

## **Disability Learning Support Consent and Disclosure Statement**

### **What is the legal context? Our duties under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010**

The University of Westminster handles the personal data you share with us in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The Act simultaneously deals with:

- Protecting your right to privacy
- Our need to process your data and share some of the information in order to achieve our legitimate aim. Our “legitimate aim” in this context is to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act 2010: putting in place reasonable adjustments and support so that you have full access to all the academic and non-academic opportunities that the University of Westminster offers all its students.

### **What does this mean in practice?**

We respect your right to confidentiality about your disability or Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD). You are in control of who you tell about your disability or SpLD and we will not pass on information without your permission.

When registering with us, you are given the opportunity to choose what name or terms we should use to refer to your disability when communicating with staff about your support. In addition, we ask you for the contact details of other people (i.e. parents, sibling, other professionals such as consultant or care coordinators) if you think it would be useful in implementing your support here at the University. Please note that we cannot disclose information about your life and support at university unless you have named them to us on the Reasonable Adjustments Document that you fill in when you registered your disability with the University.

We only disclose information to other members of staff when it is necessary for them to implement, improve or review your support and this is what you are asked to consent to when registering with us. You can decide not to allow us to do this but, in this case, the support we will be able to offer you will be

restricted to advice and guidance. Other reasonable adjustments or additional support will be highly unlikely.

Occasionally, we may also need to contact external professionals (such as GPs, Educational Psychologists, Community Mental health Team) to have more information or advice on the support to be implemented. We encourage you to consent to this and name the people we can communicate with as it allows better support, but you have the option of opting out of this. Finally, you may wish for us to talk to family or other professionals who have played a part in your support in the past and we have asked you to indicate the names and contact details of these individuals to us below.

### **How are university staff told about my disability or SpLD?**

We record information about your adjustments and support on a 'Reasonable Adjustment Form'. We pass parts of this form to relevant staff in the University, so they can put adjustments/or support in place. In the event that you have disclosed that you have a mental health condition and require specialist support, we may need to make a referral to the Mental Health adviser situated within the Counselling service.

### **Where is the information related to my disability stored?**

Once you register with Disability Learning Support, we store all information regarding your disability and support on an electronic file only accessible to Disability Learning Support. We keep it there as long as you are a student at the University of Westminster and a further 6 years afterwards as per the University's retention schedule. Once this time has elapsed, these records are destroyed securely.

### **What if I don't want anyone to know about my disability or SpLD?**

You may choose not to disclose you have a disability or SpLD outside of Disability Learning Support. However, this will restrict the University's ability to meet your needs, and it may not be possible to put any of your support in place. In this case, we may only be able to provide you with advice and information.

### **What is not shared with staff outside the Disability Learning Support team?**

Disclosing you have a disability or SpLD does not require **all** information to be shared outside of Disability Learning Support. You are given the option of choosing how we refer to your disability when involving university staff involved in the implementation of your support.

We never share medical documentation (e.g. DLS medical form, Doctors Letters, Consultants' letters) outside of the DLS team. If there were a need for university staff or external agencies to see these medical documents, we would always ask your explicit permission before passing those documents on.

### **Are their limits to the promise of confidentiality?**

There are instances when we may have to share information about you without seeking your prior consent:

- If there is a serious demonstrable risk to life (yours or others);
- If there is reasonable doubt that the particular instance involves criminal activity;
- the University has a mandatory requirement to inform relevant parties about students known to have conditions such as epilepsy on entry to the University. This is to ensure your well-being and to avoid compromising the safety of others.

In those very rare cases, we may share information with any staff or agencies involved in keeping you safe or with the Police when criminal activity is involved.

### **What if I change my mind and what if the information about my disability needs updating?**

You can make changes to the information on your consent form at any point during your course. You can do this by contacting the Disability Learning Support Team. We will update the information we hold about your disability if you notify us of a change.

Copy of the agreement students sign when registering their disability or Specific Learning Difficulty with the University of Westminster.

### CONSENT FORM

Name:

Student Number:

I would like you to refer to my disability/Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) to university staff:

- by the terminology used in my medical/diagnostic evidence
- by this other terminology (please specify):

I understand that sharing information about my disability with relevant staff at university is essential in implementing my support. I have been made aware that the full [Disability Learning Support Consent and Disclosure Statement](#) is available on the DLS website. Aside from university staff, you may communicate about my support with

- Relevant professional(s) (e.g. Educational Psychologist, GP, Community Mental Health Team – please add details on next page, if necessary)
- Family members/friends (Please detail on separate sheet below)
- Other:

**OR**

- I do not give consent for information to be shared outside of Disability Learning Support and the Mental Health adviser situated in the Counselling team. You and I understand that this will limit the support I receive to advice and information.

Signature:

Date:

**Consent to correspond with others**

I consent for the University to correspond with the following people whilst I am studying at the University of Westminster:

**Name:**

**Contact details:**

**Relationship to me (e.g. parent)**

**Name:**

**Contact details:**

**Relationship to me (e.g. parent)**

**Name**

**Contact details:**

**Relationship to me (e.g. parent)**

**Signed:**

**Date:**