

St Padarn's Institute Disability Policy



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ST PADARN'S INSTITUTE

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2. Introduction

St Padarn's is committed to ensuring that disability does not provide a barrier to full participation in learning and teaching, facilities, and services for existing and prospective learners.

St Padarn's supports an approach that requires a pro-active consideration of access to learning, teaching, services, and facilities to ensure adjustments are made in advance of individuals with disabilities attempting to study or use the services and facilities.

The Institute 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.

This Policy applies to all disabled learners regardless of nationality, fee status, programme of study, or place of residence.

3. Definition of Disability

A person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Equality Act 2010). Long-term means it has lasted for at least 12 months, it is likely to last at least 12 months, or it is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person. Disability covers a wide range of physical and mental impairments, including physical and mobility difficulties, hearing impairments, visual impairments, specific learning differences including dyslexia, medical conditions, and mental health problems.

4. Principles

- Each application for admission to a programme will be considered on its merits and on an individual basis, using the same admissions criteria that apply to all learners. This assessment is a process in which consideration of academic suitability is normally separated from discussion centred on the applicant's other needs which will be a separate but parallel activity.
- St Padarn's will ensure that in all policies, procedures, functions, and activities consideration is given to the means of enabling disabled students' full participation in all aspects of the academic and social life of the institution.
- St Padarn's publicity, programme details and general information will be accessible to people with disabilities.
- St Padarn's will have in place processes to assess the needs of disabled learners to ensure that reasonable adjustments are made, enabling disabled students to meet their full potential.
- St Padarn's will ensure that the requirements of disabled students are considered during programme validation and review and that appropriate amendments are made. Programme specifications that raise barriers to access by disabled people will be reconsidered and reasonable adjustments made to minimise such barriers.
- St Padarn's adopts a **Declare – Evidence – Assess – Support** process.
 - **Learners** are responsible for declaring any disabilities and providing the required evidence of a disability. Reasonable adjustments cannot be made unless a learner makes a declaration of disability and provides evidence to support it.
 - Decisions on reasonable adjustments which form a learner's support plan are made on the basis of an appropriate assessment process, directed by St Padarn's. If a learner chooses not to go through the assessment process, then reasonable adjustments cannot be made.

- **Learners** are responsible for requesting any review of implemented reasonable adjustments if such adjustments are not proving to be effective in meeting their entitlements.

5. Disclosure and Confidentiality

The decision of whether or not to disclose a disability and the timing of any disclosure belongs entirely to the individual learner. However, if opportunities have been given to disclose a disability and an individual decides not to then St Padarn's will not be able to offer them individual support or adjustments.

Learners are encouraged to disclose a disability, specific learning difference or medical condition at an early stage to enable St Padarn's to consider, in advance, general access arrangements and any additional support or specific arrangements which may need to be made. Disclosure can be made at the application stage by completing the relevant section on the application form, or subsequently by emailing learningsupport@stpadarns.ac.uk.

St Padarn's cannot be held liable for not implementing reasonable adjustments retrospectively (i.e., prior to disclosure of disability). St Padarn's will manage the process of information sharing and will treat all personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 (and subsequent legislation which may replace this); access to disability-related information will be provided on a need-to-know basis only, in order for reasonable adjustments to be implemented.

Where a student is on a placement as part of their training relevant information may be shared, with the consent of the learner, to ensure reasonable adjustments will be provided to ensure no disadvantage is experienced by the learner.

6. Reasonable Adjustments

St Padarn's seeks to increase the inclusivity of learning and teaching to optimise the learning experience for all, however, it is recognised that this does not negate the need for reasonable adjustments. Where a disabled learner may be placed at a substantial disadvantage St Padarn's is required to make a reasonable adjustment, which is defined as a decision taken by the Institute to allow students non-standard arrangements. Adjustments may include specific examination arrangements, provision of additional support for learning, adjustments to assessment practices,

and to accommodation arrangements. Adjustments will be made within the parameters of the following factors:

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

If learners require adjustments to be made in a placement area permission will be sought from the learner for the Learning Support Advisor to disclose a learner's disability to the Placement Supervisor. An assessment will be made of what, if any, reasonable adjustments should be made.

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.

St Padarn's will require evidence of disability and will normally require a learner to go through an assessment process to assess what, if any, reasonable adjustments it can make.

Details of reasonable adjustments agreed for a learner will be included in their Support Plan which will be disseminated to relevant staff. Tutors and other staff will not be able to make additional adjustments without discussion with the Learning Support Advisor.

7. Disabled Students Allowance

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) are a government grant available to eligible disabled learners on some higher education courses in the UK, to help with extra course costs they may incur by attending their course, as a direct result of their 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. DSAs are not available to all students, but are subject to eligibility criteria, which are stated on the Gov.uk website at: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview>.

A disabled applicant may be offered a place at St Padarn's, but that offer is not a guarantee of eligibility to receive DSAs.

DSAs are based on a learning assessment organised through the DSA awarding body. The recommendations of this assessment will be the basis of developing a support plan for learners. Learners who declare a disability and who are on an accredited programme of study will be strongly encouraged to apply for DSA in order that reasonable adjustments can be made. St Padarn's cannot make reasonable adjustments which would normally be provided through DSA.

8. Learning Support Advisor

The Learning Support Advisor is a member of St Padarn's staff with the responsibility to support students with disabilities to reach their academic potential. The Learning Support Advisor will seek to ensure that all learners experience equality of opportunity during their studies with St Padarn's. Where possible inclusive practices may make individual support unnecessary but where barriers resulting from disability still remain the learner will be offered reasonable adjustments.

St Padarn's primary method of ensuring accessibility is by developing and embedding inclusive teaching and learning practices however it is recognised that the need for some individual adjustments remains.

9. Policy Approval and Review

- This policy as well as all other policies, procedure, and guidance documents relating to learners studying at St Padarn's, will be available to all, monitored regularly and reviewed and evaluated periodically.

- The Learning Support Advisor and the Director of Operations have overall responsibility.
- This document can be found on the SPI website: www.stpadarns.ac.uk.
- Every effort will be made to respond to any request to provide this policy in a different format.
- This policy will be included in staff induction.