

Sharing disability-related information: who to share with and how, and the 'need to know' principle

With whom should you share disability-related information?

This must be limited to individuals within the collegiate university who are directly concerned with teaching or supporting students with disabilities. If there is a need to share this information with individuals not directly involved in providing support this must be expressly agreed with the student and evidenced in writing. The [consent to share information form](#) sets out the principles used in sharing information about disability.

How should the Student Support Plan be shared?

DAS obtains explicit consent from students before circulating the SSP, if any restrictions have been placed on sharing these will be highlighted prominently within the document. Disability Coordinators should share information in the SSP with all staff who will need to take action to ensure that appropriate adjustments are put in place, as this is the stated wish of the student. This may include staff at other colleges and departments (where the student is taught at more than one college or if they are in a Joint Honours School). Those who may need to know include:

- Those responsible for teaching and/or supervising the student:
 - Senior Tutor
 - Personal/Organising Tutor
 - Tutor for Graduates
 - Module/subject/course tutors
 - Lecturers
 - Supervisor
 - Director for Graduates Studies
- Other relevant staff providing support or services:
 - Administrative staff
 - Library staff
 - Porters/Lodge staff

- Welfare team, including College Nurse, Chaplain, Junior Deans etc

Once the SSP has been approved by the student, it will be made available in the student's record on eVision as a pdf document. The student, the disability coordinators in the department and college will receive an email letting them know it is available to them. Where applicable, the Disability Librarian, Access Officer and the Examinations Schools will also receive a copy.

Disability Coordinators then circulate the SSP to other staff within the department or college who need to know (respecting any preferences expressed by the student in the SSP). Where the whole SSP is being shared, this should be done via e-Vision. The Disability Coordinator should continue revising sharing rights on the SSP throughout the student's course, as they take new papers and are taught by different staff. Students are able to see on e-Vision who their SSP is currently being shared with, so they are fully informed about who has access to their information.

Disability Coordinators should share the SSP with subject tutors in colleges and convenors of papers in faculties and departments. It is the tutor and convenor's responsibility to ensure that all lecturers and tutors the student is taught by each term are aware of the adjustments that need to be made in good time, and the Disability Coordinator should remind them of this responsibility. In tutorial and seminar situations, it will normally be appropriate for the tutor to receive the full SSP text, in order that they can fully understand the impact the student's impairment has on their study and what may be helpful for them. For lecturers, it is often sufficient for them to know that there are individual/s who need a given adjustment attending a lecture. Restricting the detail given is in accordance with the principle to limit the information to be shared on each occasion to the minimum necessary for effective provision.

Students may wish to share information with their tutor or lecturer about what they find helpful or what they find difficult in study and learning contexts, but this is their choice and this should not be necessary in order to ensure an effective level of support.

Maintaining Confidentiality and a Professional Approach

Discuss student cases with great care. If seeking advice about how to help a student from a colleague you could work anonymously. Avoid casual discussion of student cases at all times. Any email correspondence should be professional, relevant and respectful of the sensitive nature of the disability and should have confidential in the subject line. You should remind those you share information with about their responsibilities in regard to student confidentiality and data protection, in line with the [University's data protection policy](#).

Note that all written records could be disclosed to the corresponding student should they submit a subject access request – which is a statutory right. All records about that student will become part of the student's legal record of their interactions with the University and could be within the scope of disclosure. Therefore it is important that you keep accurate and well organised records and ensure that your communications always remain professional.

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Further information

- [University information security website](#)
- [University Policy on Data Protection](#)
- [For students: Use of student personal data](#)
- [How the University implements the General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#)
- [Six key principles of data privacy](#)