



# Disability Guide for Students

## Disability Statement

BIMM Birmingham is committed to ensuring that disabled people are provided with equal access to their chosen course of study and facilities at the College.

The College recognises the social model of disability, whereby the individual is understood to be disadvantaged not by their disability but by social barriers, such as the physical environment, methods of communication and prejudicial attitudes.

The College is committed to working towards removing any barriers which might prevent a disabled person from actively participating in student life at BIMM Birmingham.

We provide advice and information for disabled students, and aim to enable disabled students to reach their full potential at BIMM Birmingham.

## **Welcome**

The purpose of this handbook is to answer any questions you might have about the disability support available to students at BIMM.

Disability support is available through the Student Support and Learning Support teams who can provide information, advice and guidance to all disabled students.

We provide a free and confidential service to all current and prospective students.

We work with students with a wide range of disabilities, including but by no means restricted to:

- Specific Learning Difficulties (such as dyslexia, dyspraxia)
- Mental Health Difficulties (such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, ADHD)
- Long-term medical conditions (such as HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis)
- Unseen disabilities (such as diabetes, asthma, epilepsy)
- Sensory impairments (such as visual impairment, hearing impairment)
- Mobility or physical impairments (such as paralysis, arthritis)

## **Contacting Disability Support**

By telephone: 0121 726 3959

By email: [studentsupportbirmingham@bimm.co.uk](mailto:studentsupportbirmingham@bimm.co.uk)

In person: Drop in to the Student Services Office

By letter:               BIMM  
                              93-96 Floodgate Street  
                              Birmingham  
                              B5 5SR

## Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1 October 2010. The Act was brought in to integrate, simplify, clarify and further strengthen former discrimination legislation. It is important to note that the vast majority of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has simply been transferred over into the new Act.

**Someone has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day to day activities.**

Substantial means that it has more than a minor or trivial effect on his/her ability to do normal day to day activities. Long term means that the effect of the impairment has lasted, or is likely to last 12 months. There are special rules for people who have recurring or fluctuating conditions who can also qualify.

Persons who are registered blind, have a severe disfigurement, MS, HIV or cancer will automatically qualify for protection under the Act. They do not have to satisfy the test outlined above.

### ***How does the Act protect disabled persons?***

The Act protects students from:

**Direct Discrimination** - Treating a person worse than someone else because he/she has (or had) a disability/is perceived to have a disability or is associated with someone who has a disability.

**Indirect Discrimination** - Using a policy or practice which impacts worse on a particular group and which cannot be objectively justified.

**Discrimination Arising from disability** - Treating a disabled person unfavourably because of something connected with his/her disability when this cannot be objectively justified.

### ***The Equality Duty***

The Act introduced an equality duty, which came into force on the 6 April 2011. It is very similar to the previous disability equality duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. It means that the College needs to promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons and to take steps to eliminate discrimination and harassment against disabled persons.

If you would like to find out more information about the Equality Act, you can do so on the Equality and Human Rights website:

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

## **Confidentiality**

We operate a confidential service within student support, which means that information about a student and/or their disability is not passed on to third parties without student consent.

We encourage students to contact us as early as possible regarding their disability so we are able to ensure that they are provided with equal access to their chosen course of study and facilities at the College.

Every student will be contacted at point of offer and asked to complete a Student Support Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent form (appendix 1) and given access to this guide via the website.

Please see: <http://www.bimm.co.uk/essential-documents/> - Student Support Form

We reserve the right to override the Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form in circumstances where the student is reasonably believed to be a risk either to themselves or others. Any decision to break confidentiality would be made by the Student Support Officer and/or Head of Student Services.

Student Support may need to disclose information in order to help support you. However, the student has the right to limit their disclosure.

Students may be required to complete additional support forms (e.g. Individual Support plans) with Learning Support at the department's request.

## **Full Disclosure**

If a student allows full disclosure then information will only be shared where necessary on a 'need-to-know basis'. Those with whom we may need to share information or request further information may include (but is not strictly limited to); your Course Leader and tutors, the Exams Team who arrange your exams, Health and Safety staff, support workers, your Educational Psychologist, your Needs Assessor or your DSA provider.

We always ask the people with whom we share your information to respect your confidentiality and to not pass your information on to anyone else unless they are also involved in your support.

### **Restricted Disclosure**

You can choose to restrict (i.e. prevent) disclosure to individuals outside of Student Support or to only allow information to certain individuals.

