

Sotheby's INSTITUTE OF ART

Student Support Policy and Guidance: Disabilities and Other Conditions

This procedure is applicable to all **Sotheby's Institute of Art** London students who are registered with the University of Manchester.

Introduction

Sotheby's Institute of Art London (SIAL) celebrates a diverse community of students and is committed to creating a positive, supportive and non-discriminatory environment for all who study at the Institute.

This Policy applies to all students who may have existing disabilities and conditions, such as physical and sensory impairment, specific learning difficulties (SpLDs) neurodiversity, long-term medical conditions including mental health related, or when any of the above develop while studying at SIAL.

Disabilities are considered by government legislation such as the Equality Act 2010¹ which entitles students to suitable support and specific reasonable adjustments in respect of their participation in a programme of study and as service users of the Institute government legislation such as the Equality Act 2010. In order to provide appropriate support with academic studies we will require clear and detailed documentary evidence. The evidence is required to show the diagnosis, and that the student's disability has lasted, or will last, for more than one year (see section 3 below). SIAL also recognises that there may be some conditions or injuries which may not last a year, but for which reasonable adjustments might need to be made.

This Policy outlines SIAL's support for students experiencing disabilities, our approach to protecting their personal information, to whom and in what circumstances we may disclose information, the limitations that exist on the support that we can provide, and how we will

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance#overview>

promote understanding and raise awareness of disabilities.² We use the term ‘disability’ as it is used in Equality Law. A person is considered disabled under the Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. The legislation states that the definition of disability is *“any condition which has a significant, adverse and long-term effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”*³.

Sharing information about disabilities and other conditions

Applicants to any of our programmes are encouraged to share information about any disabilities and other conditions via the student.support@sia.edu email address provided in advance and when studies begin. They can contact the Head of Counselling and Student Support anytime during their studies to share new information, send updates or review their support plan to ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments, alterations and other accommodations are in place throughout. Students can also speak to any member of academic or administrative staff during their studies.

In keeping with [The Disabled Student Commitment | Advance HE \(advance-he.ac.uk\)](http://advance-he.ac.uk) students only need share information about their disabilities and other conditions once - with the Student Support service team. Thereafter, conversations with other members of staff will focus on the effect on coursework and provision of reasonable adjustments, rather than specific details of the diagnosis or disabilities, these do not have to be repeated to others.

Your consent to information regarding your disability being disclosed, will be valid until the completion of your academic studies. However, you may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Head of Counselling and Student Support or Academic Registrar.

If you choose not to share information about a known disabilities or decide not to pursue an ILP and then subsequently change your mind, SIAL is committed to putting appropriate support in place for you as soon as is practicable. Similarly, if a previously undiagnosed condition is identified whilst you are studying with us, we are committed to ensuring you

²We take guidance from our accrediting University, the University of Manchester, on our policies and procedures. This policy has been developed with guidance from the Disability Advisory and Support Service of the University of Manchester, see <http://www.dso.manchester.ac.uk/who-do-we-support/prospective-students/>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010>

receive appropriate support to be able to continue and succeed in your studies as soon as possible.

If you have a known condition that is eligible for reasonable adjustments and alterations to exams or assessment methods, it is your responsibility to register and engage with Student Support in good time for the arrangements to be made. Please note the process of developing an ILP can take up to six weeks from the initial registration, through to development and final approval.

Interim Adjustments

In an urgent situation or where circumstances demand it, we can consider making Interim Adjustments to an exam or presentation for example. You must notify the Head of Counselling and Student Support, Personal Tutor, Programme Director or Coordinator at the earliest opportunity, giving as much time as possible for arrangements to be made. Interim Adjustments can be provided to help but you will still be required to follow through with an ILP immediately afterwards to formalise arrangements and in order for your grades to be released.

Teaching, Assessment and Examination: Reasonable Adjustments and Study Support Arrangements

You will be required to provide basic personal details upon enrolment on SIAL programmes/courses and will be encouraged to disclose disabilities and other conditions, after which you will have the opportunity to have a meeting to discuss your needs and how we can help.

