

THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES: POSTGRADUATES

The University has always sought to approach the issue of admission of applicants with special needs and disabilities in an equitable and positive way, but in any case the very recent extension of the disability discrimination legislation now makes it very difficult for Universities to legally deny admission on the basis of disability. There will still remain certain individual cases where admission of particular applicants (either in general, or to particular programmes) would be irresponsible, but generally the onus is on the HE provider to resolve practical and pedagogic obstacles to study for applicants with special needs or disabilities.

Therefore the general emphasis of the University's procedures are:

- Initially to consider each applicant purely on academic grounds;
- If there is an academic case for making an offer, then to consider the applicant's specific needs and to ascertain whether the University can meet those needs, and whether we can justify not admitting the applicant solely on the basis of their disability.

In the great majority of cases the University will already have the capacity to deal with the special need, or it will be possible to rectify this shortfall, therefore allowing the offer to be made (even if additional information has to be sought afterwards). In some cases, however, there will be genuine doubt (often involving inadequate information) and the purpose of our special needs procedure *prior* to offer-making is to provide clarification, expeditiously, in these limited numbers of cases.

Notification of Health and Special needs:

Applicants are asked to indicate in Section G Health of the Postgraduate Application Form whether they are suffering, or have suffered, from ill health, either physically or psychologically and if so to provide details. Applicants are also asked to indicate in Section H Special Needs of the Postgraduate Application Form whether they have a disability and if so to provide details including any special requirements that they may have for example in relation to study needs or accommodation.

Initial Postgraduate Office (Admissions) Checks:

Upon receipt of the Postgraduate Application Form, the Postgraduate Office (Admissions) will attach a blue 'Special Needs' sticker to the form which highlights that the applicant has a health or special need that needs to be

investigated and that an offer of a place should not be made until that investigation has been concluded.

The Postgraduate Office (Admissions) will also complete a Health/Special Needs Pro-Forma providing the applicant's name, address, applicant number and programme for which the applicant has applied. The Pro-Forma includes two sections on Health and Special Needs and the Postgraduate Office (Admissions) completes these sections by including verbatim everything the applicant has written. Any supplementary information provided by the applicant is attached to the Pro-Forma. The Pro-Forma is sent to the Student Support Unit (SSU) for consideration.

Student Support Unit:

The SSU assess each applicant initially on the basis of the Pro-Forma that has been completed by the Postgraduate Office (Admissions)

There are a number of Health and Special Needs that will not cause a problem for the University and which do not require any special facilities. In these cases, the SSU informs the Postgraduate Office (Admissions) that offers can be made without recourse to the full special needs procedures (as outlined in 12.5 below). In these cases the SSU will write to the applicant with further information about the Unit and the support they can provide.

The main categories which can in most cases be excluded from the Special Needs procedures and offers made without delay are as follows:

Dyslexia – The University should be able to support applicants with specific learning difficulties including ADHD, Dysgraphia, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dystonia.

Mental Health Difficulties – The SSU advise that these applicants should be made an offer and SSU will follow up the application afterwards.

Unseen Disability – This category covers a large range of possible special needs and disabilities. The list 12.8 is the range of special needs/disabilities which come under this category but which the SSU currently advise that offers can be made without delay.

Special Needs Procedures:

There are a number of Health and Special Needs that may cause a problem for the University and might require special facilities. In these cases, the SSU informs the Postgraduate Office (Admissions) that further action is required and that no offer of a place should be made until further investigations have been undertaken.

The main categories which must be included under the Special Needs procedures are as follows:

- **Blind/partially sighted**
- **Deaf/Hard of Hearing**
- **Wheelchair User/Mobility Difficulties**
- **Need Personal Care or Assistance**
- **Two or More of the Above Disabilities/Special Needs**
- **Disability Not listed**

In all such cases, the Disability Co-ordinator will contact the applicant. If it is necessary to arrange an interview, this will be organised by the Disability Co-ordinator (in consultation with the Postgraduate Office (Admissions) and relevant academic unit).

If upon investigation it is felt that there are no special facilities required and the University can cope with the applicant's particular needs, then the Disability Co-ordinator will indicate to the Postgraduate Office (Admissions) that the offer can proceed.

In more complex cases, requiring the applicant to visit the University, the SSU will write to the applicant to make explicit that a visit needs to take place prior to any final decision being processed. The SSU will arrange this visit and SSU will organise for a small team of relevant officers (including a member of SSU, the relevant Selector/GRC Director, and representatives from other appropriate areas, such as the Library, Housing) to meet with the applicant to ensure that the University can meet his/her needs. After the meeting, SSU are responsible for ensuring that all those present reach a final decision and if everyone agrees that any needs can be met, the SSU will then notify the Postgraduate Office (Admissions) that the offer can proceed.

Lack of Information:

If an applicant fails to respond to requests for further information from the SSU about a declared Special Need/disability, and also fails to respond to chase letters/emails, then the SSU will pass the application back to the Postgraduate Office (Admissions). The Postgraduate Office (Admissions) will then write to the applicant on the assumption that the failure to respond to letters indicates the applicant is no longer interested in the University. The applicant will be told that the University will withdraw his/her application if they do not respond and will be given a deadline for doing so. If this still fails to elicit a reply the application will be withdrawn.

Student Support Unit Contacts:

The main contact details for the SSU are:

☎ (01273) (87)7466 / E-mail: studentsupport@admin.susx.ac.uk

Unseen Disability

The SSU have advised that any of the following conditions need not be subject to the Special Needs Procedures:

Adrenal Hyperplasia
Allergies
Asthma
Back problems (refer if reference to mobility)
Bladder problems
Bronchitis
Cancer (refer if current)
Cerebral Palsy mild (refer if not described as mild)
Coeliac Disease
Colour Blindness
Crohns Disease
Cystic Fibrosis
Dermatological problems
Diabetes
Duodenal Ulcer
Deep Vein Thrombosis (if mobility affected refer to SSU)
Dystonic hand cramp
Epilepsy
Eczema
Endometriosis
Esophagitis
Fracture / Dislocation (refer of reference to mobility)
G6PD deficiency
Gastritis
Gender reassignment
Glandular Fever (refer if current)
Haemophilia
Hay Fever
High Blood Pressure
HIV positive
Hyperhidrosis
Hypertension
Hysterectomy
Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
Lyme Disease
Malaria
Migraines / headaches
Mononucleosis
Nephrotic Syndrome
Pneumonia
Polio (refer if reference to mobility)
Psoriasis
Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI)
Rhinitis
Shingles
Shoulder Injury
Sickle Cell Anaemia
Stammer
Tendonitis

Thalassanaemia
Thyroid Conditions
Ulcerative Colitus
Wrist / Hand damage
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