

Disability Statement

Support for Students with Disabilities

Introduction

The Guildhall School of Music & Drama is situated in the City of London as part of the Barbican complex and is owned, funded and managed by the City of London. The School provides training for undergraduate and post-graduate music, acting and technical theatre students, as well as research and cross-arts students. Plays, operas and concerts are part of a regular programme performed by the students throughout the academic year.

This document tells you what is available for students who have disabilities or any specific difficulties within the learning environment at the School. Please make your needs known to us in order that we may make the appropriate adjustments and provide you with the support that you require.

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1. Guildhall School Student Support

The Guildhall School of Music & Drama is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for disabled students and welcomes applications from students with disabilities, medical conditions or specific learning difficulties. Students and staff at the School are committed to creating a positive climate which allows everyone to participate in all aspects of the School's life.

The School aims to provide a supportive learning environment for each individual student. Highly trained staff are in place to offer appropriate assistance to students with a diversity of needs, for example: students with dyslexia requiring support with researching/structuring written work; individuals with ADHD needing help with time management and organisational skills; those seeking counselling for depression, anxiety or other mental health problems; students with physical/sensory impairments or mobility problems requiring environmental modifications and other on-going medical conditions.

The Student Affairs team will do their best to respond to individual students' disabilities and their requirements. They recognise that a student's circumstances and needs may change during the period of study and that students may experience a particular problem at any point during their training which will affect their life at the School. In all cases Student Affairs will respond promptly to ensure that students are well supported and appropriate adjustments are made – this includes sensitive and knowledgeable communication with academic departments - to enable successful continuation of studies.

We are always pleased to welcome students with a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences.

2. Student Affairs

Head of Student Affairs

Advice may be sought from the Head of Student Affairs on financial difficulties, social problems, disabilities and learning difficulties and any other welfare issues that might arise.

Study Skills & Disability Coordinator

Deals with all aspects of disability and learning difficulty support, including specific learning difficulty assessments (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD etc.) and application for Disabled Students' Allowance; study skills advice for all students in essay writing, note taking, planning dissertations, and so on.

Senior Health & Welfare Advisor

The Senior Health and Welfare Advisor provides a service on various aspects of healthcare.

If you have any health problems that might affect your studies it is helpful if you contact the Senior Health & Welfare Advisor as soon as possible. This enables staff to be aware of any safety risks that might affect you whilst studying at the School. The School does not provide a general health service and students studying at the School for more than a term should register with a doctor (General Practitioner – GP) local to where they live during term time.

Counselling Service

The Counselling Service is a free and confidential service offered to all students at the School. It is staffed by qualified counsellors and conforms to the BACP (British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy) guidelines and code of ethics.

Student Life Officer (International Students)

Our Student Life Officer will provide support and confidential advice to international students on any issues that may arise such as travelling and studying in the UK, visa extensions, work permits and accommodation as well as particular help and advice regarding the many aspects of living in London.

3. Study Skills and Disability Services

The Study Skills and Disability Coordinator

The Study Skills and Disability Coordinator (SSDC) is based in Student Affairs at Sundial Court, and can offer advice on funding and other practical issues for students who declare a disability or for those who think they may have a disability. The SSDC also liaises with academic staff on issues relating to arrangements for course-work, programme delivery, adjustments for examinations, early access to learning materials, in class support and so on. Academic staff are expected to make every reasonable effort to provide learning materials in an appropriate format and to accommodate Note Takers or Sign Language Interpreters. Please understand that these take time to arrange. The SSDC also works closely with the Estates and Facilities teams regarding accessibility and adaptations for residential, learning and performing environments.

Disability Assessment and Funding

If you have or suspect you may have a disability we would encourage you to contact the Study Skills and Disability Coordinator (SSDC) in Student Affairs as early as possible – either prior to starting your course if you are a prospective student, or as soon as concerns arise if you are already studying with us - so we can offer you an informal discussion regarding your needs and studies at the Guildhall School. The SSDC will talk with you about your experiences, identify any potential barriers to studying/engaging fully with School life and assess your needs. Support can then be implemented, including assistance with applying for Disabled Students Allowance (UK Students only) or other funding.

