



UNIVERSITY OF  
LEICESTER

# **Disability and Mental Health Support in Higher Education**

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# Disability and Mental Health Support in Higher Education

This presentation will cover the support available in higher education for disabled students and those with mental health conditions. The session will cover:

- Disclosure and evidence.
- University-based support.
- Disabled Students Allowance.
- There will also be an opportunity to ask questions and speak with a HE disability professional for advice about your specific situation.

# Disclosure

Is usually done on the UCAS application form.

It is important to disclose your disability on your UCAS form because:

- Access the advice and support you are entitled to in order to reach your academic potential at University.
- Disability as part of the whole University experience; it doesn't just affect academic studies, for example accommodation needs.
- All information is treated in confidence and will not affect the University's academic decision to offer you a place. It will ensure the University takes action to meet its legal obligations to provide support to you.

# Disabilities/impairments supported include:

UCAS	Disability	Includes:
A	No disability	
B	social/communication impairment	Asperger syndrome, Autistic Spectrum Conditions
C	Visually Impaired	Blind, or partial sight uncorrected by glasses
D	Hearing impaired	d/Deaf hard of hearing
E	Chronic illness, medical condition	Cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, epilepsy
F	Mental health difficulty	Depression, stress, anxiety
G	Specific Learning Difficulty	Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, AD(H)D
H	Physical Impairment	Wheelchair user, difficulty using arms
I	Other disabilities	Not listed above
J	2 or more impairments	Combinations if the above

# Besides declaring on the UCAS application

There are various ways you can disclose:

- Open days.
- On personal statements or in academic tutor reference.
- Direct to the institution's disability service.
- At interview.
- During Clearing.
- At registration.
- At any point during your studies.

The sooner they know about your needs the sooner they can support you!

# Evidence

- Once you have disclosed the information is passed on to the university's disability service who will contact you to ask for more information about your support needs.
- They may send out information about the support available, such as DSA, accommodation, etc.
- They are also likely to ask for evidence in order to put support in place.
- Universities can provide advice regarding what is acceptable evidence, and some can provide practical and financial support to obtain the evidence required.

# Evidence

Examples of acceptable evidence include:

- Post 16 assessment for dyslexia, dyscalculia or dyspraxia.
- Consultant or CAMHS diagnosis and assessments, or a GP letter with working diagnosis, for MH conditions.
- Specialist assessment reports for autism or Asperger syndrome.
- Psychiatrist assessment for MH conditions or AD(H)D.

If you are not sure that what you already have is appropriate contact the disability service(s) at the university you are applying for and check with them direct.

# University based disability support

- Advice on medical evidence and on-going access to external medical and/or therapeutic support.
- One to one support interview and pre-entry visits.
- Exam arrangements such as extra time, separate room or rest breaks.
- Reasonable adjustments to course assessment such as presentations and course work extensions.
- One to one study skills and/or specialist mentoring support.
- Access to assistive software.
- Other practical support such as arrangement of the provision of suitable accommodation.



# Other University based support

- Counselling and Wellbeing support.
- Welfare services, provide support with such as finances, accommodation and housing, legal support, and issues with your studies.
- Departmental support, from personal tutors, module leads, year heads and the administration office.
- Support available in the Students Union, such as student led support groups.
- Support available in halls of residence – residential advisers, hall wardens and security services.
- Careers services support for your next steps after university, work experience, internships etc.

# Disabled Student Allowance

## What is it?

Disabled Students' Allowance is a grant (not a loan) which pays for a range of disability support including equipment and human (non-medical helper) support.

It is non-means tested and is available from funders in England, Wales, Scotland, N Ireland and via the NHS Bursary scheme.

Paper based or on line application that runs alongside student finance, you will also need 'acceptable' evidence of your disability to apply, or have a 'Disability Evidence Form' completed by your GP or specialist.

# Disabled Student Allowance

## What can it be used for?

- Equipment – hardware, software and ergonomic aids. Students have to pay £200 towards the cost of any hardware recommended (which some universities will reimburse).
- Non Medical Helpers – human support such as study skills tuition or specialist mentoring.
- General Allowance – for such as consumables like voice recorder batteries, braille paper etc.
- Travel allowance – although if you are in receipt of a mobility component of PIP or DLA you would be expected to use that.

# Disabled Student Allowance

## How do I access it?

- Apply through funding provider at same time you apply for student loans, or at any point during your degree (*note you will need evidence in order to apply*).
- Once approved book an assessment of needs at an approved Assessment Centre (*there are 3 in Leicester*).
- Attend an assessment (*interview to discuss your support needs and what DSA can fund to support you*).
- Recommendations written into a Needs Assessment Report (NAR) which is sent to your funding provider.
- Funding provider then issues an entitlement letter which tells you what they will fund and how to access it.
- Your university can advise and support you through this process.

# Important things a prospective student can do

- Declare your disability on your UCAS form.
- Attend Open Days and find out about support.
- Think about support strategies which have worked for you in the past so that you know what support you might wish to request.
- Be open to new types of support.
- Submit evidence to your chosen university and send back any pre-entry information they ask for.
- Apply for DSA.
- Once your place is confirmed visit again if necessary.

# Further information

- Disability Support at University:

<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/getting-started/individual-needs/disabled-students>

<https://www.thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk/universities/disabled-students%27-university-guide/>

<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/sites/default/files/pdf/IntoHE2018.pdf>

- UCAS tv on Disability support – advice from disability officers:

<http://www.ucas.tv/?id=134>

- DSA:

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>

<http://www.yourdsa.com/>

# Questions?

Feel free to get in touch if you have any further questions.

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