Support Worker Code of Practice

Support Worker Co-ordinators

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Overview

The Support Worker role is essential for many disabled students without which their studies would not be possible. As a result the Disability Service has produced professional guidelines for all Support Workers to adhere to. This Code of Practice helps to ensure clarity in regards to the role and professional boundaries, quality of service, maintenance of academic standards and safety of Support Workers and students.

Support Worker Boundaries, Roles and Responsibilities

- Support Workers should attend any meetings organised by the Support Worker Co-ordinators (if requested to do so) to agree how the student would like their support to be implemented and discuss the boundaries of the role

- Support Workers should meet the student prior to every lecture/session at a pre-arranged time and place

- Support Workers (note takers) should discuss seating arrangements with the student prior to their first lecture. Some students prefer to sit independently while others prefer to sit next to their Support Worker

- Support Workers should maintain student confidentiality at all times unless there is a health and safety/academic standards breach issue. Support Workers should not disclose the identity of the student they are working with even if they are asked by a member of staff or another student. You should advise the enquiring party that the course’s Programme Director has been informed and explain the student’s right to confidentiality. On the rare occasion where you need to disclose who you are supporting to a member of staff (for example in an in class test) firstly seek advice from the Support Worker Co-ordinators and then ensure your discussion is as discrete as possible
• The student you are working with should introduce you to academic staff however if this hasn’t occurred in the first instance, you should remind the student of their responsibility. It is acceptable to introduce yourself and explain your role to avoid any confusion, if the student still hasn’t introduced you

• If a student doesn’t attend a lecture or appointment and the Support Worker hasn’t been contacted by the Support Worker Co-ordinators informing them it is acceptable to take notes in their absence, the Support Worker should wait for twenty minutes and then leave the lecture theatre or meeting place. The student should not receive any notes from that lecture

• Support Workers should not provide any advice on academic issues or provide any help with writing essays, proof reading, correcting work, researching etc

• Support Workers (note takers) should ensure notes are produced and sent electronically to the student within 48 hours of the lecture

• Support Workers should be mindful of health and safety at all times and, not place themselves or the student they are working with in a dangerous situation (for example lone working)

• You should inform the Support Worker Co-ordinators of student absence as soon as possible after a lecture or appointment

• Support Workers should avoid becoming directly involved in a student’s personal life. If an issue arises where a Support Worker feels professional boundaries are becoming blurred, then they should contact the Support Work Co-ordinators immediately for advice

• Support Workers should not exchange contact details with their student. All communication should come through the Support Work Co-ordinators

• Support Workers should e-mail any lecture notes from their university e-mail account to the student’s Cardiff Met account. This provides an e-mail trail and ensures transparency in working practices and helps to guarantee the safety of Support Worker and student

• Support Workers should advise Support Work Co-ordinators of any change in availability or contact details at the earliest opportunity

• Support Workers should remain impartial at all times

• If Support Workers have any questions surrounding professional boundaries, specific situations with their student/s or they are not sure of anything, then they should seek advice from the Support Worker Co-ordinators immediately
• Note taking equipment such as paper and pens are available from the Disability Office

• Notes are the responsibility of the student and should not be shared or distributed with others

Training

• To ensure the quality of the service we offer, all support workers must attend training if required to do so

Pay

• Support Workers should complete a timesheet for every student they work with. The timesheet **must** be signed by both student and Support Worker. Timesheets should be submitted to the Support Worker Co-ordinators on a weekly basis. Support Workers should keep copies of all timesheets submitted

• If timesheets are received on a Friday morning before 10.00am, then Support Workers will receive their pay the following week. Normally payment is made every Thursday

Sickness Absence

• If you are unable to work on a particular day due to ill health please let the Support Worker Co-ordinators know with as much notice as possible

• You can notify us either by telephone, email or text

• Please keep in touch so we have some idea of the length of your sickness absence and can arrange to cover your work

• You can self certify from 4-7 days

• After the 7th day of sickness (including weekends) you will need to provide a note from your doctor to receive sick pay

• Sick Pay – a weekly average of the hours worked over the past 8 weeks will be taken and you will receive this amount in sick pay each week
Terms of Employment

- Support Workers are employed on a zero hour's contract. Cardiff Metropolitan University cannot guarantee the number, duration or regularity of hours a Support Worker is offered. All allocations are made according to the student’s support needs, course requirements and funding availability.

- Support Workers are paid on a weekly basis.

- Work is allocated on a first come first serve basis.

- Support Workers do not receive holiday pay.

- Support Work is normally confined to the academic calendar.

- Support Workers will receive payment for their time if their work is cancelled within 24 hours of an agreed lecture/session. If they receive 24 hours notice or more of a cancellation then they will not be paid.