



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 a disability, medical condition or who are neurodiverse. Please make your needs known to us in order that we can make 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 and welcomes applications from students with disabilities, medical conditions (physical and mental health) and neurodiversity (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD, Autistic Spectrum Conditions etc.). 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 advice and assistance to students with a diversity of needs. For example: students with dyslexia requiring support with structuring written work; individuals with ADHD needing help with time management; those with depression, anxiety or other mental health challenges in need of psychological support; and students with sensory impairments or restricted mobility requiring environmental adaptations.

The Learning and Disability support team within the Student Affairs department work with students to understand the impact of their disability, medical condition or neurodiversity upon their course participation, learning and wider student life. They endeavour to put in place support and resources which will enable students to access learning opportunities, enjoy their training and progress on equal footing with their peers.

It is recognised that a student's circumstances and needs may change during the period of study and that students may encounter new challenges at any point during their training which could affect their life at the School. In all cases the Learning and Disability Support team will respond promptly to ensure that

students feel supported and appropriate adjustments are made. This is made possible through liaison and collaboration with Academic and Support Departments.

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 and social welfare, disabilities, medical conditions, mental health, learning and course related issues and any other wellbeing matters that may arise.

Learning Support and Disability Coordinator

The Learning Support and Disability Coordinator can be consulted on all aspects of disability and learning support provision. Advice and support is available to both prospective and enrolled students with disabilities and/or additional learning support needs. This includes sensory impairments, physical and mental health conditions, and neurodiversity (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD, Autism etc.).

Learning Support is also open to any student who feels in need of additional input or guidance to enable them to get the most from their course (a disability is not required).

Services include: learning needs assessment, signposting to learning resources, assistive technology training, guidance on funding, disability screening, diagnostic assessment referral, provision of specialist study skills tuition (1:1 and group based) and mentoring. The Learning Support and Disability team works closely with academic departments to put in place student Learning Support and Disclosure Agreements, implement reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, and to further develop inclusive and accessible teaching, learning and assessment practices within the School.

Study Skills Tutor

The Study Skills Tutor is a specialist in neurodiversity (e.g. dyslexia, ADHD, Dyspraxia) and is available to provide students with study skills support and guidance in relation to both academic and practical learning. Students can encounter challenges with their studies for a variety of reasons (not necessarily because of neurodiversity or a disability) and so this support is open to all learners. The Study Skills Tutor also offers accessible learning and teaching advice to teachers and support staff.

Senior Health and Welfare Advisor

The Senior Health and Welfare Advisor provides a service covering multiple aspects of healthcare. If you have any health issues that might affect your studies you are invited to contact the Senior Health and Welfare Advisor as soon as possible. This enables staff to be aware of any issues relating to your health and wellbeing that might affect you whilst studying at the School and to support you to find ways of looking after your health and wellbeing whilst being involved in a very busy programme of study.

The Senior Health and Welfare Advisor is available to assist and advise students with both physical and mental health issues, as well as holding a confidential sexual health clinic monthly in collaboration with the NHS. Where appropriate, students can be referred to additional services, including the School's in-house physiotherapist, or external medical experts including Osteopathy and Acupuncture. A holistic approach to health is taken and extra curriculum wellbeing activities for students are offered during term-time in line with this; for example, yoga classes that focus on mindfulness.

It is important to note that 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 (known as a General Practitioner or GP) local to where they live during term time. Advice can be given on this.

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

The Student Life Officer provides information and advice on a range of issues, including accommodation and international student life. They work closely with the Facilities team and Sundial Reps to oversee the well-being of students living within the Halls of Residence at Sundial Court. They also support the work of the Student Union, and the team of Student Representatives.

The Student Life Officer can provide specific 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. Learning Support and Disability Services

The Learning Support and Disability Coordinator

The Learning Support and Disability Coordinator (LSDC) is based in Student Affairs at Sundial Court, and can offer advice on funding and other practical issues for students who declare a disability, health condition or are neurodiverse; and or for those who think they may have a disability.

The LSDC liaises with academic staff on issues relating to arrangements for course-work, programme delivery, reasonable adjustments for assessments, inclusive teaching and learning, integrating assistive technology and in-class support, and so on. Academic staff are expected to make every reasonable effort to provide learning materials in accessible formats, within physical and digital forums that are optimised for accessibility, and to accommodate Non-medical Helpers (NMH), such as Note Takers or Sign Language Interpreters.

