

## Building adjustments and access

### Available Support

The Conservation & Buildings team within Estates Services is responsible for repairing and maintaining the University's buildings (as independent institutions, colleges make their own provision). This includes making adjustments and alterations to improve accessibility for staff, students and visitors with disabilities.

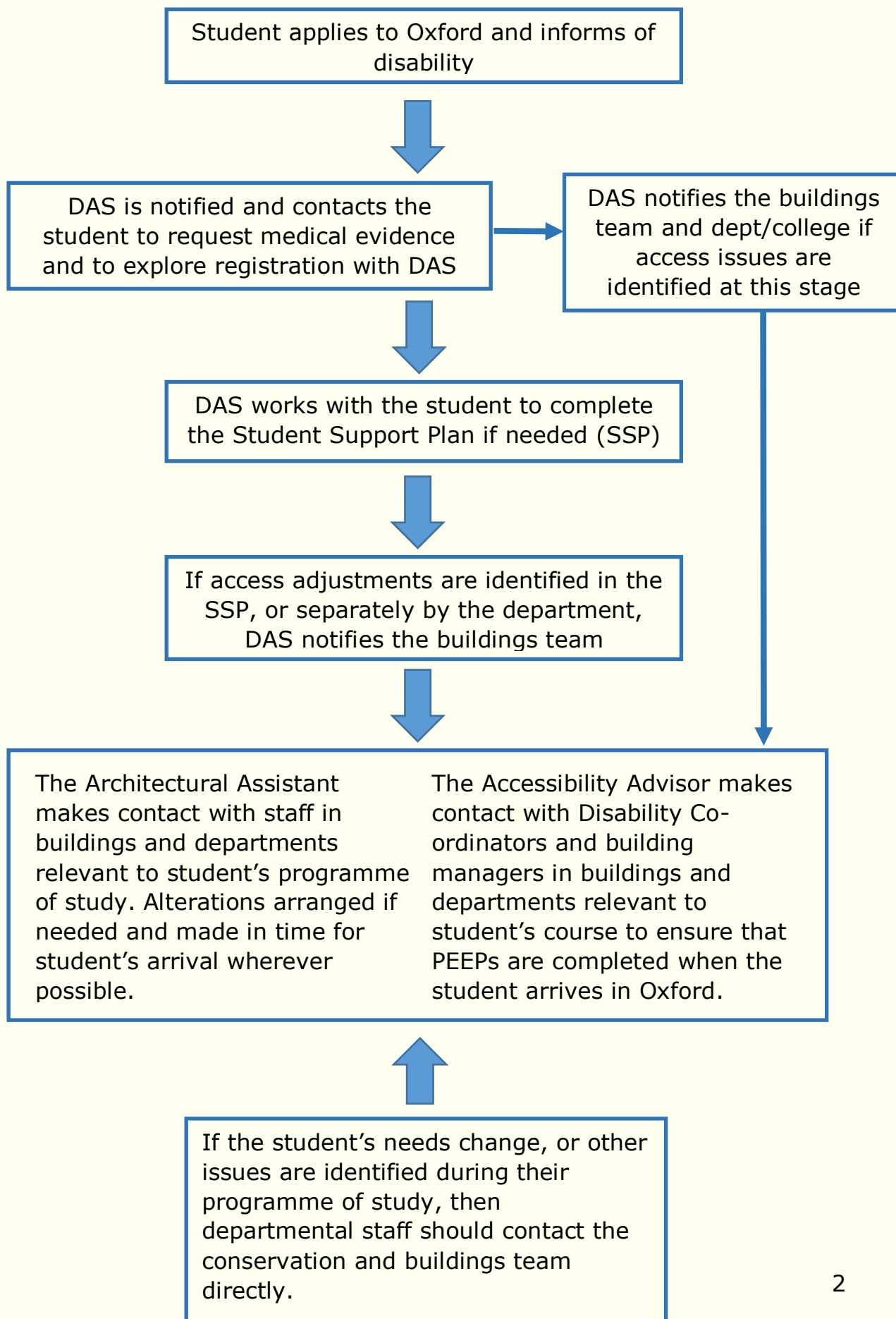
The two key contacts in the team are:

