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), if a student requires support to leave the building in an emergency
 - PEEPs will be shared with the Facilities team to share as necessary with relevant colleagues to implement as and when required i.e. fire wardens

7. Screening for Specific Learning Difficulties

7.1 Any student or apprentice who suspects they may have a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) may request a free screening appointment with Inclusive Support. This will involve completing a screening questionnaire to determine whether SpLD indicators are present.

7.2 If sufficient indicators are present (to be determined by UA92's Student Well-being Officer), UA92 may refer the student for a full diagnostic assessment with an educational psychologist.

7.3 In cases where students are formally diagnosed with a SpLD following their diagnostic assessment, they will be invited to register with Inclusive Support to set up institutional support and help them to apply for DSA.

8. Inclusive Curriculum

- 8.1 UA92 provides an inclusive curriculum across all academic disciplines, embedding reasonable adjustments into the curriculum as standard (please see appendix 10.4; Inclusive Curriculum Guidance).
- 8.2 The inclusive curriculum guidance document provides advice and guidance to academic colleagues as they develop new curricula at UA92, requesting consideration of the following categories; learning environment, course materials, communication, group work, field work/placements and assessment.
- 8.3 This universal design is intended to accommodate a wide range of students, reducing the requirement for multiple additional reasonable adjustments for disabled students in many cases. This, in turn, reduces the need for students to disclose disabilities to UA92 if they would prefer not to.

9. Related Documentation

- Student Well-being Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- UA92 Data Retention Policy
- Examination Reasonable Adjustments Policy

10. Appendices

- 10.1 DSA Application Process
- 10.2 Medical Evidence Requirements
- 10.3 Inclusive Support Flowchart
- 10.4 Inclusive Curriculum Guidance



The DSA application process

1. Gather your evidence

You will need to provide a medical report, GP letter or diagnostic report

2. Apply for DSA

You can apply online via your Student Finance England account (more information available [here](#)) or Inclusive Support can help you with the application at an appointment or drop in session

3. Receive confirmation of DSA eligibility

DSA will send you a letter (DSA1) to advise whether you can book a Study Needs Assessment

4. Book your Study Needs Assessment

Use the Assessment Centre finder on the webpage provided on your DSA1 letter to find an Assessment Centre and book an appointment

5. The Study Needs Assessment

This is a meeting between you and the DSA assessor to discuss the effects of your disability or SpLD. The assessor will suggest strategies to help overcome the impact on your studies. Don't worry, this is not a test.

6. DSA Needs Assessment Report

The assessor will write a report outlining your needs and recommended type(s) of support

7. Confirmation from DSA about Approved Support

After your funding body receives the Needs Assessment Report, they will send you a DSA Notification of Entitlement Letter (DSA2)

8. Your Support

The DSA Notification of Entitlement Letter (DSA2) will outline what support has been approved and how to access it. It is likely you will be required to contact specific suppliers to receive equipment or set up support.

This process can take up to 14 weeks, so it's important that you apply as soon as possible.

If you need help with any of the above, please contact Inclusive Support at inclusivesupport@UA92.ac.uk



Medical Evidence Requirements

Evidence of dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties:

For dyslexia or other specific learning difficulties we require a full diagnostic report which:

- has been carried out by a practitioner psychologist or a suitably qualified specialist teacher holding a current Assessment Practicing Certificate
- meets SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines (these can be found on SpLD Assessment Standards Committee [SASC] website www.sasc.org.uk)

If you have any documentation confirming your specific learning difficulty, please provide this to Inclusive Support. Alternatively, please speak to Inclusive Support about arranging a screening to determine whether we can refer you for a full diagnostic assessment.

