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Welcome

Tom Ward
Deputy Vice Chancellor of Student Education

Thank you for thinking of studying at Leeds.

A very warm welcome to you. The University of Leeds is committed to enabling talented students to participate fully in the opportunities we provide, and Disability Services plays a key role in this. The Leeds approach to education, bringing together the Leeds Curriculum, the Leeds Partnership and LeedsforLife, has been recognised in our 2017 University of the Year award: and our ‘Gold’ rating in the national Teaching Excellence Framework.

It can be difficult to manage such an intense University education with a visible or invisible disability, but be assured you are not doing so on your own. I wish you well in your studies and wider University life.

Simon Morris
Assistant Head of Student Support

Here at Disability Services we provide advice, guidance and support to both current and prospective disabled students. We work closely and in partnership with disabled students, academic departments and other services to improve access and navigate barriers for disabled students.

This handbook is designed to help you understand more about disability support at the University of Leeds and highlights other types of support and funding which may be available to you. We encourage you to discuss your requirements with us so that we can work together to assist you in realising your full potential as a student at the University of Leeds.
An introduction to Disability Services

Welcome to Disability Services. Disability Services recommend reasonable adjustments whilst you study at the University of Leeds. These adjustments are coordinated by our Disability Advisory Team, schools and other services on campus.

There are a number of ways to access support and in this handbook you can find out more about the support we provide, how to set up support with us and external funding you may be eligible to apply for.

Who can Disability Services support?

We support a wide range of students who meet the definition of a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010 and may have diagnoses such as*:

- Are deaf or hard of hearing
- Are blind or partially-sighted
- Have a physical disability, and/or mobility difficulties
- Have a specific learning difficulty (for example dyslexia or dyspraxia)
- Have a developmental learning or behavioural condition (for example, AD(H)D)
- Are on the autism spectrum (for example Asperger Syndrome)
- Have a mental health condition
- Have a long-term medical condition (for example, chronic fatigue syndrome, asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, cancer from the point of diagnosis, HIV)

*Other diagnoses may also qualify for support. Please contact us for more advice and information.
What support and services may be available?

If you are made an offer to study or are an existing student Disability Services can start to plan you support. Support can include:

- Induction and transition activities
- Receiving handouts and lecture presentations in advance
- Access to campus-based computers with assistive technology
- The loan of equipment
- Adaptations to university accommodation
- Modified assessment arrangements
- Extended library loans
- Information and support from Disability Services
- Personal Assistant and/or note-taker support
- Transcription services for accessible text

This list is not exhaustive and support is identified on an individual basis.

Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSA)

Other types of support are available and paid for by external bodies. The most common for UK students being government funded support called Disabled Students' Allowances, see page 23 for more information.
How do I sign up with Disability Services?

Students who are made an offer through UCAS or direct application are contacted by Disability Services soon after with an invitation to sign up with our Service.

To start the process for setting up support with us, you need to complete an online sign up form to register with our service. This gives you the opportunity to tell us about your disability, provide us with supporting documentation and what we do with your information. If you are a prospective student who has declared a disability on your UCAS or direct application form, we will contact you by email to invite you to complete our sign-up form. This will take approximately 10 minutes to complete.

If you have not received an email from us with a link to our sign-up form, you can visit our website on: students.leeds.ac.uk/settingupyoursupport. If you have any questions when filling in your form, or if you would like to speak to a member of the team about your circumstances, please contact us.

The sign up process is complete once you have provided sufficient evidence. See page 7 for more information on evidence.

Should I declare my disability?

We encourage you to tell us about your disability so that we can work with you to make adjustments to your learning and teaching, and so that we can set up your support and exam arrangements.

You can tell us about your disability in a number of ways:

- On your application form (e.g. UCAS application)
- By contacting us and letting us know
- By completing our sign-up form.
Declaring a disability does not affect your application but does mean that
we are able to work with you to make sure your support is in place.

**What evidence do I need?**

The type of evidence we need will depend on your disability and the
level of support you wish to access.

For all disabilities other than Specific Learning Difficulties (such as
dyslexia – see below) we require one of the following:

- A letter from a GP, consultant or other medical professional
- A diagnostic report.

This evidence should:

- be on **official** headed paper
- be as **up to date** as possible - this is not vital if it is a long-term or
  life-long condition
- give a clear **clinical** diagnosis of a disability that is likely to affect
  your ability to do every day, or academic, tasks
- clearly state that your disability is **long term** (eg has lasted for, or
  is likely to last for, at least 12 months)
- indicate the **impact** your disability has on your daily life and/or
  studies
- must be written in **English**
Specific Learning Difficulties such as Dyslexia

The level of support you can receive at University will depend on the type of evidence you have provided. You may need to seek further evidence in order to get the support or exam arrangements you need.