The LSDC also works closely with the Facilities, I.T., Library and Audio/Visual Departments regarding accessibility within residential, learning and performing environments (encompassing physical, social and digital spaces).

Disability Assessment and Funding

If you have a disability, long-term medical condition or neurodiversity - or suspect you may have, we would encourage you to contact the LSDC 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 LSDC will talk with you about your experiences, identify any potential barriers to studying/engaging fully with School life and assess your

learning support requirements. Resources and a support plan can then be put in place, including assistance with applying for Disabled Students Allowance (UK Students only) or other funding.

Please note that in order to be eligible to apply for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA), a formal diagnostic assessment or written report from a qualified specialist must accompany your application. We can provide advice on this if you require further clarification.

For enrolled students without a diagnosis, a member of the learning support team in Student Affairs can offer an initial screening assessment to determine if referral for formal diagnosis would be helpful. For example, we can make appointments for students to have an assessment with an Educational Psychologist if Dyslexia seems strongly indicated. There is currently no charge to enrolled students for this service.

4. Support for Neurodiverse Students

The Learning Support team in Student Affairs offers support for students who are neurodiverse; for example Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD and Autism / Asperger Syndrome. Students can be referred for specialist Study Skills Tuition - which can be 1:1 sessions online or in person, a weekly drop-in (where no appointment is needed) and also study groups for students facing similar challenges at key points in the academic year (e.g. focusing on developing skills for researching and writing a dissertation).

The team can offer students an assessment of their learning support needs, which is the 'gateway' for students to accessing additional support and resources (such as Study Skills Support, Specialist Mentoring, assistive technology and disability funding) which can enable them to develop effective learning strategies and build confidence in their studies.

Please note that support for English as a foreign language is provided by the Academic Departments.

Student Responsibility

The School is well resourced to support students who have disabilities, physical and mental health conditions and neurodiverse learning profiles. However, it is important to stress that it is ultimately the student's responsibility to investigate and make use of the resources and support available. Support cannot be imposed, since it is a student's right to manage their studies in the manner of their choosing, and we consider it our duty as an higher educational institution to enable students to develop independent learning and life skills, which includes the management of one's own support needs.

5. Physical Access

The School is a multi-site institution. Its buildings were 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 was 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 and domestic facilities within the School's hall of residence at Sundial Court
- Disabled toilet provision in the main School buildings at Silk Street and Milton Court, as well as within the John Hosier Annexe (additional practice and teaching spaces).

Some locations, particularly within the older Silk Street building, can present access challenges for students who have limited mobility or are wheelchair users. It is important that you inform us of any access requirements you have as soon as you can (ideally and where applicable before you commence your studies) or as soon as any barriers arise, so that we can explore potential solutions and factor these in to space and schedule planning. It may be possible to arrange classes in rooms which offer the best access and facilities to meet your requirements. The School is committed to progressively removing environmental and operational barriers affecting students with disabilities, physical and mental health conditions, sensory impairments and neurodiversity and we are keen to work closely with students to improve access to learning.

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.

The accommodation offers 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, 7 days per week. In addition, a team of 'Sundial Reps', who are specially trained senior students, live in the building to provide pastoral support and to respond to any emergency situations or complaints outside of office hours.

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
- submitted their Sundial Court application by the deadline
- completed the required additional form in order to apply to live in Sundial Court on medical/disability grounds (available through eGo).
- been deemed by the applications panel to have a medical or disability related need for a place at Sundial Court which is over and above that of first year undergraduate students, who otherwise have priority.

Student Affairs will notify the Head of Facilities of students' individual requirements within the Halls of Residence. 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.

7. Making Your Application

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 Learning Support and Disability Coordinator. The School also has several Open Days each year, during which staff will be pleased to discuss any questions you may have.

Guidelines for Completing an Application

The Guildhall School encourages applications from students with disabilities, physical and mental health conditions and neurodiversity. If you have any particular requirements in relation to this we would like to know about these as early as possible, so we can put in place supportive arrangements/resources and reasonable adjustments and provide facilities which best meet your needs - firstly for your audition/interview and secondly for studying at the School.

The School application form includes an option for you to provide information about your disability, neurodiversity or health condition. For the above reasons, we ask you to complete this part as fully as possible so 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 demonstrating your abilities and potential during the application process, and then on developing your skills, knowledge and craft as you undergo your training. 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 organised for when your studies commence.

