



# **DISABILITY POLICY**

**Policy Owner: Head of Student and Staff Services**

**Last Updated: July 2016**

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**Version Number: v3.0**

**Informed by Quality Code Chapters: B3, B4**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Institute of Contemporary Music Performance (ICMP) welcomes all students who are academically and musically qualified and motivated to benefit from the various programmes offered.
- 1.2. We are committed to actively promoting equality of opportunity ensuring that all students reach their learning potential and achieve success on an appropriate course of study. This means that disabled applicants and students may be entitled to receive support to enable them to participate as fully as possible in college life and to enable them to complete their programme of study successfully.
- 1.3. The ICMP welcomes applications from anyone regardless of disability. Central to the Student Disability Policy is the intention to take account of individual need and to work with disabled students to find appropriate and practical solutions to problems that might arise.

## **2. Legal Context**

- 2.1. The Equality Act 2010 drew together, simplified, strengthened and replaced previous legislation, consolidating equality legislation with respect to nine protected characteristics, including disability.
- 2.2. Related Institute policies & Procedures are:
  - Equality & Diversity
  - Equality & Diversity Charter
  - Student Mental Health
  - Student Charter
  - Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study

## **3. Purpose**

- 3.1. The ICMP recognises its responsibility to make anticipatory and reasonable adjustments to all policies, procedures and provision of services, including teaching and learning, and actively seeks to widen the participation of disabled people in higher education.
- 3.2. The ICMP seeks to actively promote inclusive practices and encourages students to disclose information regarding additional needs as early as possible in the application process in order for support planning and provision to be most effective. Students can disclose their needs confidentially at any stage of the student life cycle.
- 3.3. We understand there is a transition into Higher Education when starting at ICMP and our aim is to support students to study as independently as possible during their time here. We will support students to progress and gain strategies to succeed as independent graduates. It is the aim of ICMP to foster independence, self-awareness and personal responsibility amongst students. We encourage students take an active part in the process, and take appropriate steps to manage their own health and wellbeing in order to fulfil their academic potential

#### **4. Definition of Disability**

**4.1.** The Equality Act (2010) makes it unlawful to discriminate against disabled people and places a positive duty to promote disability equality. Legally disability is described as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term (normally longer than 12 months) adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The range of disabilities includes:

- a sensory (visual / hearing / speech) impairment
- a mental health issue
- a mobility impairment
- a dexterity impairment
- a physical disability
- Asperger's Syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorders
- chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy.)
- chronic pain / chronic fatigue
- specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia)
- any other condition which has a long-term and adverse effect

**4.2.** The definition includes cancer, HIV/AIDS and Multiple Sclerosis effectively from the point of diagnosis.

**4.3.** The ICMP recognises its responsibility to make anticipatory and reasonable adjustments to all policies, procedures and provision of services, including teaching and learning, and actively seeks to widen the participation of disabled people in higher education.

#### **5. Responsibilities arising from the Policy**

**5.1.** Students are responsible for disclosing their disability to the ICMP

**5.2.** Students have the right not to disclose a disability or to request that the existence or nature of their disability be treated as strictly confidential and therefore not shared with relevant staff across the Institute. Requests for strict confidentiality may mean that a less satisfactory adjustment is provided or that no adjustment can be provided.

**5.3.** Students are responsible for requesting any review of implemented reasonable adjustments, if such adjustments are not proving effective in meeting their entitlements.

**5.4.** Where students do not inform the ICMP of any disability and the effect of said disability, the Institute will be exempt from any duty to make reasonable adjustments. This exemption does not apply, however, where the ICMP ought to have known that the individual in question was disabled, and the individual's disability was liable to affect them in the manner set out in section 6 of the Equality Act.

#### **6. Responsibility for the Disability Policy**

**6.1.** The Head of Student & Staff Services is responsible for the implementation and operational review of this policy. The policy is reviewed annually.

**6.2.** The Disability Advisor & Mentor has delegated authority to make minor changes to Policy wording and content. Such changes will be reported to the Head of Student & Staff Services.

**6.3.** Major changes to the policy, such as significant content changes, changes to responsibilities, policy application or changes resulting from new legislation, must be approved directly by the Executive Committee.

#### **7. Disclosure**

- 7.1. Applicants are strongly encouraged to disclose their disability to the ICMP as early as possible in the application process and as much information as possible should be provided in respect of the nature of the condition and how it affects the applicant.
- 7.2. If a disability is disclosed in the initial application form, a Support Needs Questionnaire will be sent to the student requesting details of their disability. ICMP will require medical evidence of the disability or evidence from an appropriately trained relevant expert in order to fully consider the request for adjustments and to determine whether ICMP is able to support the student in their studies.
- 7.3. Should the student fail to provide the relevant information when requested ICMP may not be able to assess what adjustments are required or put those adjustments in place, and entry may be deferred.