The table below details what support you may be able to access depending on the evidence you have:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence Provided</th>
<th>Adjustments Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A letter or other document from your school, college or previous university,</td>
<td>We may recommend temporary exam arrangements for 1 semester only, as long as the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which confirms that you had exam arrangements, what these were, and the reason</td>
<td>evidence is received by Disability Services by the published deadline. Your exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCQ (Form 8) confirming that you had exam arrangements in your previous</td>
<td>arrangements will be removed after 1 semester and you must provide further diagnostic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school or college</td>
<td>evidence to receive ongoing exam arrangements or other support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some types of adjustments are available on provision of a pre-16 report and may</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>include ongoing exam arrangements and a range of University reasonable adjustments:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Permission to audio record / access to Lecture Capture</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Marking consideration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Consideration of flexibility with deadline extension requests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lecture materials in advance of teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Directed reading lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Written instructions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A report from a psychological assessment carried out **after your 16th birthday** which confirms your diagnosis of specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia). This should have been carried out by carried out by an educational psychologist or specialist teacher

We may recommend a wider range of ongoing exam arrangements and university adjustments. You may be entitled to **specialist 1-1 study support** funded by the university and may also be eligible to apply for Disabled Students' Allowance. This can fund **assistive technology** and additional specialist 1-1 study support.

A Needs Assessment Report- carried out as part of an application for Disabled Students Allowances

An active DSA application for the current academic year means that you are eligible to receive reasonable adjustments from the University as well as any assistive technology, 1-1 support and other support recommended in your report. If you are not sure how to access the support that you’ve been recommended, please speak to Disability Services.

Please contact Disability Services for information about how to arrange a post 16 diagnostic assessment. You may also be eligible to claim back some of this cost.

**Unsuitable Evidence**

Please note that the following types of documentation are not usually sufficient to access ongoing support or permanent exam arrangements at university:

- 'Form 8' JCQ forms
- 'Access Arrangement' forms
- Results of an SpLD/ dyslexia screening test e.g. Quick Scan
- School or exam board exam arrangement documentation where there is no clinical diagnosis
• Medical letters which do not meet the criteria set out above, or where there is no clinical diagnosis

If you are unsure about your evidence, or finding it difficult to obtain, please contact us to discuss this further: telephone 0113 343 3927 or email disability@leeds.ac.uk.
When do I contact Disability Services?

Disability Services is open year round and we provide advice and guidance to pre-applicants, applicants and existing students. You can get in contact by email, phone and by visiting us.

Throughout the year we hold daily drop-in sessions where we discuss the types of support available, how to set up support with us and guide you through the process of applying for Disabled Students’ Allowance. Please contact us for our current drop-in times.

We also host Service Information Days in the run up to the start of the academic year.

What are Service Information Days?

We hold a number of Service Information Days on dates across the summer. This is a chance to meet our team face-to-face, register with the service if you have not already done so and to ask any questions you may have before the start of your course. If you have declared a disability on your UCAS or direct application form, we will contact you with more detailed information, prior to the Service Information Days. If you have not declared your disability on your application form, or have not heard from us, please contact us and we will happily send you this information.
How we use your information

In order to support you, we may need to share information about your disability with other people in the University. We only share information where necessary and on a “need-to-know” basis. This means that we will only share sufficient information to resolve any issues, and only with the people involved in resolving these.

We will not share information with people outside the University, except where you have given your explicit permission and this is necessary. This might include your DSA study needs assessor or your funding body (see below).

The University does not normally discuss students with their parents/guardians or other family members. You can give us permission to be able to discuss your support with your parents, family members or representatives by completing our Consent and Share Form. Please let your Disability Coordinator know if you want to do this.
Meet the Teams

Disability Services is comprised of; the Front of House Team, the Disability Coordinator Team and the Support Worker Team. We also work in partnership with the RNIB Transcription Service and the Leeds Assessment Centre.

Front of House Team
Our friendly Front of House Team is based at Reception in Disability Services. Their day-to-day role includes:

- Make initial contact with applicants and current students
- Providing information on the process for accessing support
- Answering initial enquiries
- Running the daily drop-in session
- Providing information on funding available including Disabled Students’ Allowance

Disability Advisory Team
Our Disability Advisory Team provides support, advice and guidance to students regarding all aspects of disability in relation to learning and teaching. They will process the information you provide in your sign up form and evidence; and will recommend reasonable adjustments including recommendations for support and exam access arrangements. They also offer advice on funding and external sources of support.

