

# Disability support at university...



## Disclosing your condition/s

When you start your course, your university will not have any information about your previous learning adjustments. It is your responsibility to disclose your condition/s by providing evidence of your diagnoses and telling them what barriers you face.



It is encouraged that you disclose your condition/s on your UCAS application form. However, it is not a requirement to do so if you are uncomfortable. You can disclose information about your condition/s to your university at any time, but, sharing this early on can ensure that you receive necessary support sooner.

*Please note:* If you choose to disclose this information on your application form it will **not** impact the outcome of your application in any way. The information is only shared confidentially with relevant staff members and is used to ensure that the university can be prepared to provide support when you arrive.

## What will change from school / college?

If you had an Education, Health, and Care plan (EHCP) at school or college, when you enter higher education this support will come to an end. There are many avenues of support to help you manage your condition/s at university. However, this support will be different.

*There are some key differences regarding support at university:*

### 1 Different language

Universities may use unfamiliar terminology. Previously, your condition/s will have been described as Special Educational Needs. Instead, universities use the terms 'disability' and 'disabled'. This might feel like strange and uncomfortable language to begin with, but the terms cover a broad range of condition/s and impairments experienced by students.



The names of support teams dedicated to supporting disabled students will vary across universities. For example, they may be called the Disability Services or Accessibility Team.



Your university may offer a support plan for your condition/s. This may be called a Needs Assessment Report, Inclusive Learning Plan or Reasonable Adjustment Plan.



## 2 *Involvement of parents/carers*

When you start university, you will be legally classed as an adult. Any support will be discussed directly with you and not your family. However, you can provide consent for parents and carers to attend meetings with you and they can also assist you with completing application forms.

## 4 *Social care support*

Universities cannot provide social care support. If you require this type of support whilst attending university, you must talk to your local authority about how this assistance will be transferred to ensure your needs are met.

## 3 *Paying for study support*

Your learning support at school or college will have been funded by your education provider or your local authority. At university you will need to apply for help with adjustment costs yourself through the Disabled Students' Allowance. You can find out more information about this in our 'Managing your money at university' guide.

## 5 *Accessing support*

To access support at university you will need to provide evidence of your condition/s. This could be a letter from your GP or consultant, or a diagnosis report from an educational psychologist. You may need to pay for a copy of this type of official evidence.



Be aware that you are not guaranteed receive the same support as in school or college. But your university will work with you to ensure you do not face study barriers that place you at a disadvantage.

# *Disability support services*



There will be a dedicated team of staff to support disabled students at your chosen university. You should contact a member of this team before you apply to be informed about the support they offer. Their contact details will be available on the university website, but you may also find it within prospectuses or by contacting student services.

This team can discuss study adjustment queries with you and provide guidance about funding, including applying for the Disabled Students' Allowance. They can also provide information about the accessibility of campus facilities and university accommodation. This team will continue to support you throughout your time at the university.

Don't be afraid to contact the disability support team if there is any aspect of university life you are finding challenging. They are there to help and support you.

*For more information and guidance:*



[Speaking to the disability support team or mental health adviser | Undergraduate, Postgraduate, Conservatoires, Teacher Training | UCAS](#)



## Questions to ask the disability support team

*I would like to disclose my condition/s to the university – what do I need to do?*

*Do you have an induction or summer school for disabled students I can attend?*

*When can I expect my adjustments to be put in place?*

*What study and assessment support can I expect to receive on my course?*

*Are there accessible parking spaces around campus, near my teaching rooms and my accommodation?*

*Are all the university accommodation options accessible to me?*

*Will written materials be provided in the accessible format I require i.e., Braille, large print, specific colours?*

*Is there a GP or medical service on campus? How do I register?*

*Can you help me with my Disabled Students' Allowance application?*

## What support could you receive?



### Support with your application

Universities are legally bound to ensure that their application process is accessible to all students. This means that you should be provided with forms in an accessible format upon request. As part of the application process, you may be invited to attend an interview or audition. The university must provide reasonable adjustments that ensure you do not face barriers to accessing these appointments. This could include adjustments like a ramp, induction loops, or lift access.



### Support with the transition

Transitioning to university life is both exciting and challenging. All universities have a mental health team for you to contact and discuss any difficulties you may be facing. Some universities offer induction programmes and summer schools to help disabled students with the transition. These can include the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the facilities, talk to existing students and participate in social activities.





## *Support with your studies*

As part of your support plan, you may receive day-to-day adjustments to remove barriers in your learning. For example, you may receive:

- Assistive technology such as a screen reader or Dictaphone
- Permission to record lectures
- A notetaker
- Assistive software such as a spellchecker or speech-to-text software
- Induction loops
- Worksheets in an accessible format such as Braille, larger print and specific colours
- Sign language interpreter
- Accessible teaching rooms such as wheelchair space, ramps and automatic doors
- Teaching rooms near accessible toilets
- Unrestricted lift access
- Lecture recordings with captions
- Online meetings with live captions
- Printed reading material and lecture notes in advance



## *Support with your assessments*

As part of your support plan, you may receive assessment adjustments to ensure that you are not at a disadvantage to other students. For example, you may receive:

- Extra time in exams
- Rest periods during exams
- Extensions on coursework assignments
- Exam papers in an accessible format
- The use of assistive technology such as a screen reader or a spellchecker
- A separate exam room to other students
- A scribe



## *Accessible accommodation*

Universities may provide adjustments to their accommodation facilities to make them more accessible. This may include alterations to your room, flat or building. Some of these adjustments could be:

- Wider door frames
- Ground floor room
- Accessible parking spaces
- Flashing alarms fitted for students with hearing impairments
- Provision of a 'rumble' pillow for students with hearing impairments
- Level floor plans
- Automatic doors
- Ensuite and shared bathroom facilities with shower rail or chair
- Authorisation of a personal medication fridge in room
- Kitchen adaptations

Be aware that universities cannot provide social care support and different institutions offer different accommodation accessibility options. Not all accommodation for first year students is managed by their university.

It is important that you discuss the accommodation accessibility with your preferred university before you apply.