## **8. Confidentiality**

- 8.1. Students can seek confidential advice and support from the Disability Advisor & Mentor at any point.
- 8.2. Applicants and students have the right to request their disability is kept confidential. Where absolute or limited confidentiality has been requested, ICMP may not be able to make adjustments that would otherwise be reasonable, particularly in relation to disabilities that are hidden and complex or where the related needs are specific to the individual.
- 8.3. Where confidentiality has not been requested, ICMP will manage the process of information sharing and will treat all personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998); access to disability-related information will be provided on a need to know basis only, in order for reasonable adjustments to be implemented.
- 8.4. If a student chooses to disclose a disability informally to a tutor or any other member of staff (Admissions Officer, Personal Tutor, Programme Leader), then by law, the ICMP is deemed to know about that student's disability. Levels of confidentiality should be negotiated with the student and they should be encouraged to explore reasonable adjustments, but at the very least the disclosure should be documented with the Disability Advisor & Mentor.
- 8.5. Where a student is on an exchange to another institution or on another placement as part of their degree programme, relevant information may be shared with the consent of the student to ensure reasonable adjustment will be provided at the host institution/organization and to ensure no disadvantage is experienced by students engaged on exchanges and placements.

## **9. Assessment of Need**

- 9.1. Any student requiring an assessment of support needs is referred to the Disability Advisor & Mentor. This may involve a referral to an independent assessor to prepare a Study Needs Assessment Report. Applicants may be invited to discuss support requirements with the Disability Advisor, Wellbeing Team and the relevant Programme Leader responsible for their course. The Disability Advisor & Mentor will make recommendations relating to any support needs that can be met. These can include:
  - arranging for non-medical help (i.e. specialist tutors, mentors, note takers, transcription support)
  - recommendations regarding examination arrangements
  - advice about physical access to courses
  - advice to staff regarding disability awareness

- advice about the Disabled Students Allowance
  - Advice on producing material in alternative formats.
- 9.2. All disabled students have the opportunity to have their needs clearly stated and a Support Agreement drawn up between them and the ICMP.
  - 9.3. Assistance and Information on the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) application process will be provided.
  - 9.4. In circumstances where a disabled student has complex needs and/or the ICMP is being asked to make an adjustment and hence provide the funding for it, ICMP may refer the case to the Executive Committee to ascertain the adjustments that are reasonable in the specific circumstances and the extent to which the ICMP is reasonably able to support the student.
  - 9.5. Where ICMP is asked to fund adjustments, decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis in the context of ICMP's overall financial resources.

## **10. Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study Policy**

- 10.1. The Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study policy outlines the steps that ICMP will follow when concerns are raised about the fitness to study of one of its students. It is intended as a supportive procedure which can be used by staff when a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour is having a detrimental impact on their ability to progress academically and function at ICMP. In addition, the procedure should be used for any student whose ability to cope with student life, to study or progress on their course is compromised as the result of their health, wellbeing or a disability. Any Student who is absent due to serious health issues (including mental health) or injury is requested to attend a 'Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study' meeting.

## **11.**

### **11.1.**

## **12. Assessment and Examinations**

- 12.1. The ICMP has a policy of providing Special assessment and examination arrangements, where necessary, for disabled students. Any adjustments required will be included in the Support Agreement
- 12.2. Students requiring adjustments to be made prior to taking unseen examinations, must make this situation known at least one month prior to the date of the examination.

## **13. Measures for Monitoring the support needs of disabled students. .**

- 13.1. The Admissions Panel is responsible for matters relating to equality of opportunity in student recruitment and admissions, for developing policies which meet legislation and best practice, for monitoring the impact of these policies on different minority groups, and for providing relevant student recruitment and admissions statistics.
- 13.2. The Head of Student & Staff Services & Head of Studies are responsible for matters relating to equality of opportunity in learning, teaching and assessment, for developing policies which meet legislation and best practice, for monitoring the impact of these policies on different minority groups, and for providing relevant student statistics.
- 13.3. The Action Plan, which is reviewed quarterly by the Wellbeing Team, monitors the effectiveness of all provision for disabled students, evaluates progress and identifies opportunities for improvements.

- 13.4. Statistical Data on Disability is monitored annually as part of the Quarterly Business Review (QBR).
- 13.5. The students' Support Agreement is reviewed annually.
- 13.6. Disabled students will be asked to provide feedback and contribute ideas/ suggestions which will contribute to the development of support at the ICMP.

**14. Continuing Professional Development**

- 14.1. The ICMP is committed to ensuring that all teaching and support staff are appropriately trained and that teaching practice/strategies are inclusive. The ICMP will provide information for staff in a range of media, including printed information leaflets (ADHD, Dyslexia, etc.) and will ensure that training is available on a regular basis (mental health, dyslexia etc.)
- 14.2. Information and training is reviewed and provided at the beginning of the academic year in response to the needs of the students.