- Architectural Assistant (Accessibility), currently Kevin Green ([kevin.green@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:kevin.green@admin.ox.ac.uk)). The Architectural Assistant is responsible for Disability Minor Works across the University both in response to individual student needs and anticipatory adjustments. This might include, for example, the provision of hearing support systems, the automation of doors, and installation of platform lifts or wheelchair accessible WCs.
- Accessibility Advisor, currently Ben Smith ([benjamin.smith@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:benjamin.smith@admin.ox.ac.uk)). The Accessibility Advisor is responsible for:
  - Maintaining the University's online [Access Guide](#) which contains detailed and searchable access information about many buildings across the University;
  - Auditing buildings across the University Estate for inclusion in the Access Guide;
  - Providing advice to departments on access improvements;
  - Working with architects and project managers to ensure that new buildings and major refurbishments are designed to be as inclusive and accessible as possible.

### University Access Guide

Many buildings across the University Estate are already in the [Access Guide](#), including libraries, museums, Student Services as well as departmental and teaching buildings. Whilst not yet comprehensive, updated and additional access information is being added to the guide, and work is underway on a Conference of Colleges project to include all of the colleges. If a department's buildings are not included in the guide, or the information there is not based on a full audit, the Accessibility Advisor can be contacted to arrange this (there is likely to be a waiting list).

## Access improvements process



Kevin and Ben work closely with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) to ensure that reasonable adjustments relating to access in and around buildings are made for disabled students.

## **Anticipatory access improvements**

Departments wishing to review the accessibility of their buildings, or who are considering minor or major projects to improve accessibility, should contact the Architectural Assistant or the Accessibility Advisor for an informal discussion in the first instance.

Minor works to improve accessibility across the University are managed by the Architectural Assistant, and a number of examples are given below. Major refurbishments, alterations and extensions of existing buildings are usually managed by the [Capital Projects team](#).

Disability Leads and Disability Coordinators may find the [University's Disability Access Philosophy Document](#) useful. It is primarily used to guide design teams working on building projects for the University, but provides an important reference point for those reviewing access arrangements in their own unit's buildings.

## **Examples of minor works to improve accessibility**



21 Banbury Road external platform lift – as the main entrance is stepped, the lift was installed to enable wheelchair users to get into the building.

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28 Norham Gardens accessible WC refurbishment – the old facilities were not up to modern standards and some people would have struggled to use the WC independently. The location and positioning of rails, WC and sink is crucial to enable wheelchair users to manoeuvre and use the space effectively.

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Law Library portable loop – a portable induction loop at the information desk was provided to enable hearing aid users to communicate with library staff.

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Martin Wood lecture theatre automated door – an existing door was automated to enable wheelchair users to access the building.



Music Faculty internal platform lift – before the lift was installed wheelchair users and people unable to use stairs could not access the upper floors of the building.



Nissan Institute automated doors – existing doors were automated to enable wheelchair users to access the library.



History Faculty (Old Boys High School) hearing support system – an infrared hearing support system was provided in the lecture theatre to

enable both hearing aid users, and hearing impaired people without hearing aids, to hear lectures. This is a portable system which the department can use in other rooms as needed.

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Ruskin School of Art (and adjoining Examination Schools) access ramp – the main entrances to both buildings are stepped. The ramp enables wheelchair users to access both buildings.

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Sherrington Building temporary access ramp – a temporary ramp was constructed while building work is being carried out in the area. This enables wheelchair users to access the building. Once the building work is completed a permanent ramp will be constructed.

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15 Norham Gardens – contrasting step edgings were painted to enable people with visual impairments to use the steps independently and safely.