Please note that evidence in the form of a Diagnostic Assessment conducted after your 16th birthday is required for all Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD etc.) in order to apply for Disabled Students Allowance. For all other disabilities and long term health conditions, medical evidence or a report from a suitably qualified specialist is needed to support your funding application. For enrolled students without a diagnosis the SSDC can perform an initial screening assessment for disabilities, including specific learning difficulties and mental health issues, to determine if a formal

diagnostic assessment would be helpful. Individual appointments can be made for students to be referred to an Educational Psychologist. There is currently no charge to enrolled students for this service.

4. Support for Specific Learning Difficulties

The Study Skills and Disability Coordinator offers support for students with Specific Learning Difficulties such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and ADHD. There are specialist tutors who provide academic support and study skills tutorials for students with specific learning difficulties, which are held on a weekly basis in Student Affairs at Sundial Court. There are specialist Dyslexia tutors and a Training Room with computers and specialist software for a variety of learning support needs. The room may be booked for private study when it is not being used for tutorials through Reception in Student Affairs.

Additional Support

Student Affairs also provide Counsellors and Mentors who are available to support students who need this. In addition, the Study Skills and Disability Coordinator provides study skills workshops and drop-in sessions, open to every student (with or without disabilities). Please note that support for English as a foreign language is provided by the Academic Departments.

Student Responsibility

The School is well equipped and keen to support students with disabilities and learning difficulties, in numerous ways. However, it is important to stress that the onus is on the individual student to make use of the resources and supportive mechanisms that are available to them. Support cannot be imposed - it is a student's right to manage their studies in the manner of their choosing - and we consider it our duty as an educational institution to encourage students to develop independent learning and life skills whilst studying at the Guildhall, which includes the management of one's needs relating to disability.

5. Physical Access

The School is a multi-site institution. Its' buildings were recently listed in 2004. The Barbican complex is over 30 years old and is the only architectural example of its type left in Europe. The School's newest Building, Milton Court, opened in September 2013. Milton Court offers state-of-the-art facilities to match the talent within its walls, ensuring that students can enter their chosen profession at the highest level. The £89 million redevelopment of the Milton Court site is the most significant investment in the Guildhall School for 36 years.

Facilities supporting disabled access within the School include:

- Loop systems in the main theatre
- Lifts in main buildings and to the Library
- Wheelchair accessible living accommodation/disabled accommodation at the School's hall of residence at Sundial Court
- Disabled toilet provision in the main School at Silk Street, the new building at Milton Court, the John Hosier Annexe (practice rooms) and Sundial Court

Access in the main School in Silk Street and other buildings does on occasion create problems for some students with restricted mobility. Certain areas may be inaccessible. Parts of some programmes take place at other School sites. It is important for you to inform us of any access difficulties you anticipate or that you encounter as soon as they arise, so that we can explore possible solutions. Often it is possible to arrange classes in the rooms which offer the best facilities to meet your requirements. The School is committed to progressively removing barriers within the physical and social environment affecting people with disabilities and we are happy to provide up to date information about facilities.

6. Accommodation During Your Programme

Sundial Court, the School's hall of residence, is located in Chiswell Street, just around the corner from the Silk Street building.

Priority for a place in Sundial Court is given to students with disabilities and/or medical conditions as long as they have

- firmly accepted their offer to study at the Guildhall School
- have submitted their Sundial Court application by the deadline
- filled in a medical/disability assessment form through eGo.
- Student Affairs will notify the Head of Facilities of students' individual requirements. To allow us to be prepared for your arrival, we encourage students to let us know about any special circumstances at the earliest stage of application.

The School has accommodation facilities adapted for wheelchair users and people with mobility difficulties. In addition, room adaptations (e.g. fire alarms for students with a hearing impairment) can be arranged.

A security guard is on site 24 hours a day and trained senior students (known as Residential Wardens) are on call throughout the night.

7. Making Your Application

a) What to do Before You Apply

Before you apply for your programme at the School it is useful to think about the type of support you have had in the past and what you are likely to need here during your time as a student.