It will be necessary for you to provide documentary evidence of your condition to confirm the diagnosis with associated and expected consequences of your disability for us to assess your learning support needs in this setting. This is likely to take the form of a report from an accredited health care professional (see appendix A and C). We aim to be flexible with evidential requirements where possible.

In order to qualify for reasonable adjustments, your documentation will need to show that you have had your condition, or are likely to have your condition, for more than a year. SIAL also recognises that there may be some conditions or injuries which may not last a year, but for which reasonable adjustments need to be made.

Any evidence you submit will be treated confidentially and only divulged on a 'need to know' basis and in support of the purpose for which it was submitted. All such evidence is treated as sensitive data under the Data Protection Act (2018) see more in the section on page 5.

Agreed learning support arrangements, as adhered to by both the student and SIAL, will be intended to satisfy the requirement under the Equality Act 2010 for reasonable adjustments to be made for students with disabilities (although in some situations further issues may arise that cause a need for additional adjustment). Such adjustments may include, but are not limited to, additional personal tutorials and dissertation supervisor support, specialist study skills tutorials, additional time for the hand-in of assignments and dissertation, adaptations in the way that presentations are delivered, agreement to record teaching sessions (see Appendix D) where necessary, use of specialist digital resources or equipment to support learning, use of a real-time sign language interpreter, additional time in examinations, extended library loans.

Proofreading

Students with neurodiversity such as ADHD can consider using a proofreader, see the MA/Study Abroad Handbook for guidance and principles that must be adhered to. We recommend choosing a proofreader who is a member of the Chartered Institute of Editors and Proofreaders (select the option for proofreaders only) <https://www.ciep.uk/directory.html>

Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools

Always follow the Guidance on using Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) tools in your academic work and assignments [Guidance on using Generative AI Sept 24.pdf](#)

Assistance Animals

Under the Equality Act (2010) people with disabilities are allowed to bring Assistance Animals onto campus as a reasonable adjustment.

Definition of an Assistance Animal:

- An animal that has been specifically and highly trained to perform tasks to assist disabled people.

- An animal that has been qualified and accredited by the appropriate organisation, for example, registered as a member of Assistance Dogs UK (ADUK) or equivalent, to prove the dog has undergone adequate training.

Examples of an Assistance Animal include Guide Dogs for people with sight impairment, Hearing Dogs for people with hearing impairment, animals that detect the onset of seizures/ changes to blood glucose levels which may highlight an imminent health issue.

Assistance Animals will have formal identification in the form of a branded jacket or lead slip and are permitted to accompany their owners at all times and all places in the UK, unless there is a genuine health and safety risk. In the wider interest of health and safety, the Institute reserves the right to refuse access to any animal that is not an Assistance Animal.

Pets, Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) and Emotional Support Animals

These animals are used to support people with a range of support needs, including mental health and autism. However, these animals are not specifically trained to carry out a particular task, as in the case of Assistance Animals, but rather their role is to be a source of comfort or support to their owners. Whilst the Institute understands the benefits that having a support animal can bring, any animal accompanying a student, staff member or visitor must be an ADUK registered Assistance Animal. Unfortunately, pets, Animal Assisted Therapy and Emotional Support Animals are not classified as Assistance Animals in the UK, therefore, not currently permitted on campus, on study trips and visits.

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

UK students may be eligible to apply for funding with Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) if they are living with a disability, learning difficulty or mental health condition, including: specific learning difficulty, mental health condition, physical disability, sensory disability, long-term health condition.

DSA support can cover:

- Specialist equipment – if a student needs a computer to run specialist software or braille display for example.
- Non-medical helpers – if a British Sign Language interpreter is required to attend lectures for example.
- Travel – if a taxi is needed to attend university, rather than using public transport for example.
- A range of general costs may also be considered, related to a student's disability.

For further information see <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/eligibility>

For additional sources of funding that may be available see the Snowdon Trust:

<https://www.snowdontrust.org>

Privacy, Confidentiality and Disclosure

Under the 2018 Data Protection Act all data relating to disability is regarded as sensitive personal data⁴, which must be stored securely, kept in confidence, and only passed on with the individual's informed consent. The law regards every person over the age of 18 as being capable of giving consent unless a medical opinion has stated otherwise.

You are entitled not to disclose such information or might choose to provide evidence of the impact of a disability on you without disclosing exact details of the disability itself.

As with all matters of a personal nature, we will respect the confidentiality of the information you provide us with, unless there are exceptional circumstances that require information to be shared with others, and we will not normally disclose personal information about individual students to external agencies or third parties without the student's express permission. In normal circumstances, our definition of third parties includes named family members or your trusted contacts, medical professionals and emergency services

We would expect to share certain information within the Institute with those members of staff who need it in order to implement the appropriate level of support and we will normally obtain

⁴ See the Data Protection Act 2018 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/pdfs/ukpga_20180012_en.pdf Section 35- 8(a)

your consent before we do so. Exceptionally, there may be circumstances in which confidentiality has to be broken (as explained in section below).

If you share information about disabilities, a meeting will be offered to ensure that you receive the support you need and Sotheby's Institute of Art London meets its obligations to you under the Equality Act 2010. The Student Support Team will need to share relevant information about you and your conditions with those who have a role in implementing support and adjustments, including external support services where necessary.

We may also need to share information with your student finance funding bodies to confirm your entitlement to financial support. If you receive externally provided disability support, such as an approved Disabled Students' Allowance, we may need to share information with providers of this support.

The Programme Director, Unit Leaders, Personal Tutors, Dissertation Supervisors, Programme Co-ordinators, Head of Quality, Registrar and Student Support team all have active roles in implementing study support arrangements and will ensure that appropriate members of staff are made aware of arrangements with appropriate informed student consent and any specific support which has been agreed is provided.

Benefits and Responsibilities

There are many benefits to sharing information about disabilities. However, you can request that non specific information is passed on to others outside the Student Support Service. There will be implications, as this may restrict or adversely affect the level of support the Institute can provide and could limit the types of adjustments which can be put in place.

Individual Learning Plans and support arrangements can be reviewed on request, or whenever there is a significant change to the way teaching is delivered; this can be as often as needed to ensure the adjustments continue to meet your needs throughout the course.

If you have a known condition, it is your responsibility to notify us of any learning support needs and in good time for reasonable adjustments, alterations or accommodations to be considered, approved and fully implemented. This is a process that can take up to six weeks from the initial registration and receipt of evidence.

We also expect you to ensure appropriate and timely actions are taken to safeguard your physical and mental wellbeing so that, for example, you register with a General Practitioner (GP) or family doctor in London on arrival, that any ongoing treatment and medications are properly managed.

Disclosure without Consent and Emergencies

If we decide to disclose information about you without your knowledge, or in the face of your refusal of consent, we will do so only in circumstances when we judge that there is a significant risk of harm to either yourself or to others. Such a decision to contact the emergency services, your doctor, named emergency or trusted contacts will not be taken lightly nor, except of an emergency, will it be taken without consultation with senior members of staff.

Your emergency and trusted contact details are held on the student record system, in accordance with our Privacy Policy <https://www.sothebysinstitute.com/privacy-policy>.

The interests of individual students will always be considered in the context of the interests of the community as a whole and there may be rare occasions when the interests of others take priority over the interests of individuals.

Guidelines for providing evidence

In order for you to register for Student Support, you'll need to complete our registration form and provide appropriate evidence of your disabilities/ other conditions. The registration form should be returned to Student Support together with your supporting evidence.

What evidence do you need?

If you do not have existing and current evidence you will need to take the guidance sheet (or form) below, to your doctor and ask them to write you a letter that contains the requested information, or they can complete the form provided. The letter must be written in English or officially translated to English (your embassy may be able to assist you in finding an approved translator). Please ensure that the letter includes confirmation of the diagnosis and talks about the impact of your condition. Letters/ forms should be recent, ideally dated within the previous 12 months but we aim to be flexible wherever possible.

