SCHOOL OF POLITICS & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Statement on Supporting students with disabilities

The School of Politics and International Relations is committed in its support of all students, including those with a disability. We provide prospective and current students registered with a disability with clear and comprehensive information that sets out the support that is available to them.

We expect students to familiarise themselves with this information and take up all the support opportunities on offer, where applicable, so as to enable them to make the most of their time at University and achieve to their full potential. We also encourage students to actively seek out the answers to any questions they may have about the support we provide, and be partners with us in this enterprise.

The support the University provides follows the ‘student journey’, from enquiry and application through to enrolment, on-programme support (reasonable adjustments in respect of learning and teaching and assessment), through to completion of studies and graduation. The School of Politics and International Relations is central to the provision of this support, and we will work together with disabled students, and central support services, to seek to ensure that they are supported appropriately throughout their time at University. If any student with a disability has any concerns that their needs are not being met then we encourage them to raise their concerns straight away with the School.

Details about the support the University offers to students with disabilities through Inclusive Learning Plans (ILP) (as well as other information about policies relevant to disability) is here: http://www.kent.ac.uk/studentsupport/policies/policies_and_procedures.html

If you need more information, either because you want to seek an ILP, or have one and want to talk about it, contact Sara Witchell, Student Support Manager, School of Politics and International Relations.

THE STUDENT JOURNEY AND SCHOOL OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Information for Applicants

We ensure that all applicants to the School are made aware of the systems in the University that support disabled students, through:

1) The internet site for the School (http://www.kent.ac.uk/politics/) has a clearly visible link to student support, which takes students to our Student Support website (http://www.kent.ac.uk/politics/support/index.html) which lists services available to students and also provides links to University support pages.; and

2) All applicants receiving an offer from Kent are sent a hard copy Information Pack. This includes information about Student Support.

3) When applicants book for a Visit Day online, information is provided about how to arrange a meeting with Student Support on the day
5) When an applicant registers for a Visit Day online, via the Applicant Portal, they can inform us about a disability they (or their guest/s) may have. This is then communicated to the School so that we can make any necessary arrangements for their visit (access to buildings, interpreter etc.) (See http://www.kent.ac.uk/courses/visit/ucas/visit-day-faq.html)

**Open Days and Visit Days**

When prospective students book to come to visit the University / Politics & International Relations on visit days we let them know in advance that they can tell us if they have a disability. Students who declare that they have a disability are asked whether they would like to meet the School’s Student Support Manager, and/or a member of staff from the Student Support and Wellbeing Service during their visit, to discuss how the University supports disabled students, and in particular how the ILP system works.

On Open Days, we ensure that:

1) All talks given by Staff to prospective students address the University’s system of support for disabled students. Information regarding the support services available are provided on a powerpoint slide during Open Day talks, which also provides the email address of the School’s Student Support Manager should they wish to contact the School to discuss this further.

2) Politics & International Relations staff on the Open Day stand are aware that Student Support and Wellbeing also have a stand and signpost interested visitors over there;

**School module guides, handbooks and other sources of information**

The opening statement above, and further details regarding the Student Support and Wellbeing Service and other University Support Services, is included in our School Handbooks (both Undergraduate and Postgraduate). The full version of this document is available on our PASS webpages, on the Politics & IR website. (http://www.kent.ac.uk/politics/support/index.html)

**Communication in relation to students with ILPs**

All students with ILPs have a designated person in Politics & IR as their point of contact: Sara Witchell, the School’s Student Support Manager. Where students have an ILP, Sara Witchell will ensure that the content of the ILP is disseminated to all relevant teaching staff for information, in a fully confidential manner.

**Agreement and Implementation of ILPs**

While it is up to individual students to approach the Student Support & Wellbeing Service regarding obtaining an ILP, the School of Politics & International Relations works to ensure all students in the School are fully aware of the support available to them. Information is disseminated as part of Induction week, and information/links re. University Support Services, is regularly included in School newsletters to students through the academic year to students at all stages. Where students have an ILP, when it is generated for the first time they are invited to meet with Sara Witchell to have a full discussion about the content of the ILP, how the ILP will be implemented, and the student’s responsibilities. Aspects of general policy in the School of Politics & IR that students with ILPs will be appraised of include:

- being able to use sound recording equipment in all lectures to record what the lecturer says.

NB. Students must ask lecturers for permission to do this, at the start of each module.
- Lecture slides will be available via Moodle, at least one day prior to each lecture.
- Module reading lists, and weekly readings, are identified in the module outline, which is available online (via Moodle) and is given in paper format to students at the start of each module. It should also be noted that any handouts given to students, will meet with ILP requirements as per the School Policy regarding ILP’s.

**Submission and Assessment of Assignments**

Issues around extensions/concessions, both the Schools’ general policy and any special allowances generated via an ILP, are discussed individually with students by Sara Witchell. Where agreed in a student’s ILP, assignments will be marked in accordance with any reasonable adjustment for their disability. Module convenors/seminar leaders who will be marking individual pieces of work, will have access to ILP’s, so as to be able to take account of these adjustments.

**Arrangements for in-class assessments and examinations**

The School recognises and has embedded the expectations of current disability equality legislation, and supports students with a declared disability or special educational need in its teaching. When writing module specifications, module convenors are asked to consider how the learning and teaching methods, including the assessment, will affect all students. Within each module we will make reasonable adjustments wherever necessary, including additional or substitute materials, teaching modes or assessment methods for students who have declared and discussed their learning support needs. Arrangements for students with declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the University’s Student Support and Wellbeing Service, and specialist support will be provided where needed.

In addition, the School always ensures that where a student has an ILP indicating the need for special arrangements for in-class assessments. We make adjustments on an individual basis through consultation with the module convenor and the student.

**Staff Development**

The School is committed to ensuring that all staff are made aware of equality legislation, and their role and responsibilities in relation to the law and University policy and procedures. In addition the School seeks to ensure that its staff approach disability in a positive manner, are fully supportive of disabled students, and are mindful of their disability needs and agreed reasonable adjustments. In addition, staff directly involved in liaison with the Student Support and Wellbeing Service, and students with ILP’s, will have attended/completed all necessary staff development and training events in respect of student disability.

The School will ensure that these commitments are made widely known to all staff, and included in new staff induction (including that provided for sessional and part-time staff, Assistant Lecturers). This is communicated to students by appropriate means (handbooks and School webpages).

**Raising Concerns and Making complaints**

Students (not only those with disability) are given the message from Welcome week onwards, through module guides, School Handbooks, School Newsletters and the website, that they should seek advice and help in the first place via the Student Support Manager, Sara Witchell, if they feel they are running into difficulties. Where students have a disability, they are additionally encouraged through these channels and those described above, to get in touch with Sara Witchell.
Where issues cannot be resolved informally, students are made aware of, and referred to the School/University complaints procedures and advised of appropriate sources of support (eg. Kent Union Advice Centre) should they wish to take this route.