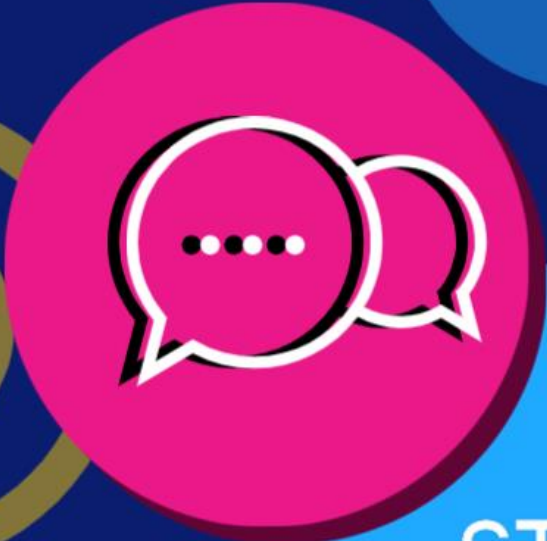




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ACCESSIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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Applying to university: disabled students



Applying to higher education is a nerve wracking yet exciting experience. If you have a diagnosed disability or health condition, you may have lots of questions about the sort of support available to you. This guide is designed to help you through the application process and will be a useful accompaniment to our '*Accessibility in Higher Education*' webinar.

If you do not have a diagnosed disability or health condition, but would like to find out more about the sort of accessibility support available in higher education- this guide will be of use to you too!

Examples of disabilities:

- specific learning difficulty (dyslexia, dyspraxia, attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)
- long term health condition (including epilepsy, chronic fatigue syndrome, diabetes, Crohn's disease)
- autism spectrum condition (Autism and Asperger syndrome)
- visual impairment
- hearing impairment
- mental health conditions
- physical impairment or mobility difficulty (including cerebral palsy, fibromyalgia, arthritis)
- speech, language or communication difficulty

What sort of support is available at university or colleges for disabled students?

Types of support will vary at different institutions so it is important to do your research. You can see what support is available from our partner HEIs here:

<https://www.studyhigher.ac.uk/disabled-learners/>

However, some examples of support available are:

- copies of lecture notes and handouts in advance and/or in alternative formats
- support workers (such as note takers or sign language interpreters) so you have an accurate record of what is covered in lectures
- digital recorders to record sessions
- support worker assistance in practical sessions (for example in labs) to ensure that you can work effectively and safely
- one to one mentor support sessions to help with organisation and prioritisation
- computing equipment
- mind mapping software to help plan your work
- scanning and proofreading software to help with reading
- support with assessments or exams
- stickers to put onto pieces of assessed written work to inform markers that you have a disability which can affect aspects of your written communication
- arrangement of alternative methods of assessment where the standard method of assessment may disadvantage you
- smaller rooms to sit exams in
- sitting exams with fewer students, or possibly on your own
- extra time during exams

- use of a computer or assistive software
- rest or nutrition breaks
- permission to use specialist ergonomic equipment
- exam papers in alternative formats such as Braille or large print
- more appropriate language used in exam questions (generally for students who are deaf or hard of hearing or for those with an autism spectrum condition)

Where can I find help?

The best person to ask about disability support at a university or college is a Disability Officer. Disability Officers have lots of experience in advising disabled students as to the support available. Universities and colleges will have a disability page on their website. These webpages will have contact details to help get you in touch with a Disability Officer.



The [UCAS disabled students page](#) is a great hub of information with advice on applying to higher education.

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Applying to University or College **‘To Do List’**



To Do List	Tick when complete
Do your research. University websites are a good place to start. There is also useful information on the UCAS website . Explore all of the exciting options available to you!	
Attend open days and get a feel for the environment. Below you will find a list of suggested questions to ask at Open Day.	
Share your disability with Universities/ colleges you are thinking of applying for.	
Talk to the University/ college about facilities you'll need before you apply.	
Have a conversation/ meet with a Disability Adviser from the universities or colleges you are applying for (you can ask them some of the 'Open Day' questions below!)	
Disclose any disabilities when you complete your application (you will be asked to do this on your UCAS application) NB: you do not have to give this information if you don't want to. However, it will be beneficial if you do, as it gives the university/ college time to prepare your support.	
Discuss any personal care needs with social services	
Apply to Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). It is recommended that you do this as early as you can, but you can do this after you have started your course too. NB: You do not need to hold a university place to apply to DSA	

**Questions to ask at a
university open day**



Category	Questions to ask	Tick when asked
Accommodation	What will be the most accessible accommodation option for me?	

	What measures are in place to make the accommodation more accessible for me?	
	How much do the accommodation options cost?	
Wellbeing	Is there a University Health Centre or do I need to register at a GP?	
	Is there counselling and other mental health services available at this university?	
Transport	Is there a campus mini bus and is it accessible to me?	
	What is the local transport like? Is it accessible to me?	
	How long will it take me to get home if I need to? How will I get home?	
	How do I get from my accommodation to campus?	
	Are there car spaces/ can I get a permit?	
Academic Support	How will my individual study and exam needs be met?	
	Are there alternative assessment methods available?	
	How quickly can support be put in place?	
	How will my needs be communicated to lecturers and other academic staff?	
	How has this university/ college supported students with similar needs to me?	
	If there is any remote learning as part of my course, what support will I receive?	
Environment and facilities	<p>Are these areas accessible to me?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● lecture theatres ● seminar rooms ● student Union ● eating areas ● library ● sports facilities 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • department offices 	
	What is the lighting like in study areas and teaching spaces?	
	Is the signposting clear around the campus?	
	What COVID restrictions are in place and how will that affect me?	
Finance	Can someone help me apply to Disabled Student Allowance (DSA)?	
	Are there any bursaries or grants available to me?	
	What are the part time job opportunities like at the university or college/ in this area?	
Social	What societies can I join?	
	What support will I receive from the Student Union?	
	What measures are in place to make freshers week and other social activities more accessible to me? (ask your Student Union!)	

Useful Websites

- **Study Higher disabled learners webpage**
<https://www.studyhigher.ac.uk/disabled-learners/>
- **Talk to Study Higher staff about your future options!**
<https://www.studyhigher.ac.uk/students/>
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- **UCAS disabled students page**
<https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/individualneeds/disabled-students>
- **GOV.UK applying for Disabled Students Allowance**
<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa>