



European School
of Osteopathy

**Student Equality, Disability and Additional Needs Policy
March 2021**

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1.0 Equality

The European School of Osteopathy (ESO) is committed to treating all students fairly. We do not discriminate on grounds of , marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, age, sexual orientation, disability, gender reassignment, sex or pregnancy and maternity (protected characteristics) and we welcome students from a variety of backgrounds. The ESO believes that equality of opportunity is key to achieving its mission in providing high quality undergraduate and postgraduate education, clinical care to the community and osteopathic research.

The ESO recognises its responsibilities to provide guidance and training for both students and staff. The ESO will take steps to encourage staff, students and visitors to:

- Treat others with respect at all times
- Actively discourage discriminatory behaviour or practise
- Participate in training and learning opportunities that would enable them to adopt good practice.

The ESO will raise awareness of this statement and its supporting policies to staff and students. It will operate a fair, open and transparent procedure for the recruitment of students, student assessment, progression and attainment of awards.

Students have a responsibility to treat all members of the ESO's community with dignity and respect their rights and beliefs. They should also respond positively to individual differences. This applies to all forms of communication, verbal and non-verbal. Students are encouraged to challenge or report incidents of discrimination, harassment and bullying.

If you have any specific needs, please speak to the Admissions Department as early as possible, The Student Welfare Officer will contact you to discuss your requirements so appropriate arrangements can be made.

2.0 Disability

All public authorities, including higher education institutions, have a duty to promote disability equality throughout the organisation. These duties cover recruitment, retention and progression of disabled students, as well as making welcome other members of the community who may use the ESO.

A person with a disability is defined by the Equality Act 2020 as "someone with a physical or mental condition that has a substantial and long term impact on their ability to do normal day-to-day activities."

It is important to remember that disability covers many areas including long-term illness, specific learning disabilities (such as dyslexia, dyscalculia), visual impairment and mental health conditions. It includes people with cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis, heart conditions or a significant mobility difficulty. It also covers those with hidden disabilities, such as diabetes, epilepsy, and other learning differences.

The legislation sets out general and specific duties. The general duty is that the education facility must work to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote equal opportunities for disabled people. The ESO must also promote positive attitudes shown by ESO staff and the wider academic faculty to encourage the participation of people with disabilities and/or impairments in the life of the ESO.

The ESO should be notified if a student has any issues or concerns relating to their disability and they are advised to inform the Student Welfare Officer as soon as they identify a concern. The Student Welfare Officer will co-ordinate with the other departments within the School to identify any additional support and resources available to them. The ESO will support them where appropriate, to enable them to achieve full potential within their studies and become a practising osteopath.

All students who have identified on their UCAS form that they have a learning disability, such as dyslexia,

will need to provide evidence to the Student Welfare Officer. Specific requirements for written and practical assessments will be discussed and agreed. Reasonable adjustments can be made to the exam but every student will still be required to meet the learning outcomes and assessment criteria. The Student Welfare Officer will confirm the agreed arrangements with the Academic Registrar.

The Student Welfare Officer is also able to offer advice on applying for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) and is therefore able to ensure that any needs are identified and met by the School.

To ensure that we are able to provide the best level of support, students with disabilities are asked to meet with the Student Welfare Officer on a regular basis to ensure that the supportive measures put in place are working. We are aware that needs may change over time.

Please be assured that confidentiality is maintained at all times, for all students. If the Student Welfare Officer considers that other members of the School's faculty and/or staff need to be made aware of a particular situation, consent will be gained before details are disseminated to the relevant person.

3.0 Specific details on exams (practical exams, written exams and coursework)

3.1 Practical and Written Exams:

The ESO is committed to fair and equal assessment of our qualifications. We expect all learners, regardless of protected characteristic to have equal and fair access to all the assessments we provide. Therefore we recognise that in some cases there will be a need for some learners to have access to a range of reasonable adjustments in order to meet their individual needs and ensure fair access to the assessments they are undertaking.

Explanation of reasonable adjustment

A reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the learner at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment situation. The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) defines 'reasonable adjustments' as: "Reasonable is what most people would agree is fair and sensible, when they think carefully about it. Adjustment means you are changing something". "Reasonable adjustments' are about responding sensitively to individual cases by taking account of the circumstances without necessarily setting precedents.