Evidence of a physical condition, sensory impairment or mental health condition:

For a physical conditions, sensory impairments or mental health conditions, please arrange for a suitably qualified medical professional to provide a letter (signed and on letter headed paper), which confirms the following information:

- a clear diagnosis of your condition
- your condition is long term (has lasted, or is likely to last, more than 12 months)
- how your condition has a substantial adverse effect on your ability to carry out daily activities

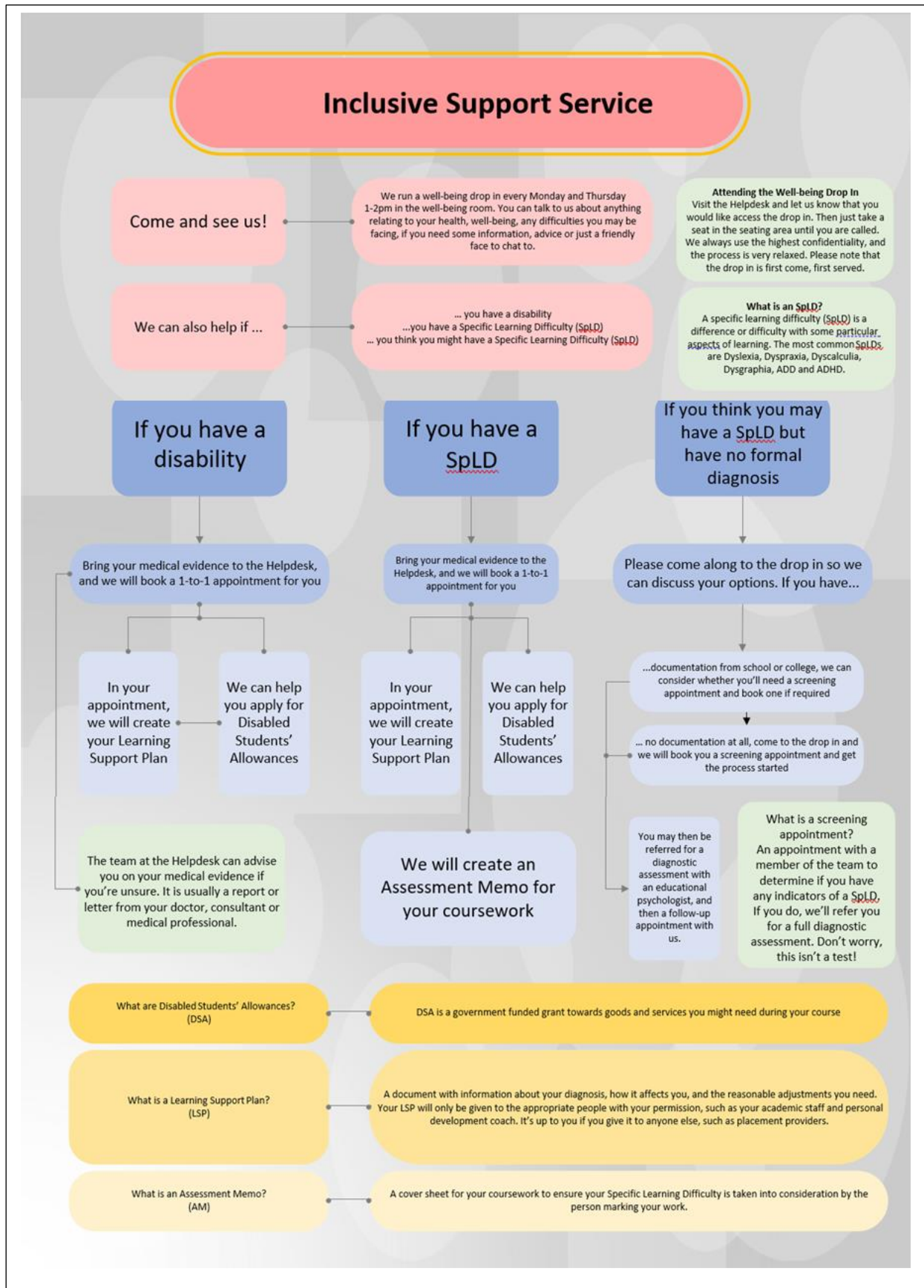
Evidence of autistic spectrum conditions:

