



Title: Admission procedures for applicants with specific disabilities: medical, physical, sensory or mental health conditions; or who are on the autism spectrum
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4J Admissions procedures for applicants with specific learning difficulties; medical, physical, sensory or mental health conditions; or who are on the autism spectrum

Introduction

1. This procedure supplements the policy guidance in the Academic Handbook Section 2J Admissions Policy and outlines the University's internal procedures to ensure that applicants who make disability declarations have their individual support needs considered supportively alongside any formal admissions processes. The University makes offers based on an applicant's suitability for the proposed course of study and as per the Course Entry Requirements Statement. The University is committed to make reasonable, anticipatory adjustments to counteract any substantial disadvantage for disabled applicants and to assure equality of experience compared to other students.

The University encourages applicants to provide information about any disability, health condition or specific learning difficulty that they have, in their application, or as soon as possible after application.

All information provided by applicants regarding their disabilities will be treated as confidential and shared only for the purposes of making reasonable adjustments.

UCAS Applicants

2. All University course profiles on the UCAS website direct applicants who may require additional support, or wish to discuss a disability declaration, to an electronic link on the University's Access Solent webpage.
3. Where applicants indicate a disability on their UCAS application, Admissions staff will take the action as outlined below.

4. Disabled students are admitted on the same academic criteria as all other applicants and decisions processed in line with School and UCAS guidelines/deadlines, which can be viewed via UCAS track. As soon as an applicant declares they have a disability the admissions teams email the applicant with a disability information pack. The offer letter reiterates the need to contact Access Solent for disability support as well as referencing the Access Solent web page in the University's terms and conditions. The applicant returns the application pack directly to Access Solent. Access Solent will attempt to follow up with applicants who do not return their packs, although it is the responsibility of applicants to ensure that the packs are returned within deadline.
5. As soon as Access Solent receives information from the applicant they will share with the School and other services as relevant (e.g. Accommodation). Access Solent will consult the course representative (as directed by the Student Achievement Officers), service(s) and the applicant as necessary to determine whether the University is able to meet the applicant's particular support needs or whether any further intervention is needed, including any reasonable adjustments to course delivery or the University's environment generally.
6. Where there are concerns about the ability of the University to make adjustments; Access Solent will arrange a case meeting with the student, course representatives (as directed by the Student Achievement Officers) and Access Solent staff. This will provide the applicant with the opportunity to present further evidence if required and to understand the University's concerns. Access Solent will facilitate outcomes and report to the Student Achievement Officers, course representative and admissions team.
7. All applicants have the same rights of complaint or appeal, as per the Admissions Policy (specifically points 83-85 in the Academic Handbook: 2J).
8. The University's priority is to act in the best interests of its applicants and to ensure that a prospective student is in a position to benefit from any course they hope to undertake and to have an equal opportunity to meet the academic entry requirements of the course alongside other students. The final decision regarding the applicant's entry to the University rests with the Admissions and Enrolment team with the advice of, and in liaison with, Access Solent staff.

Applicants requiring interviews/audition/portfolio viewing

9. For all courses that require an interview, applicants are initially assessed on academic criteria prior to being invited to the University. Applicants are advised to inform the Admissions if any additional facilities such as disabled parking, sign language interpreter, etc., are required so that appropriate arrangements can be made before and during their interview.

Direct Entry Applicants

10. Direct Entry Applicants submit a paper or online application which invites them to make a disability declaration. Procedures relating to disabled applicants are then followed as above.

Clearing Applicants

11. As part of the acceptance process in Clearing, procedures relating to disabled applicants are then followed as above. Given the shorter timescales relating to processing Clearing applicants, they are referred immediately to Access Solent. This is either by Hotline staff as they receive phone queries, School staff as they identify particular needs and increased reporting via Admissions and by Access Solent staff. This ensures information packs are forwarded to hotline applicants as early as possible.

Rejection or Withdrawal of an offer

12. If an application from a disabled applicant is rejected solely on academic grounds, then feedback, outlining full reasons for the rejection will be conveyed to the applicant by the Admissions team on request.
13. Where the University is unable to meet the applicant's learning requirements the offer will be withdrawn.

Continuing support

14. Once an applicant's learning support needs have been confirmed, the details are passed to Student Achievement Officers in each School for dissemination to course coordinators. This is provided manually at application stage and then automated as part of the current Access Solent database once students have enrolled and confirmed support needs. Schools update Access Solent to ensure contact names are accurate. Schools have a responsibility to ensure all members of the teaching team are aware of and support identified support needs for individual students and that this communication is reinforced at times of transition, e.g. as students' progress through the levels of their course or where students transfer between courses.

Late Disclosures

15. Students' requirements change and there may be later disclosures of support needs after entry; alternatively, needs identified at admission may require additional support later in the course. Students should therefore be encouraged to maintain liaison with Access Solent to ensure that the University can continue to be responsive to their individual needs and circumstances.
16. In instances where a student makes a disability disclosure to any member of staff, the student is deemed to have disclosed to the University. The student should be informed that this information needs to be shared with the School and Access Solent and that the student must make an appointment with Access Solent to discuss learning needs. Where the student states that they do not wish this information to be formally recorded by the University and that, therefore, they do not wish any provision to be made by the University, the staff member should inform the student that they must complete a disability disclaimer at the Student Hub. The disclaimer will be held on the student file.