Reasonable adjustments may involve:

- changing usual assessment arrangements
- adapting assessment materials
- providing assistance during assessments;
- re-organising the assessment physical environment
- changing or adapting the assessment method
- using assistive technology.

The Student Welfare Officer (SWO) formally records the student's disability and reasonable adjustments. The SWO liaises with the student, internal and external staff to disclose and manage the individual disability and/or the recommended reasonable adjustments. Disability and reasonable adjustments could be disclosed at any stage from application to graduation and may be short or long term.

It is the student's right not to disclose a disability or access reasonable adjustments but retrospective marking is not possible if a student does not declare until a later stage in their studies.

Where circumstances result in delays between the initial screening and formal diagnostic assessment, an interim support package will be put in place in order to mitigate any disadvantage to the student. The interim support package may include appropriate reasonable adjustments and signposting of academic and pastoral support.

Reasonable adjustments must be approved by the Academic Registrar and set in place prior to assessment commencing. The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other learners. It is important to note that not all adjustments will be reasonable, permissible or practical in particular situations. The learner may not need, nor be allowed the same adjustment for all assessments. Reasonable adjustments are recommended by the SWO based on advice from a medical professional and/or as the result of an 'assessment of need'. The 'assessment of need' is conducted by an external assessor funded by Student Finance England (SFE) or equivalent.

Please note that a reasonable adjustment must never affect the validity or reliability of assessment, influence the outcome of assessment or give the learner(s) in question an unfair assessment advantage.

Examples of reasonable adjustments as defined by the above categories are listed below:

- Allowing extra time, e.g. assignment extensions
- Using a different assessment location
- Use of coloured overlays, low vision aids, CCTV
- Use of assistive software
- Assessment material in large format or Braille
- Readers/scribes
- Practical assistants/transcribers/promoters
- Assessment material on coloured paper
- Use of ICT/responses using electronic devices.

Institutional responsibility

The recruitment process will include the ESO assessing each potential learner and making justifiable and professional judgments about the learner's potential to successfully complete the assessments and achieve the qualification. Such judgment must identify, where appropriate, the support that will be made available to the learner to facilitate access to the assessment. Where the recruitment process identifies that the learner may not be able to demonstrate attainment and thus gain achievement in all parts of assessment for the selected qualification, this must be communicated clearly to the learner.

The ESO will ensure that learners are aware of:

- the range of options available, including any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary, to enable the demonstration of attainment across all required assessment; and
- any restrictions on progression routes to the learner as a result of not achieving certain outcomes.

Applying reasonable adjustments

Reasonable Adjustments are the responsibility of the Institution. Reasonable adjustments are approved by the Academic Registrar before an assessment and are intended to allow attainment to be demonstrated. A learner does not have to be disabled (as defined by the Equality Act 2010) to qualify for reasonable adjustment; nor will every learner who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustment. Allowing reasonable adjustment is dependent upon how it will facilitate access for the learner. A reasonable adjustment is intended to allow access to assessment but can only be granted where the adjustment does not:

- affect the validity or reliability of the assessment;
- give the learner(s) in question an unfair advantage over other learners taking the same or similar assessment;
- influence the final outcome of the assessment decision.

This could include:

- learners who have a permanent disability or specific learning needs;
- learners who have a temporary disability, medical condition or learning needs;
- learners who are indisposed at the time of the assessment.

3.2 Coursework

Normally, students with learning disabilities do not get extra time for coursework. The coursework assessment outlines are published, on the Learning Zone, well in advance of the submission date. This provides a student with sufficient time to complete the coursework. However, should the need arise, they can apply for an extension. The application will be considered along with the supporting evidence.

The special demands of this highly 'hands-on' clinical course have to be considered. There is a Student Code of Conduct and Fitness to Practise Policy that applies to all students. These documents are on the ESO Learning Zone > Student News & Information. As a student of Buckinghamshire New University, they are able to access their Equal Opportunities Policy which is available on their website.