In these cases, Student Support will inform the student that this will limit the reasonable adjustments that can be put in place. The student is advised that should they choose to limit their level of disclosure, a failure by the College to make reasonable adjustments is unlikely to be grounds for any subsequent mitigation. Please be aware this may limit the level and type of support the College can provide for you.

If you would like to discuss the different options and the effect on your support, please contact Student Support.

Under the Data Protection Act (1998) disability is considered to be 'personal, sensitive information'. We therefore provide a confidential service to students, which means that information about a student and/or their disability is not passed on to third parties without their consent. The Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form is a record of who you have or have not given your consent for Student Support to discuss your case with and, where appropriate, share relevant information.

Any information held by Student Support will be kept for a period of six years, after your last point of contact with us, as required by the Data Protection Act (1998). After this date, the information held by Student Support will be appropriately disposed of.

## Specialist Services for Students

The Learning Support team provides a number of services to disabled students. These include:

- Advice and information on disability support and reasonable adjustments at BIMM
- Advice and information on additional funding which disabled students may be eligible to apply for (such as Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)).
- Advice and information on arranging an assessment for a Specific Learning Difficulty with an Educational Psychologist or Needs Assessor
- Liaising with the Programme/Course Leaders, Academic team and Heads of Department to implement recommended exam provisions
- Assistance in arranging Non-Medical Helpers (such as note-takers, one-on-one support mentors)
- Specialist tutorials focussing on academic study skills and organisation and planning.

We can provide guidance and advice to students without evidence of their disability. However, we will not make any recommendations for support, and the College will not implement any reasonable adjustments, until the student provides written evidence of their disability, giving the College adequate time to put these adjustments in place.

## **Evidence of Disability**

Evidence of a student's disability must be confirmed in writing by an appropriately qualified professional. Examples include:

- GP letter
- Consultant letter
- Visual/Hearing Impairment Specialist letter
- Psychiatrist/Psychologist letter or report

All evidence must be contemporaneous and relevant to the period for which they are applying for adjustments and submitted in a timely fashion.

***It is the responsibility of the student to provide the Learning Support Team with evidence of their disability. BIMM are unable to acquire evidence on a student's behalf.***

## **Obtaining Evidence of a Disability**

Where a student does not have evidence of a disability, we can provide advice and guidance on how to obtain it. We can assist students in arranging an assessment with an Educational Psychologist, where the student believes they may have a Specific Learning Difficulty. The cost of an Educational Psychologist assessment is met by the student.

For students that are unsure whether they may have a Specific Learning Difficulty, we are able to provide a free informal in-house assessment which will identify your learning style and highlight any evidence of learning support requirements which can help you decide whether to invest in an Educational Psychologist's report.

Please note that this informal assessment cannot be used as evidence of a diagnosis.

All students on our Diploma courses or non-UK BA students without documentation evidencing their Specific Learning Difficulties may be required to take our in-house screening to identify learning style and potential need for additional support.

Students can also contact the Learning Support team at any point through the year to book an in-house screening.

Where a student requires written evidence of disability from a medical practitioner, we can provide the student with a letter to present to their practitioner, explaining why the College requires evidence of disability. We will not cover the cost of any letters issued for a student by a medical practitioner.

### **Temporary medical conditions, illness or injuries**

Students who are pregnant should make themselves known to Student Services who can advise on reasonable adjustments during pregnancy and after the birth.

Students with a temporary illness or injury are advised to contact Student Support to discuss their circumstances.

### **Reasonable Adjustments**

Under the Equality Act, the College also has an obligation to make adjustments for disabled students once it becomes aware that they have a disability.

A “reasonable adjustment” is a change that the College can make to the way in which a course is delivered, or the way in which we carry out assessments to remove a disadvantage caused by a disability.

Reasonable adjustments should be tailored to the needs of an individual student but support provisions are most commonly identified in accordance with recommendations made by an Educational Psychologist, or other medical professional.

In order to put reasonable adjustments in place, the Learning Support and Exams teams must receive evidence of your disability in advance of your assessments.

### **Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) - Marking of Assignments**

Upon receipt of evidence confirming a diagnosis of a SpLD, we will identify work from a student with SpLD so it is marked appropriately. Marking guidelines have been written for the academics on how to mark work for those students with a SpLD.

## **Flexibility with deadlines**

Students with a registered disability may request flexible deadlines for coursework assignments on the grounds of their disability, as a reasonable adjustment. This can be negotiated with the Learning Support Team.

***Please be informed that evidence of a SpLD does not guarantee an automatic right to an extension.***

Where a student has a disability, we do not recommend blanket extensions for all assignments. We recognise that where possible students should adhere to given deadlines, in the interests of their academic progress.