What evidence of neurodivergence or specific learning differences do I need?

If you have an existing diagnostic assessment report for ADHD, dyslexia or dyspraxia, please send this to us. We can then consider whether this is acceptable for use at the Institute, or whether you will need a new report. If you are planning or in the process of being assessed, it is important the person completing is qualified to make the assessment, for example with Dyslexia, the person must hold a current practising certificate which certifies that the assessment has been conducted and the report written in accordance with the SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines for Assessment of SpLDs in Higher Education.⁵

Title	Student Support Policy and Guidance: Disabilities and Other Conditions
Date first implemented	September 2017
Approving body	Academic Board
Version	October 2025
Effective	From 2025-2026
Supersedes	December 2024
Next due review date	Summer 2028
Frequency of review	As required or every three years
Policy owner	Quality Team/ Student Support

⁵ See the [https://www.sasc.org.uk/\(S\(2j2fuq45af3c3qafusymmw45\)\)/SASCDocuments/SpLD_Working_Group_2005-DfES_Guidelines.pdf](https://www.sasc.org.uk/(S(2j2fuq45af3c3qafusymmw45))/SASCDocuments/SpLD_Working_Group_2005-DfES_Guidelines.pdf)

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Registration Form

To register with Student Support please complete all four sections, and return the completed form with your supporting evidence to us at student.support@sothebysinstitute.com using your official SIAL email address.

Release of Information

Please tick the relevant box to indicate consent for details about your support requirements to be held on the Institute's manual and electronic files and for relevant details to be disclosed to professional staff having a legitimate need to see them in the course of their work (for example your personal tutor, lecturers etc). You have the right to request that information about your disability is kept confidential or you can limit the information that is released; however, this may make it difficult for the Institute to fully support your needs.

Consent for Student Support to hold and disclose information within the Institute
Please tick ONE box only and sign below

1. I give full consent for Student Support to disclose information regarding my disabilities and additional support needs as appropriate. This will always be treated sensitively, only shared on a 'need to know' basis.	
2. I consent for the Student Support to disclose that I have disabilities, but I do not want the nature of my condition to be disclosed.	
3. I do <u>NOT</u> give permission for any information regarding my disabilities or additional support needs to be disclosed to anyone outside the Student Support Team. I have discussed this with a member of the Student Support team and understand the limits of how we can support your needs.	

Signed:

Date:

Return the completed form to us at student.support@sothebysinstitute.com using your official SIAL email address, or if you don't have one yet an external email address you have already registered with us.

Personal Details

Name:	
Date of birth:	
Programme title and start date e.g. MAAB 2025	
Home address	Term time address (if different)
Post Code	Post Code
Mobile telephone:	
Personal email:	
SIAL email (to be used in all official communication):	
The medical practice, GP or family doctor you are registered with in London (name and contact details):	

Disabilities and other conditions

Neurodivergence or Specific Learning Differences e.g. Dyslexia, ADHD, Autism ☐

Blind or visual impairment ☐

Deaf or hearing impairment ☐

Wheelchair user ☐

Mobility Impairment ☐

Personal care needs ☐

Mental Health Condition ☐

Long term medical condition ☐

Another condition ☐

Tell us more in the box below, including the specific diagnoses and describe the impact on your daily life and studies. Let us know about any treatment plan that might impact on your studies, including prescribed medication/side-effects, medical appointments etc.

Diagnoses:

Detail any assistance required in your daily life and studies, in particular any reasonable adjustments or accommodations that have been granted to you during previous study programmes. This might include accommodations for written work, exams, presentations, study trips and visits, employment and your day-to-day learning activities.

How does this impact on your daily life and studies? What accommodations have been helpful in the past and what would you like us to consider?

Supporting Documentation

Please supply one of the following:

- Medical or other form of professional evidence e.g. a recent letter from your doctor, therapist or another appropriately qualified health professional (see the guidance sheet below to take along with you).
- Diagnostic assessment report produced by a registered psychologist /specialist teacher holding an approved qualification or current practising certificate.

There may be occasion when we need to contact the named doctor or professional to verify the supporting evidence provided. We may also ask for your permission to liaise, as part of an ongoing support plan.

The Institute will endeavour to meet your needs, although we cannot guarantee all the support requested can be arranged due to academic criteria and other factors.

Returning This Form

- The Registration Form and Assessment of Support Needs, together with *signed electronic documents*, can all be sent by email to student.support@sia.edu
- The Registration Form and Assessment of Support Needs with *signed printed documents* can all be scanned or clearly photographed and sent by email to student.support@sia.edu

Need any help or have questions, please contact us: student.support@sia.edu

Guidance for health professionals writing medical letters for students

The Student Support Service at Sotheby's Institute of Art - London supports students with a range of disabilities, mental health needs and/or medical conditions in order to enable them to participate as fully as possible on our study programmes.

We require independent medical evidence from a health professional/practitioner as part of this process. This document and template outline the information that we require.

The student must have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010. A person is disabled under the [Equality Act 2010](#) if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities.⁶

The letter, or template, should be on headed paper, dated and signed (Word documents emailed to the office are not acceptable), and include:

- What the condition is (diagnosis)
- When it was first diagnosed
- The duration of this condition and the length of time it is likely to have a negative **impact on the student's academic work**
- Whether any medication prescribed has side effects which may impact on learning
- Any other information that you think might help us assess appropriate support for this student while studying
- State the impact (or potential impact) on day-to-day activities/studies.

Completed letters, or templates, should be given to the student. The student should then return the letter/template to us by:

- Scanning or photographing documents and emailing to student.support@sia.edu
- Posting the letter to Student Support, Sotheby's Institute of Art, 30 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3EE (keeping a copy for your own reference).
- Bringing the letter to the above address (opening hours Mon-Fri 09:00-17:00)

⁶ 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial – e.g., it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task. 'Long-term' means 12 months or more

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Template request for medical evidence from Sotheby's Institute of Art London

(this is an alternative to the medical letter as described above)

Name of student:

Address:

Date of Birth:

In order to assist the above-named student with their application for support, please could you provide the following information:

Nature of the condition (diagnoses):

When was the condition first diagnosed?

Likely duration of the condition (temporary or permanent) How long has it lasted?

Briefly, how does the condition affect the student on a day-to-day basis? Does this condition **affect the student's** day to day activities, including the ability to study?

Current treatment plan, including prescribed medication and side-effects experienced, therapy, medical appointments - please state any expected side effects that may impact on the **student's academic work** or attendance:

Any other coping strategies used to manage the condition – please describe:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Professional capacity: _____

Institution (e.g. Health Centre, Hospital): _____

Please return the form to us:

Email:

Fax:

Phone:

Address:

Please call, or email, should you have any questions regarding this request.

Thank you.

Please Stamp in this box

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Agreement for audio recordings of taught sessions

Students who have specific diagnosed learning difficulties and who can present valid documentation confirming these difficulties may be authorised, subject to prior agreement, to make audio recordings of their taught sessions. This is a reasonable adjustment put in place to support your academic learning. Recorded material may be used to support you in accessing programme-related material and used to support assessed written work.

Recordings can be made on the condition they will not be distributed or broadcast to any third parties external to Sotheby's Institute of Art, nor must you seek commercial gain from these.

No more than six recordings are to be held by you, the student, at any one time. Recordings to be kept in a safe and secure place.

The recordings of previous sessions must be deleted. Please ensure that all remaining recordings made from the programme have been deleted six weeks after completion of your course.

You may be asked to stop recording during a lecture if the lecturer feels that the material being covered is particularly sensitive or there are data protection issues.

Please note that if any of the above terms are contravened you may be subject to disciplinary procedure.

I,..... (print your name)

agree to comply with this policy when using audio recording of Sotheby's Institute of Art sessions.

Programme or Course on which I am studying

Signature.....Date.....