You are welcome to visit the School prior to your application and familiarise yourself with the environment. If you wish to make an appointment to visit, please contact the Study Skills & Disability Coordinator. The School also has several Open Days each year,

during which staff will be pleased to discuss any questions you may have.

b) Guidelines for Completing an Application

The Guildhall School encourages applications from students with disabilities, long-term medical conditions and specific learning difficulties. If you have any particular requirements due to a disability we would like to know about these as early as possible, so we can make special arrangements and provide facilities which best meet your needs, firstly for your audition or interview and secondly for studying at the School.

The School application form includes an option for you to state any information about your disability. For the above reasons, we ask you to complete this part as fully as possible to ensure that relevant staff are aware of your circumstances and can ensure your experience with us from point of application onwards, is a positive one. The aim is to enable you to focus completely on your performance/studies and demonstrate your potential. Knowing in advance about your needs also means that we will be able to advise and assist you in preparing to come to the School and any necessary support or adjustments can be put in place ready for when your studies commence.

Providing disability information will in no way make it less likely that you will be offered a place on your chosen programme. The information on your application form assists the staff to provide for your particular requirements if you are invited for an audition/interview at the School.

If you are unsure about how to fill out the application form or require assistance, please contact Registry. A member of Registry staff will be pleased to assist you with any questions.

c) Pre Entry Guidance and Admissions

i. The School Admissions Process

If you have indicated that you have a disability on your application form, this information will be passed to the Study

Skills and Disability Coordinator and the departmental Admissions Coordinator.

ii. Auditions/Interviews

If you wish to talk over your individual circumstances with a member of staff in Student Affairs on the day of your audition/interview, you should contact Student Affairs' Administrative Adviser at least one week in advance of your audition/interview to make an appointment. This consultation will be in confidence and will not be used as part of the formal selection process. We will try to help you decide whether this School is an appropriate learning environment for you. It may be important for you to be clear about where the programme is taught and the location of accommodation.

Where appropriate, and with your permission, staff from Student Affairs will discuss your particular needs with the Head of the programme to which you have applied. In this way we can ensure that if you are offered a place, your individual requirements can be met, where reasonable. It would be helpful when you visit Student Affairs, to bring with you any documentation relating to your medical condition or disability (e.g. a letter from your Doctor or copy of a formal assessment by an Educational Psychologist).

8. Financial Support

Undergraduate and postgraduate students from the UK only are eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), which is intended to cover any extra costs or expenses you have while studying that arise because of your disability. Students on '*designated programmes*' (including full-time and sandwich programmes in Higher Education) are eligible to apply. The DSA allowance is provided to cover the cost of specialist equipment, specialist tuition or the cost of a support worker – e.g. a note taker or

mobility enabler. Students who have (or suspect they may have) a Specific Learning Difficulty such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia or ADHD should see the Study Skills and Disability Coordinator who can provide initial screening and organise for an Educational Psychologist to assess their needs. The assessment is currently paid for by the School (enrolled students only).

The [direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk) website can provide you with information:

- Student Loans
- Tuition fee grants
- Supplementary grants e.g. for disabled students, lone parents, travel costs and those leaving care to enter Higher Education

Prospective students may also wish to consult the following guides:

- *'Into Higher Education: The guide for disabled people'* (by Disability Rights UK):
<http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/benefits-information/factsheets/education-factsheets>
- *'Bridging The Gap: A Guide to Disabled Students Allowances in Higher Education'*:
<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/further-information>

You can obtain further information from your local DSA funding body:

- **England**
<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>
- **Scotland**
http://www.saas.gov.uk/forms_and_guides/dsa.htm
- **Wales**
<http://www.studentfinancewales.co.uk>
- **Northern Ireland**
<http://www.studentfinanceni.co.uk>

Ireland

Students from Ireland may be entitled to funding via the Fund for Students with Disabilities (which is funded by the Irish Government). For further information about the fund, guidance on making an application and other financial support, please go to:

<http://www.studentfinance.ie>

International Students

Unfortunately, international students are not eligible for the UK government disability allowances. However, the School can offer some Study Skills sessions and some basic equipment. It is the responsibility of the EU and overseas students to enquire from their own country whether or not they are eligible for any financial help.

9. Personal and Academic Support

Academic Registry

The Academic Registry provides information on entry requirements, applications, financial support and enrolment. The Registry processes all student application forms and is the primary contact point for all student enquiries relating to admissions.