It is the student's responsibility to negotiate any flexibility required **in advance of the submission deadlines or assessments dates** with the Learning Support team. It is at the discretion of the Head of Student Services as to whether or not an extension is granted.

## **Examinations/Assessments**

The Learning Support team in discussion with the Course Leader will identify what reasonable adjustments need to be put in place for the individual disabled student in line with recommendations made by an Educational Psychologist, or other medical professional. The purpose of reasonable adjustments to the assessment format is to reduce any disadvantage a disabled student faces due to their disability.

The Learning Support team will inform the Exams Team of what reasonable adjustments are to be put in place. It is essential that the Learning Support team are given appropriate evidence in advance, to enable them to inform the Exams Team with enough time before the assessment to arrange support.

## **Additional Study Skills Support**

The Learning Support Officers will work with students who require supplementary study skills help. Students are able to attend a 1 x 60 minute study skills tutorial per week. Students can be provided with advice and guidance on:

- Academic writing styles
- Harvard Referencing
- Constructing and presenting a PowerPoint
- Punctuation and grammar
- Time management
- Organisational skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Study skills software
- Note taking
- Structuring essays
- Introductions and conclusions

Students can access this service by emailing: [annapaxman@bimm.co.uk](mailto:annapaxman@bimm.co.uk)

Please note that the Learning Support team cannot provide:

- Subject specific advice
- Grade prediction
- A proof reading service

## **Physical Accessibility**

BIMM is accessible to disabled students. It is recommended to contact the Student Support or Estates and Facilities team at each College for specific details on accessibility.

Student Support work closely with Estates and Facilities team in order to provide appropriate measures to ensure the best possible learning environment for all students.

We provide an orientation/induction meeting for disabled students who may have a visual impairment/blind, wheelchair users and/or experience mobility difficulties, to familiarise themselves with the College and facilities.

Students who would like an orientation/induction meeting should contact Student Support prior to enrolment in order for this to be arranged.

## Student Support Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form *Appendix 1*

### Student Support Disclosure and Confidentiality Consent Form

<b>First Name:</b>	<b>Surname:</b>
<b>Date of Birth:</b>	<b>Contract No/UCAS ID No:</b>
<b>Course applied for:</b>	<b>Campus:</b>

1) Do you have any difficulties with reading, writing, English or maths?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details:

2) Did you have extra time, a reader, a scribe or other access arrangements when taking exams?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details:

3) Do you consider yourself to have any disability/learning difficulty or mental health condition?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details:

Please tick relevant box

Dyslexia/Dyspraxia/Dyscalculia

Personal care support needed

Visual Impairment

Asthma

Hearing impairment / Deaf

Mental health service user

Wheelchair User / Mobility need

Epilepsy

Asperger's / Autism

Do you have any other disability not identified here?

ADD / ADHD

Anxiety

Please give details:.....

Depression

4) Do you have a medical condition that could affect your time at college?

If yes, please give details:

5) Do you have any reports on your disability/learning difficulty e.g. Statement of Special Educational Needs, an Educational Psychologist's report, Specialist Teachers report or medical report?

Yes  No

If yes, please give details (type of report):

If yes, please send a copy of any report you have or let us know where we can get one. You do not have to tell us about your disability but any information will help us to organise support and make reasonable adjustments to our service.

6) What is the name and address of your last school or college?

7) What support did you get at your school/college? \*

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra lessons                | <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom assistant                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication Support Worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist Teaching                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist Equipment         | <input type="checkbox"/> Other ( <b>please give details</b> ) |

8) How many hours of support did you have each week? \*

9) What type of support do you think you might need at college?

10) Please give details of any mobility or physical access issues as not all college rooms are accessible: \*

**I agree that my learning support and other disability related needs can be disclosed to appropriate members of BIMM Birmingham staff to enable the provision of support and reasonable adjustments.**

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(if completing electronically – please type name)

Please feel free to contact BIMM with any questions you may have regarding your learning support requirements:

**Tel:** 0844 2 646 666      **Email:** [admissions@bimm.co.uk](mailto:admissions@bimm.co.uk)

*\*please note, questions 7, 8 and 10 are non-compulsory*

**Please return this form to:**

**Post:** Admissions, BIMM, 38-42 Brunswick Street West  
Hove, East Sussex, BN3 1EL  
**Email:** [admissions@bimm.co.uk](mailto:admissions@bimm.co.uk)