

ETS Policy and procedure for Applicants who have disclosed a disability

1. Purpose

1.1 To set out principles and procedures for the management of applications from potential students who have disclosed a disability, to ensure that such information is used to the benefit of the applicant.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy and procedure forms part of the wider ETS Admissions Policy, and refers to applicants applying to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at the Seminary, and to students enrolled on shorter non-validated programmes.

3. Definition

3.1 The Equality Act defines disability as: "A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day to day activities", where "substantial" means more than minor or trivial and "impairment" includes long term, fluctuating or progressive medical conditions.

4. Policy

4.1 The Seminary is committed to providing inclusive education which meets the specific needs of individual students. The Seminary welcomes applications from people with disabilities, health conditions and specific learning difficulties, and aims to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged due to a disability or impairment.

4.2 The policy sets out procedures for admissions staff to ensure that applications received from applicants who have disclosed that they have a disability are treated fairly. The procedures seek to ensure that applicants are considered on the basis of their aptitude, skills and ability in relation to their proposed programme of study.

4.3 Information regarding an applicant's disability is not used in the academic decision making process. It is used constructively to ensure that the Seminary can make necessary adjustments in order that a programme of study is accessible to the applicant.

PROCEDURE

5. Applicants who disclose a disability

5.1 All applicants to the Seminary are encouraged to disclose any disability that they may have in the relevant section of the relevant application form.

5.2 In addition, applicants are encouraged to provide information relating to their disability, and in particular whether additional facilities or support are likely to be required during the

course of their studies. This could be included in the application, or through direct contact with the Admissions staff.

5.5 Applicants who have not provided any information on disability, and who have not ticked any box, will be assumed not to have a disability, although that status would be changed should the applicant provide information regarding a disability later in the admissions process.

6. Selection Procedures

6.1 Selection to programme admission is carried out either by the Senate through two or more of their number.

6.2 The selection procedure for applications from students who have disclosed a disability is identical to the process for all other applications.

6.3 Applications are assessed against agreed selection criteria for each undergraduate degree programme or postgraduate programme.

6.4 Consideration of a disclosed disability and any required adjustments will take place separately, after the academic selection decision has been made.

6.5 All information provided by an applicant regarding his/her disability will be treated as confidential. It will be shared only for the purposes of making reasonable adjustments.

7. Reasonable adjustments

7.1 The Seminary is required to make reasonable adjustments to enable disabled students to access their studies and to ensure that they will not be disadvantaged during their time at the Seminary. The Seminary's Disability Officer is responsible for assessing a student's needs and ensuring that appropriate adjustments are put in place.

7.2 Admissions staff are not expected to assess what adjustments will need to be made in order for a disabled applicant to successfully access their studies at the Seminary. However, it may sometimes be necessary for admissions selectors to request additional information from an applicant about his/her disability, and to discuss this information with the Seminary's Disability Officer, after the selection process has been completed but *before* an offer is issued.

7.3 In many cases, applicants will have provided information about any specific support they will require for studying at the Seminary within their application. If the Admissions staff are uncertain as to whether the required support is available, they should contact the Seminary's Disability Officer. In most cases, this will lead to the offer being made as normal.

7.4 Where discussions with the Seminary's Disability Officer indicate that there may be difficulties in making the adjustments required to enable the applicant to access the programme, the Seminary's Disability Officer will facilitate further discussions with the applicant to try to resolve the issue. This will include a meeting with the applicant and the Vice Principal if that is possible. The application will be on hold during this process. If the decision is taken that the offer can be made, Admission staff will be informed and will be able make the offer as normal.

7.6 Very occasionally, it may not be possible to make the adjustments required to enable the applicant to undertake the programme applied for. In these situations, Admissions Staff and the Seminary's Disability Officer would work with the student to consider if a place on an appropriate alternative programme could be offered.

7.7 If no agreement can be reached regarding an alternative programme, and the Seminary decides that it cannot offer a place to the student, the applicant should be informed of this decision in writing by the Vice Principal or a nominated representative, and provided with reasons as to why no reasonable adjustments were possible.

7.8 In the event that the Seminary finds that it is unable to meet an applicant's support needs after the offer has been issued, it may in exceptional circumstances be necessary to withdraw the offer. In such cases the applicant will be informed of the reasons as to why no reasonable adjustments were possible. Whenever possible, the applicant should be involved in discussions to find a place on an appropriate alternative programme at ETS.

8. Interviews / Auditions / Portfolio inspection

8.1 If the selection procedure involves an interview, all applicants should be asked if they require any adjustments to be put in place and the admissions selector should make adequate arrangements to ensure that an applicant with additional needs is not disadvantaged. The Disability Officer can provide advice if required.

9. Reports and Communications

9.1 All communications will take place through the Seminary's Disability Officer who will in turn report to the Senate at each meeting. The Seminary's Disability Officer will ensure that each lecturer and Director of Studies is made aware of students who have disclosed a disability, so that support is provided for students with a wide variety of additional needs.

10. Feedback, Appeals and Complaints

10.1 Where the decision has been taken not to offer a place to an applicant, the applicant may request feedback and subsequently make an appeal or a complaint, using the process set out in the *ETS Policy and Procedure for Admissions Feedback, Appeals and Complaints*.

11. Monitoring

11.1 The Seminary's Disability Officer and the Senate will liaise as appropriate to keep admissions staff informed of any changes to legislation that might impact on disability issues.

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