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| Student Disability Service  Guidelines for ‘Named Contacts’ | scan-cropped2col-transback |

A Named Contact has been recommended as a Reasonable Adjustment for this student, to address disability-related barriers which are likely to affect their academic progress. NB: there are separate guidelines where students have Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder or Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

We ask that the School nominates a suitable person who is able to:

* advise the student on academic matters;
* check in regularly with the student to discuss progress on the course and ensure that they are on track.

Further details are listed below.

The nominated person’s name will appear in the student’s file.

**Please contact the Student Disability Service (SDS) as soon as possible, to let us know who has been nominated for the role**. This is vital as we may need to contact them soon. Contact details are at the end of this guidance.

**The role of the “Named Contact”:**

| **Role of the Named Contact** | **Why is this important?** |
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| **To act as part of the team within the institution, helping to keep the student on track with their studies.** | Regular liaison with staff of the Student Disability Service will help the Named Contact manage any issues or concerns arising if they are uncertain of appropriate actions to take. Practical help with understanding of course requirements and university routines is vital. |
| **To contact the student regularly**– **by email, or in person, weekly, or at least monthly, as agreed with the student.** | Due to difficulties this student experiences, they may find it especially difficult to organise their studies or to proactively communicate with staff and other students. Therefore regular contact/support can be vital in helping to reduce anxiety and ensure that the student stays on track with their studies. |
| **To listen to the student’s concerns non-judgementally and respond appropriately.** | Students can experience concern and confusion stemming from indirect or ambiguous communication. Offering reassurance, clarification or directing students to further supports can be vital. |
| **Ascertain how a student might be managing coursework and deadlines and monitoring progress** | Reminders of work due and dates for submission can greatly help to keep students ‘on track’. |
| **To provide support reliably, as agreed** | It is important to follow up actions within agreed timescales. |
| **To give some assistance with organisational skills and reminders of deadlines** | If the difficulties are thought to be significant, further mentoring or study skills support may be arranged through the SDS to help the student improve their skills |
| **To act as a familiar point of contact to whom the student can turn regarding course related concerns.** | This may mean clarifying questions regarding study expectations, wording of an assignment, management of group work, anxiety about fieldwork or practicalities regarding exam arrangements. |
| **To liaise with other academic staff, as necessary** | To help reduce sources of confusion and improve communication – multiple meetings with multiple people may prove very stressful or impractical for these students. |
| **To manage personal boundaries and signpost the students to other sources of support, as required.** | Staff should not feel overburdened by their interactions with students and further supports are available. The SDS advisors and the SDS website are useful sources of information in this regard. |
| **To help monitor attendance and course work submissions during the year.** | Students may not demonstrate obvious signs of stress but changes in behaviour may be noted and further advice sought within the university. |

**In terms of personal qualities, ideally someone who:**

* non-judgemental in their attitude
* has an awareness of disability related issues, or is willing to learn more about them.
* is calm and patient, and a clear communicator.
* is aware of managing boundaries and signposting students for other supports. The idea is NOT to overburden one individual unnecessarily, but to recommend other support as and when required. That said, a reduced mentoring load is often suggested as good practice to allow for the more regular contact and liaison work.

**Is training required to be effective in this role?**

* The Student Disability Service advisors are happy to be contacted to discuss any concerns and offer guidance as required.
* If necessary, training can also be offered by the Student Disability Service.

If you require this document in an alternative format please contact Student Disability Service

Student Disability Service

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<http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service>

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