For an autistic spectrum condition, please provide any of the following documents:

- Statement of SEN and Transition Plans
- Individual Education Plans
- Learning Difficulty Assessments
- Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- A letter from your doctor or medical professional which confirms the following information: a diagnosis of your condition and how your condition has a substantial and adverse effect on your ability to carry out daily activities

Evidence of visual stress, scotopic sensitivity or Irlen's:

For visual stress, scotopic sensitivity or Irlen's you will be required to provide a Visual Stress/Irlen Test Screening completed by an Optometrist, Optician, Orthoptist, Ophthalmologist or other qualified Irlen Screener or diagnostician.





Inclusive Curriculum Guidance

An inclusive approach to learning, teaching and assessment at UA92 means that reasonable adjustments will be embedded into the curriculum as standard

Please be aware that course learning outcomes and standards set by professional bodies may override some of the recommendations listed below

Learning Environment:

- Classes to be delivered in a structured way to allow students to follow topic changes easily
- Provide students with sufficient time to read instructions before being asked to respond
- Avoid asking students to read aloud or respond to questions in front of others (consider asking for volunteers or use anonymous voting polls)
- Allow students to audio record taught sessions, for personal use only
- Allow students to eat and drink during teaching sessions
- Avoid drawing attention to students arriving late to teaching sessions*
- Allow students to leave and return to teaching sessions when required*
- Additional explanations to be provided in classes, on request, to facilitate better understanding
- Subject-specific terminology to be clarified
- Questions and comments made by other students to be clarified

* In cases where this occurs frequently, discuss privately with student to determine whether any additional support is required e.g. refer to Inclusive Support service

Course Materials:

- Provide information in advance about how the course/module will be delivered
- Learning materials and resources e.g. presentation slides or session outlines, to be provided at least 48 hours in advance of teaching sessions on Microsoft Teams
- Distinguish on reading lists between core and secondary texts
- Subtitles or a transcript to be provided for audio-visual material, where possible
- Provide a glossary of complex terminology you wish to introduce, where possible
- Provide session outlines from guest speakers prior to delivery, where possible

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Assessment:

- Provide **inclusive deadlines** as far as possible
i.e. maximum amount of time available from setting an assignment to submission date – to reduce the disadvantage for students benefitting from additional time e.g. those with SpLDs*
- All assessment deadline dates to be published pre-module start on Microsoft Teams
- Use a range of assessment methods e.g. written work, presentations, practicals, group tasks
- Consider using an Assessment Menu i.e. allowing students to choose their preferred assessment method

* Specific Learning Difficulties e.g. dyslexia

Communication:

- Provide clear and concise information, instructions and feedback whenever possible, ensuring all course expectations are direct and explicit
- Use unambiguous language, avoiding sarcasm and irony
- Avoid excessive information on presentation slides
- Provide students with sufficient time to read information on slides before moving on
- Take care when using colour, ensuring sufficient contrast between text and background colours to improve accessibility for students with colour blindness, visual impairments, specific learning difficulties etc.
- Describe objects, activities, and processes both in writing and verbally, whenever possible
- Be aware of inclusive language i.e. use 'thought shower' or 'mind map' instead of 'brainstorm'

Group Work:

- Encourage students to work in groups to facilitate peer support
- Where possible, academic colleagues to arrange groups to avoid difficulties for students with social anxiety and to ensure groups are well balanced (consider any known disabilities)
- Encourage only one student to speak at a time (arranging chairs in a semi-circle can be helpful)

Studio, practical, field-based, professional skills and placement activities:

- Provide an opportunity to discuss fieldwork and placement needs, if required
- Ensure accessibility on field trips/external visits/placements etc.
- If expected to undertake precisely defined tasks, students to be provided with detailed instructions ahead of time in order to familiarise themselves with what is required
- Provide sufficient time to take notes during explanations and demonstrations of activities, and to help formulate or respond to questions
- Risk assessments to be presented in writing and explained verbally

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