The ESO prides itself on its friendly, supportive, yet professional atmosphere. All our members of staff and faculty are approachable. Students with welfare issues should refer to the Student Handbook or contact the Student Welfare Officer. The School is aware that students have other responsibilities outside of the ESO that may or may not affect their ability to study. The School strives to provide appropriate supportive measures to help them fulfill their goal of being successful in the M.Ost and becoming an osteopath.

3.3 Adverse circumstances at the time of the assessment

A learner may be eligible for extenuating circumstances if:

- Their performance in an assessment is affected by circumstances beyond the control of the learner, e.g. recent personal illness, accident, bereavement, serious disturbance during the assessment;
- The alternative assessment arrangements which were agreed in advance of the assessment proved inappropriate or inadequate;
- Any part of an assessment has been missed due to circumstances beyond the control of the learner.

Applying for extenuating circumstances

All requests for extenuating circumstances must be submitted to Academic Registry in writing in the three weeks prior to an exam / submission deadline.

All applications for extenuating circumstances can only be made on a case-by-case basis and thus separate applications must be made for each learner and for each exam.

Learners may apply for extenuating circumstances during or after an assessment but may not apply in the case of a permanent disability or learning difficulty.

Learners need to submit evidence to the Academic Registrar to support their request for extenuating circumstances. This may include medical evidence or a statement from the invigilator or any other appropriate information.

4.0 Review of Student Equality and Disability Statement

To ensure that this statement remains current with government legislation and the changes within osteopathic education, and the wider field of higher education, it will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Student Attendance and Support Committee or as legislation changes.

5.0 Useful Contact Details

Role	Name	Telephone	Email	Location
Student Welfare Officer	Jacqui White	01622 671558 Ext: 222	jacquiwhite@eso.ac.uk	Boxley House
Academic Registrar	Antony Charles	01622 671558 Ext	academicregistry@eso.ac.uk	Boxley House
Head of Quality	Sue Kendall-Seatter	01622 671558 Ext	Suekendall-seatter@eso.ac.uk	Boxley House

6.0 Useful links

Alcoholics anonymous: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

British Dyslexia Association: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk

Cancer: www.macmillan.org.uk

Eating Disorders: www.b-eat.co.uk

Epilepsy: www.epilepsysociety.org.uk

General Health enquiries: www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Meningitis: www.meningitis.org.uk

Mental Health advice: www.maidstone-mind.org

Self-Injury: www.lifesigns.org.uk

STDs & contraception advice: www.brook.org.uk

7.0 Summary

- 7.1 Faculty, students and visitors are expected to treat others with respect at all times; actively discourage discriminatory behaviour or practise and participate in training delivered to enable you to adopt good practice in this area of equality.
- 7.2 Student Welfare Officer will contact any student who is identified as potentially having a learning disability for further testing and/or support.
- 7.3 Students who have identified on their UCAS form that they have learning disabilities will meet with the Student Welfare Officer and discuss specific requirements for practical and written assessments.
- 7.5 The Student Welfare Officer will confirm the agreed arrangements with the Academic Registrar.
- 7.6 The arrangements for exams are reviewed annually by the Academic Registrar and Student Welfare Officer.
- 7.7 The Student Welfare Officer is able to offer academic study skills advice to all students.

8.0 Auditing

Policy Name:	Student Equality and Disability Statement
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Owner:	Student Welfare Officer/Academic Registrar		
Approver:	Academic Board		
Audience:	Students		
Storage Location:	VLE –Student Matters		
Effective Date:	Jan 2021		
Review Date: <i>(unless other revisions are required prior to this date)</i>	Jan 2022		
Version:			
Equality Impact Assessment	Are there any implications for a protected characteristic group as defined by the Equality Act 2010 in this policy?		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Positive impact	<input type="checkbox"/> Negative impact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Neutral
Details: <i>(provide details if there is either a positive or negative impact)</i>			

9.0 Contact Us

Business Address

Boxley House
The Street
Boxley, Maidstone
Kent ME14 3DZ

Contact Information

Jacqui White
Student Welfare Officer
T: +44 1622 671558
E: jacquiwhite@eso.ac.uk

Further Information

If you have further questions regarding this document or require further information; please contact the Student Welfare Officer.