Providing disability or health information will not make it less likely that you will be offered a place on your chosen programme. The information on your application form assists staff to provide for your particular requirements if you are invited for an audition/interview at the School.

If you would like guidance on filling out the application form or require assistance, please contact Registry. A member of Registry staff will be pleased to assist you with any questions.

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 Learning Support 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 prior to your audition or interview, you should arrange an appointment to speak with the Learning Support and Disability Coordinator in Student Affairs no less than one week in advance of your audition or interview (to allow sufficient time for any supportive arrangements to be made). This consultation will be confidential and will **not** be used as part of the formal selection process. We can also provide you with information and answer your questions, to help you decide whether the Guildhall School is an appropriate learning environment for you.

Where appropriate, and with your permission, staff from Student Affairs can 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 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. Enrolled students who have (or suspect they may have) a disability, physical or mental health condition, or neurodiversity such as Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Autism/Asperger Syndrome or ADHD should contact the Learning Support and Disability Coordinator who can provide an initial screening consultation and organise for an appropriate specialist, such as an Educational Psychologist, to assess their needs. The assessment is currently paid for by the School (enrolled students only).

The [direct.gov](#) website can provide you with information on:

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

UK students can obtain further information about Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) from their local funding body via the following links:

England: [gov website](#)

Scotland: [saas.gov website](#)

Wales: [Student Finance Wales website](#)

Northern Ireland: [Student Finance NI website](#)

You may also wish to look up the following helpful resources for prospective students:

[Disability Rights UK information on Disabled Students' Allowances \(DSA's\)](#)

[Into HE 2020 A guide to additional support in higher education \(Disability Rights UK\)](#)

EU and International Students

International students are unfortunately not eligible for the UK Government's Disabled Students' Allowances. However, the School (via Student Affairs) can offer students a full assessment of their learning support needs and are able to put in place appropriate support and resources to ensure that international students can assess the curriculum and get the most from their studies whilst at the School.

It is the responsibility of EU and overseas students to enquire with the Government within their own country as to whether or not they are eligible for any financial help in relation to their disability or health condition.

The British Council provides information about disability support for EU and International students planning to study in the UK:

[Study-UK website](#)

Republic of Ireland

Students from the Republic of 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:

[Student Finance website](#)

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 in-house collection of music, plays, poetry, scores and DVD recordings and manages student access to a wide range of digital learning resources. There are computer terminals available for use by students within the library.

The School's Library Staff, Learning Technologist and IT Team collaborate with students and the Learning Support Team to make learning as inclusive and accessible as possible and to find creative solutions for meeting the individual needs of students experiencing specific challenges. Every reasonable effort is made to reduce barriers to learning. Library staff will assist with sourcing materials 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 student views at the Board of Governors of which they are 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 their Programme and/or Department Handbooks or Assessment Regulations. Copies are available from the Music and Drama Offices.

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. Personal data supplied by a student, or gathered in relation to a student during their studies, will be used in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation.

Full details about what data we collect, why we use it, and with whom we may share it is given in the HE privacy notice which is linked to the School's overarching privacy notice. Please see below for further details: [GSMD website](#)

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

This statement is accurate at the time of printing, but there may have been changes to access arrangements and facilities since its publication. It is advisable to check this by contacting the Head of Facilities or the Learning Support and Disability Coordinator using the contact details provided.

If you would like to receive a copy of the Disability Statement in larger print, in Braille, or in digital form please contact the Learning Support 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

Learning Support & Disability Coordinator

Nicola Sherrington

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Study Skills Tutor

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Counselling Team

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Student Life Officer

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Student Affairs Administrative Adviser

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Library

Senior Librarian

Kate Eaton

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Estates & Facilities

Facilities Department

Tel: +44 (0)20 7382 7192/3

Email: facilities@gsmd.ac.uk

Registry

Assistant Registrar (Admissions & Enrolment)

Stuart Brooking

Tel: +44 (0)20 7628 2571

Email: registry@gsmd.ac.uk

Drama Office

Assistant Head of Drama Administration

(Applications and Admissions)

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Production Arts & Drama Administration Manager (Records)

Ellen Paine
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Music Office

Deputy Head of Music Administration

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Students' Union

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Last updated 17th August 2020

Last Reviewed May 2021 (SL)