Music and Drama Offices

The Music and Drama Offices organise and administrate all examinations and assessments and will take care to provide for any student who has a specific requirement (e.g. extra time allowance) for exam sessions and other assessments.

The link between your programme requirements and your personal circumstances is an important one. During Induction Week you will be introduced to your Programme Coordinator and Head/Deputy Head of Department. They will advise you on your programme of study and help in implementing adjustments if required.

10. Library and Learning Resources

The Library has a comprehensive collection of music, plays, poetry, scores and DVD recordings and is accessible by wheelchair. There are computer terminals available for use by students.

The Head Librarian and Head of IT are available to discuss individual needs with students. Every reasonable effort is made to ease difficulties. Library staff will assist with sourcing material that may be otherwise difficult to obtain, supporting students to access and use online databases, and extending library loans, where applicable.

11. Students' Union

The Students' Union (SU) is able to provide support and information during your time at the School and acts as a point of contact between students and staff. The President of the Students' Union represents your views at the Board of Governors of which he/she is a member. The SU also encourages students' interests within and beyond the subject of their programme by supporting a number of societies and activities in the School. The SU also provides additional services and ensures that specific needs are addressed. Their office is on the second floor in the Common Room and can be accessed by lift on all floors

12. Complaints and Appeals

Any student who wishes to make a complaint or appeal regarding their programme, a specific assessment or progression decisions, should contact the Registry in the first instance for advice on the operation of the School's Complaints and Appeals procedures.

The Student Complaints and Appeals Procedures are set out in the School's Academic Regulatory Framework. The Registry can provide a copy of the procedures on request and these can also be made available in large print, Braille, on tape etc.

Where applicable, students are also advised to consult the Validation Handbooks or Assessment Regulations of the validating university for their programme; copies are available from the Academic Registry.

13. Sharing Student Data

The School is a registered data controller under the Data Protection Act 1988, and is aware of its responsibilities to ensure the fair and lawful processing of personal data. Disclosure of a student's personal information is released only:

- To the student or someone acting with the express permission of the student to act on their behalf
- To a member of staff of the School for the use in the proper performance of his/her duties
- Where disclosure is a legal requirement
- Where failure to disclose information would endanger the student or be against the student's interests

The statement is accurate at the time of printing, but there may have been changes in facilities since publication. It is advisable to check facilities by contacting the Head of Facilities using the contact details provided.

If you would like to receive a copy of the Disability Statement in larger print, in Braille, or in tape form please contact the Study Skills and Disability Coordinator using the contact details provided.

14. Contacts

Student Affairs

- **Head of Student Affairs**
Sue Cowan
Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7198
Email: sue.cowan@gsmd.ac.uk
- **Study Skills & Disability Coordinator**
Nicola Sherrington
Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 2360
Email: nicola.sherrington@gsmd.ac.uk
- **Student Affairs Administrative Adviser**
Lesley Secker
Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7219
Email: lesley.secker@gsmd.ac.uk
- **Senior Health & Welfare Adviser**
Hannah Goodwin
Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7256
Email: hannah.goodwin@gsmd.ac.uk
- **Counselling Team**
Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7257
Email: counsellors@gsmd.ac.uk
- **Student Life Officer**
Julia Oliver
Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 6132
Email: julia.oliver@gsmd.ac.uk

Library

- **Senior & Drama Librarian**

Kate Eaton

Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7174

Email: kate.eaton@gsmd.ac.uk

Estates & Facilities

- **Interim Head of Facilities**

Elliott Barnes

Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7218

Email: elliott.barnes@gsmd.ac.uk

Registry *Applications & Entry Criteria*

- **Assistant Registrar (Admissions & Enrolment)
(post to be recruited)**

Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7183

Email: registry@gsmd.ac.uk

Drama Office

- **Deputy Head of Drama Administration (Applications and Admissions)**

Lynne Buckley

Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7149

Email: lynne.buckley@gsmd.ac.uk

- **Drama Administration Officer (Assessments)**

Ellen Paine

Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 2323

Email: ellen.paine@gsmd.ac.uk

Music Office *Auditions, Interviews & Assessments*

- **Deputy Head of Music Administration**

Antoine Kaiserman

Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 6128

E-mail: Antoine.Kaiserman@gsmd.ac.uk

Students' Union

Email: union@gsmd.ac.uk

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