Disclosure – Guidance for staff

Not all students feel confident about disclosing their disability and so may not have shared this information on their UCAS/application form. Some will only do so when they feel confident that the university will understand and support their needs or when they have established a good relationship with a particular member of staff. For some students their disability may be newly acquired or identified while for others, they may not have been aware that their medical condition, e.g epilepsy, diabetes, depression counts as a disability. As students and applicants are not obliged to disclose their disability, it is important to foster an environment and culture which encourages disclosure.

If a student tells a member of staff – and only that one member of staff – about their disability the University may still be “deemed to know” and be expected to make any necessary “reasonable adjustments”. It is therefore vital that staff follow the guidance below if a student discloses a disability.

How can I encourage students to disclose?

In almost all cases, it is in a student’s best interest to disclose his/her disability so that they receive the support they need.

You can encourage students to disclose a disability by:
- Creating appropriate opportunities for disclosure e.g. at induction, at a tutorial or prior to placement;
- Making students aware of the support available, for example, by displaying information about the Student Wellbeing Service;
- Including information about Student Wellbeing in your course handbook;
- Creating an open and welcoming atmosphere;
- Explaining the benefits of disclosure; i.e that doing so will ensure that appropriate support can be in place.

What should I do if a student discloses a disability, Specific Learning Difficulty or health condition to me?

Students frequently disclose a disability, health condition, Specific Learning Difficulty (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit (hyperactive) disorder, autistic spectrum) or mental health difficulty to staff members they know. The information below suggests the steps that should be followed if a student discloses a disability or if you are concerned about a student with a disability.

When a student discloses a disability we would suggest that the following steps are taken:
- Ask if s/he has had contact with the Student Wellbeing Service;
- Provide contact details for Student Wellbeing and encourage the student to make contact;
- Inform student the Student Wellbeing Service hold drop-in sessions which they could attend;
• Explain the positive benefits of disclosure, i.e. that ‘reasonable adjustments’ can be made to ensure that they are supported. For example, this could include alternative exam arrangements and additional library services;
• Offer to contact Student Wellbeing on their behalf.

If the student agrees that you can contact Student Wellbeing on their behalf please:

• Complete the Disclosure Form and send it in a sealed envelope marked ‘strictly confidential’ to ‘Student Wellbeing’. Alternatively complete the form, scan it and send via e-mail to claire.torbett-weaver@newcastle.ac.uk
• Once Student Wellbeing is informed, an adviser will make contact with the student directly either by phone or email to offer advice. We will email you to let your know that the form has been received. If you do not receive an email within 2 weeks please contact us.

SEE FLOW CHART

What should I do if a student discloses a disability but insists that they do not want any information to be passed on?

Students have the right to request that information they share with you is kept confidential. If a student does not wish the information to be shared with anyone else in the University, you should explain that you recognise their right to do this but that it will limit the support or ‘reasonable adjustments’ which can be offered.

The student should be made aware that:

• Certain key people may need to know about their disability so that support can be provided and staff will better understand how to make learning more accessible;
• It may not be possible for the University to implement reasonable adjustments including exam arrangements;

They can review this decision at any point during their time at University.

Exceptional Circumstances:

There may be times when a student discloses information that must be passed on, for example, if a student discloses a disability that has a health and safety implication e.g. a student with epilepsy who regularly undertakes laboratory based work. In addition, if the student reveals that there is a serious and immediate threat to their own personal safety, the safety of others (this kind of situation is likely to be a very rare occurrence).
**Student Disclosure/Referral Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forename:</th>
<th>Surname:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student ID:</td>
<td>Date of Birth:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail address:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact number:</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**I give my consent** for the information I have provided regarding my disability disclosure to be passed on to the relevant staff in Student Wellbeing Service so that reasonable adjustments can be considered.

| Sign:          | Date:          |

**I do not give my consent** for the information I have provided regarding my disability disclosure to be passed on to staff in the Student Wellbeing Service. I understand that this may limit the support I receive and that I can review my decision at any point during my time at Newcastle.

| Sign:          | Date:          |

**To staff:**
Should the above student consent please ensure that this form is sent (**marked confidential**) to:

**Student Wellbeing Services**, Level 2 King’s Gate.
Telephone: 0191 208 3333 or extension 3333
Webform: [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/enquiries/](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/enquiries/)

If the student **does not consent**, retain this form in a secure place and treat it as confidential information under the Data Protection Act 1998.
**FLOW CHART:**

1. **Student discloses disability to you**

2. **Has student been in contact with Student Wellbeing Service?**
   - **YES**
     - Remind student that they can contact their advisor with any specific issues they may have.
   - **NO**
     - Explain benefits of contacting Student Wellbeing Service, provide student with a copy of the Student Wellbeing Brochure.

3. **Ask the student if he/she wishes to disclose their disability.**
   - **YES**
     - Advise student that he/she should make contact with the Student Wellbeing.
     - You can offer to make a referral yourself by completing the referral form and sending to SWS.
   - **NO**
     - Confirm with the student that he/she understands the implications of not disclosing. Remind them that they can change their mind at any time in the future.
     - Ask student to complete Disclosure/referral form.
     - Retain form in a secure place and treat it as confidential information under the Data Protection Act 1998.
# Kings Gate Drop ins

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drop in Service</th>
<th>Days and times</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Careers</td>
<td>Monday – Friday: 10am – 4.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday: 9am – 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday: 10am – 5pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exchange and Study Abroad</td>
<td>Monday, Tuesday: 10am – 11am and 2pm – 3pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thursday, Friday: 10am – 11am and 2pm – 3pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Advice</td>
<td>Wednesday, Thursday: 2pm – 4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loyola</td>
<td>Wednesday: 10am – 12pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumbria Police</td>
<td>Thursday: 12pm – 2pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate Admissions</td>
<td>Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 10am – 12pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wednesday, Friday: 2pm – 4pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Student Support Team</td>
<td>Monday – Friday: 10am – 12pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Wellbeing Service (Not Mental Health)</td>
<td>Wednesday, Friday: 1pm – 2pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visa and Immigration</td>
<td>Monday, Tuesday, Thursday: 1pm -3pm</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Friday: 10am – 11.30am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information regarding Accessing Student Services, please visit: [https://my.ncl.ac.uk/students/kingsgate](https://my.ncl.ac.uk/students/kingsgate)