

SPI Disability Policy



ATHROFA PADARN SANT
ST PADARN'S INSTITUTE

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St Padarn's Institute Disability Policy

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2. Introduction

St Padarn's is committed to fostering an inclusive and accessible environment where all learners can thrive. We aim to provide learners who require support with the tools to enable them to work to their potential and demonstrate the true level of their abilities.

3. Definitions

Inclusive and accessible – this refers to St. Padarn’s teaching and learning environment, and its assessment practices, which are designed to promote equal participation and reflect the diversity of the learners.

Neurodiverse – St Padarn's recognises how individuals learn and think differently.

Reasonable adjustments – modifications made by St Padarn’s to remove, or reduce, barriers to learning, taking into account factors such as their effectiveness, its impact on other learners and resources.

Study and learning – this phrase encompasses all St Padarn’s programmes, networks, and one-off courses.

4. Legal Context

In line with the Equality Act (2010), St Padarn’s will take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled learners are not placed at a disadvantage in applying for, or undertaking a course of study, in comparison with a person who is not disabled.

According to the act, disability is defined as “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.” By way of guidance, a “substantial effect” should be interpreted as anything that is more than minor or trivial and a long-term effect is one that has lasted or is likely to last 12 months or is likely to last for the rest of a person’s life.

Examples of a disability include but are not limited to:

- Long-term health conditions (e.g. epilepsy, chronic fatigue)
- Specific learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)
- Mental Health conditions (e.g. depression, bipolar)
- Visual Impairments
- Hearing impairments
- Autism

The Equality Act imposes a duty to make reasonable anticipatory adjustments for disabled learners at St Padarn’s.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments aim to ensure that if you are a disabled learner, you are able to realise your full potential and to ensure you are not disadvantaged in comparison with non-disabled learners. This duty is anticipatory, meaning St Padarn's is required to consider and take action in relation to barriers that impede disabled people generally to access learning with St Padarn's.

This duty applies to:

- Provisions, criteria, or practices, for example, policies, processes and methods of teaching and assessment
- Physical features, for example, access to buildings, design of teaching and learning environments
- Providing auxiliary aids or services, for example, equipment, technology, or support from a person (often provided through the Disabled Students Allowance).

St Padarn's is committed to addressing the barriers to inclusion (structural, cultural, organisational, and attitudinal) and takes as its starting point the premise that accessible and appropriate provision is not 'additional' but a core element of our overall mission and work.

6. St Padarn's Commitment

St Padarn's will endeavour to:

- Work to ensure its environmental, social, and institutional practices and attitudes are inclusive of learners with disabilities, specific learning difficulties, mental health conditions and long-term health conditions.
- Provide an inclusive learning environment, endeavouring to be anticipatory in making reasonable adjustments and in taking proportionate steps to overcome barriers which potentially impede or disadvantage disabled learners.
- Encourage full disclosure of disability, fostering an environment where learners feel able to talk about disability and making sure that there is clear information about support available and how to access it.
- Support learners with applying for and accessing Disabled Students' Allowances.
- Support all staff by providing disability training and resources to raise awareness and to help them support disabled learners.

- Work collaboratively with learners to continually improve the experience of disabled learners.

7. Admissions

St Padarn's welcomes applications from people who have a disability, specific learning difficulty (e.g. dyslexia), mental health condition, long-term health condition, or are neurodiverse. When applying to a programme you are strongly encouraged to disclose disability at application, so that appropriate support can be put in place as soon as possible. All applicants to St Padarn's are considered equally. Admission to a course is based on the judgement that the learner can be reasonably expected to fulfil the competence standards and, where applicable, the professional body requirements of the course. The Equality Act (2010) defines a **competence standard** as "an academic, medical or other standard applied for the purposes of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability." Reasonable adjustments **cannot** be made to the learning outcomes of the course.

8. Disclosure

If you have a disability, you are strongly encouraged to disclose this as early as possible so that appropriate support arrangements can be put in place. However, you may disclose a disability **at any time** during your studies. We also encourage you to speak to the Learning Support team or tutor if you suspect you have a disability or a condition which is impacting your studies.

If on application you choose not to disclose a disability, you will not be treated any less favourably if you choose to disclose that disability later in your studies. We also recognise that health conditions fluctuate, and needs may change during your studies so you are encouraged to communicate any changes with us as soon as possible so we can ensure you get appropriate support.

St Padarn's encourages learners to disclose disabilities or difficulties in learning directly to our dedicated and helpful learning support team, either in person or by emailing learningsupport@stpadarns.ac.uk. However, if you feel more comfortable disclosing your disability or difficulty learning to another member of staff such as your personal tutor then please do so.

St Padarn's asks for information about your disability in order to help put in place the best possible support for you. This can include things like a formal diagnosis or a GP's letter. It also can include what you tell us about your condition, or observations

by staff involved in your learning. Putting in place reasonable adjustments is not dependent on providing a formal diagnosis, but the more information we have the more we can ensure that we tailor your learning support to your specific needs.

