LIBRARY & STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Guidelines for External Non-Medical Helper Providers of DSA-funded support workers

Sheffield Hallam University aims to establish and build positive working relationships with its external Non-Medical Helper (NMH) providers. This document has been written to provide a framework for operational activities to ensure that all parties are aware of the standards expected of them and to actively maintain and enhance working relationships between the university's students, staff and external support provision.

This agreement has been split into two distinctive sections:

* Section One: Services to Students
* Section Two: Operational Management Process and Procedures.

**1.0 Service to students**

At SHU, our students' experience is central to all of our service delivery. As part of our overarching duty of care towards our students we expect all external NMH providers to work within the Disabled Student Allowances Quality Assurance Group Non-Medical Helper Provider Quality Assurance Framework (DSA-QAG NMH QAF),

**1.1: Communications - over-arching principles:**

1.1.1: We expect communication between the support provider and SHU to be open, proportionate and relevant to the support of individual students and to be delivered in the format agreed between SHU and the support provider,

1.1.2: We expect the support provider to communicate to the University all relevant support issues raised by individual students and support workers relating to students, in a timely and proportionate manner, as set out in the Disabled Students' Allowance Quality Assurance Group, Non-Medical Helper Provider Quality Assurance Framework (DSA-QAG NMH QAF) and in the format agreed between SHU and the support provider,

1.1.3: We expect the support provider to work within the boundaries of the DSA-QAG NMH QAF and not to act as advocates or representatives for the student.

1.1.4: Wherever possible we prefer information to be shared electronically in a secure format (PDF), encrypted or password-protected, where it relates to a student's sensitive personal data. Document passwords should be constructed according to the good practice guidelines outlined in Appendix 1.

**1.2: Referrals for Support**

1.2.1: Where students are DSA-funded, the University expects the support provider to inform Disabled Student Support on receipt of a student's DSA2 and to share this document.

1.2.2: Where students are DSA-funded, they are expected to share their Study Needs Assessment reports with the University and the support provider should inform students of this and facilitate this activity with the University.

**1.3: Communications relating to student non-attendance or engagement issues**

1.3.1: We expect the support provider to ensure individual students understand and comply with their funding authorities' policies with regard to missed sessions and non-attendance.

1.3.2: The support provider should also ensure that students are aware that should their support be withdrawn or suspended by the support provider due to repeated missed sessions, then SHU will not be responsible for its continuation.

1.3.3: We expect the support provider to share information with the university about student attendance and engagement with sessions and to ensure that the support provider obtains the student's consent to this being shared with SHU. Examples of where this will be relevant include (the list is not exhaustive):

* Where non- attendance will impact on DSA funding and discontinuation of support.
* Where the student is vulnerable to failure of assessments.
* Where a student raises concerns about their experience of support.

**1.4: Communications with Library & Student Support Services Staff**

1.4.1: We expect the support provider to immediately alert the university to any issues which may present a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of the student being supported or could be deemed to be a risk to others. If a support worker is working with a student in a low risk environment such as a standard classroom or meeting room, the provider should give a briefing/induction regarding generic arrangements for fire, first aid and other emergencies. If working with a student in a high risk area, such as a laboratory or workshop, the University will provide a local induction and will require the support worker to wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g. lab coat, eye protection, hearing protections, safety footwear, etc.). The supplier should provide PPE or pay any associated costs.

1.4.2: We expect the support provider to highlight and signpost supported students into other university services, if they raise issues or concerns that impact on their academic or personal wellbeing. Information for support providers can be found within the Disabled Student Support area within the SHU website.

**1.5: Communications relating to academic/course issues raised by individual students.**

1.5.1: We expect the support provider to signpost supported students back into university services should they raise a course or academic related issue.

1.5.2: Communications might include:

* Student concerns regarding an assignment brief and/or request for an alternative form of assessment.
* Student concern regarding the delivery/teaching, learning and assessment on a unit or part of the course.
* Student concerns relating to issues of assessment and feedback.