Once you have made a disclosure St Padarn's can start the process of assessing what support and adjustments you need.

9. Assessment of Need

St Padarn's has a duty to put reasonable adjustments in place no matter how you disclose your disability. Usually, reasonable adjustments will be considered by the Learning Support Advisors who are the members of St Padarn's staff dedicated to providing this service, and who are normally the most able to make a thorough assessment of what you need to help you in your studies. The Learning Support Advisors will seek to ensure that all learners experience equality of opportunity during their studies with St Padarn's. However, where there is knowledge of a disability St Padarn's still has a responsibility to put in place reasonable adjustments and this is not dependent on a full assessment by the Learning Support Advisors. St Padarn's staff should seek advice from the Learning Support Advisors on the implementation of reasonable adjustments.

10. Learning Support Plans

St Padarn's seeks to increase the inclusivity of learning and teaching to optimise the learning experience for all. However, if you have a disability your individual needs will be assessed to see if there are specific reasonable adjustments needed in order to support your learning and ensure you will not be put at a disadvantage. Adjustments may include specific examination arrangements, provision of additional support for learning, adjustments to assessment practices, and accommodation arrangements.

In order that proper reasonable adjustments are made and followed in all aspects of your study the usual practice is that St Padarn's learning support team will assess your needs and write a learning support plan which is disseminated to everyone involved in your studies. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place and St Padarn's will train staff to do this. Where staff other than the Learning Support team make adjustments, these should be discussed with the Learning Support team so that they can be included in the learner's learning support plan, where relevant. If St Padarn's staff are in any doubt of what reasonable adjustments, they can make they should contact the Learning Support team for advice.

The learning support plan can be modified if the adjustments are not effective or to reflect changes in your needs, please contact the Learning Support Advisors if you have any concerns about your plan.

The learning support plan is normally a collaborative document involving you, Learning Support, and relevant staff.

Adjustments will be made within the parameters of the following factors:

- The nature of the learner's circumstances and needs following the assessment process.
- The nature of the programme of study.
- The likely effectiveness of the adjustment in removing the disadvantage.
- The practicality of the adjustment, taking account of:
 - a. The feasibility of the steps
 - b. Health and safety issues
 - c. The resources of St Padarn's
 - d. The reasonable expectations of others and external factors (for example, factors in relation to placements)
 - e. The costs, including the availability of external funding sources for e.g., Disabled Student Allowances to assist in the adjustment
 - f. The relevant interests of others, including other learners, where the adjustment would result in a significant disadvantage to those others
 - g. The extent to which aids, and other services will otherwise be provided to people with a disability
 - h. Legal precedent
 - i. The possibility of using inclusive measures, which is our preferred method of ensuring accessibility, rather than a reasonable adjustment.

For those learners who are candidates for ministry, the Learning Support Advisor will work with the Dean for Initial Ministerial Training, the Tutor in Contextual Learning and a candidate's Placement Supervisor to put in place reasonable adjustments. Any support provided by St Padarn's will be in respect of its function as an education provider. St Padarn's will not provide support which would ordinarily be provided by statutory organisations such as Social Services or the Health Authority.

Details of reasonable adjustments agreed for a learner will be included in your Learning Support Plan. In order to make reasonable adjustments and support you in your learning some information will need to be shared with those involved in your studies. This could include tutorial staff, administration staff, and for candidates training for ministry this could include placement supervisors and relevant diocesan staff. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis.

Learning Support Plans will be reviewed annually, but you can ask for a review at any point if your needs change or if you feel your plan is not giving you the support you need.

11. Disabled Students Allowance

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) is a government grant available to eligible disabled learners on some higher education courses in the UK, to help with extra course costs you may incur by attending your course, as a direct result of your disability. The allowances can help to pay for a non-medical personal helper, items of specialist equipment, assistive software, travel, and other course-related costs. The allowance is neither means-tested nor repayable. DSA is not available to all learners, but are subject to eligibility criteria, which are stated on the Gov.uk website at: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa/overview> . Student Finance does require evidence of disability, details of which can be found on this website.

An offer of a place at St Padarn's is not a guarantee of eligibility to receive DSA.

The DSA is based on a learning assessment organised through the DSA awarding body. The recommendations of this assessment will be incorporated into your learning support plan. If you declare a disability and are on an accredited programme of study, you will be strongly encouraged to apply for DSA in order that you receive the comprehensive support available from this source.

St Padarn's Learning Support team will support you in completing a DSA application.

12. Confidentiality

St Padarn's will exercise care to ensure your privacy is respected. In order to make reasonable adjustments and support you in your learning some information will need to be shared with those involved in your studies. This could include tutorial staff, administration staff, and for candidates training for ministry this could include placement supervisors and relevant diocesan staff. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis. For more information about how we process the information you give us please visit our privacy statement [here](#).

13. Contact Details

You can contact the Learning Support Team on:

Email: learningsupport@stpadarns.ac.uk

Tel: **02920563379**