**1.6: Summary of regular management reports required**

* Timely information regarding students who have non-attendance and engagement issues and who may be vulnerable to failure.
* Invoice information, where a student's DSA2 letter states that a student is entitled to the maximum DSA Non-medical Helpers' Allowance. This will enable the University to plan and communicate contingency if and when DSA-funding is exhausted. The contingency will not include automatic continuation with the same supplier and may require the student changing supplier, so early planning will be vital.
* Brief reports of any academic issues raised by the student.
* Immediate reporting of any student presenting a concern around their safety or the safety of others, or matters relating to unacceptable behaviour and conduct.
* Notes from Feedback Review meetings, set up by the support provider in accordance with DSA-QAG NMH QAF, to receive an overview of the service, student feedback and discussion of any operational matters still outstanding.

**1.7: Student complaints**

1.7.1: We expect the support provider to have a suitable, accessible and transparent complaints policy, in accordance with DSA-QAG NMH QAF, that is made available to the students accessing the provider's services.

1.7.2: The University will actively work with the support provider's Complaints Policy and signpost students accordingly, should any issues arise with regard to their support.

1.7.3: We expect the university to be made aware of, and to be updated about, any generic outcomes of a student complaint, subject to the normal requirements of a student's consent to share.

**2.0 Operational Management Process and Procedures.**

**2.1: University policies & procedures including Health & Safety**

2.1.1: The University expects that all staff employed by the support provider and working with SHU students on campus are informed and equipped as necessary for the working environment and have a practical understanding of what to do in an emergency. They should also be aware of and abide by the following university policies and guidelines:

* Health and Safety Policy
* Lone Working Policy
* Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan Procedure
* Fire Safety Policy
* Safeguarding Policy

Copies of these policies and guidelines can be provided to the support provider on request, who will be responsible for ensuring their staff are advised and briefed accordingly.

2.1.2: If working on campus, all support workers supplied by the support provider are required to sign in as a visitor at SHU's main reception, prior to attending any booked appointments with SHU students. Visitor badges MUST be worn at all times.

2.1.3: If working in a high risk environment, such as a science lab or engineering workshop, all support workers must be given induction regarding safety and use of appropriate personal protective equipment (provided and paid for by the support provider). Any worker who does not follow safe procedure will be asked to leave the premises.

2.1.4:If working on campus, the support provider should ensure that all their staff are aware of the university's emergency procedures, including nearest emergency exit routes in line with their designated support spaces and the university's assembly points on each campus.

2.1.5. The support worker should follow all the appropriate information and advice, as provided by those responsible for the evacuation and should not attempt to re-enter the university's premises until they are told to do so.

**2.2: Access to university spaces and resources**

2.2.1: Should the support provider wish to deliver one to one support sessions on campus, they will need to book appropriate study spaces for their staff, via <https://www.shu.ac.uk/eventservices> . There is a charge for this service.

2.2.2: Once booked, the support provider should ensure that their staff are aware of the booking information and use the room/s in accordance with guidance from SHU Event Services.

2.2.3: The support provider staff are welcome to use the university's catering facilities but should not use other university areas, apart from those booked for the benefit of meeting with students.

2.2.4: The University will not be responsible for provision of any learning or teaching materials or access to the university's systems, including the VLE and library catalogue, or printing/scanning facilities. If access to these resources is required, then this should be discussed with the student directly. Under no circumstances should students give their login details to support workers as this would contravene the University's IT regulations.

2.2.5: The University has very limited car parking on all of its campuses. Car parking facilities are not available to support provider staff, but blue badge holders can arrange parking at either campus, tel. 0114 225 3868.

**Appendix 1.**

All passwords must be of a minimum length of 8 characters

 Password must contain characters from at least three of the following four categories:

o Lowercase letters a to z

o Uppercase letters A to Z

o Numbers 0 to 9

o Special characters ! # $ % ' ( ) + ? @ [ ] ^ \_ { } ~ -

 Passwords must not contain any characters that are not listed above, including space characters

 Passwords must not contain the user's first name, surname or logon code and for students, also their student number.

Link to The University's Terms and Conditions and Student Regulations: <https://www.shu.ac.uk/Study-here/Terms-and-Conditions-and-Student-Regulations>