Disability Coordinators are assigned according to the faculty you will be, or are, studying in; and they will work closely with your faculty to ensure your support is in place. Disability Coordinators also have specialist expertise in a number of areas including:

- Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia)
- Autism
- Physical disabilities
- Mental Health

Disability Coordinators are happy to offer advice and guidance prior to the start of your studies.
Support Worker Team
Our Support Worker Team coordinates different types of one-to-one support for students with DSA and other funding. If you have been recommended these types of support (and your funding body has selected us as the provider) this team will make any arrangements for that support to be put in place. **It can take time to get support in place**, so if you think you will require support from any of our support workers, please contact us as soon as possible.

Types of one-to-one support may include:

**Personal Assistants/ library support (PAs)** – can help you to access services and venues across the University. Our PAs offer support with tasks such as retrieving, returning and locating books at the library. They can assist with computer work, assisting with physical tasks where appropriate, mobility support and orientation or guiding.

**Note-takers** – provide you with a set of summarised notes for each of your taught sessions (lectures, seminars etc.). A note-taker will attend your timetabled sessions and take notes on your behalf according to your note-taking request. Depending on your requirements and support recommendations this may be for certain types of sessions and may be handwritten notes, typed notes or real-time electronic notes.

**Specialist Mentors** - meet with you on a one-to-one basis, either regularly or as required. They can support you to implement strategies to assist with organisation, time-planning and managing your workload; maintaining motivation, focusing on academic progress and engaging with university life; making contact with your academic department and other services; understanding coursework requirements, and breaking down work into manageable pieces; orientation and signposting to sources of information and support.

**Study Skills Tutors** - meet with you on a one-to-one basis, either regularly or as required. Study skills support is aimed specifically at supporting students with academic skills. Tutors can support you to
develop strategies on how to approach: grammar, spelling and punctuation; academic writing skills and essay structure; revision schedules and strategies; proofreading strategies and referencing; research and resource management; developing presentations; note-taking and reading strategies.

**British Sign Language (BSL) Interpreter Support** - If you have been recommended support from a British Sign Language Interpreter, we can source and arrange this for you. You can contact the Support Worker Team for more information by emailing supportworkerteam@adm.leeds.ac.uk or phoning us on 0113 343 3927.

These are not exhaustive definitions of the roles of our Support Workers - all our support schemes are flexible and responsive to the individual requirements of students.

**Partner Teams**

**RNIB Transcription Service**
The RNIB Transcription Service is based within Disability Services and works in partnership with the University to provide transcription of academic material - print and inaccessible electronic source files - into large print, electronic text, braille, digital audio and tactile diagrams. All transcription is tailored to individual requirements. In addition, they have access to RNIB Bookshare - an online digital academic collection - which secures files from publishers and other transcription suppliers.

There is no need to wait for a support recommendation through a DSA Needs Assessment or from a Disability Coordinator as this service does not require additional funding.

You are eligible to use the service if you have:

- a visual impairment (blind or partially sighted)
- a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia)
- a neurodevelopmental disability (such as autism, AD(H)D)
- a physical disability which affects your use of printed materials
If you think you might need transcription please contact the RNIB Transcription Service directly as early as possible, as it can take time to produce transcription.

You can contact the RNIB Transcription Service by phoning 0113 343 3929, or you can email leedstrans@rnib.org.uk.

**Leeds Assessment Centre**
The Leeds Assessment Centre is based in Disability Services and provides Study Needs Assessments for disabled students who have applied for Disabled Students’ Allowances. If you have received authorisation (usually a letter) from your funding body telling you to arrange a Study Needs Assessment, you can book in with the Assessment Centre.

To Contact the Leeds Assessment Centre email assessmentcentre@leeds.ac.uk or phone 0113 343 3927. The Assessment Centre can also advise on matters relating to Disabled Students’ Allowances and the assessment process.

**Student Counselling and Wellbeing**
Student Counselling and Wellbeing comprises of the Mental Health Team, Student Counselling and the Wellbeing Team. They also offer a range of workshops and groups throughout the year, such as ‘dealing with parental loss’, anxiety management, meditation sessions; as well as a self-help library and self-help resources including downloadable MP3s.

To access support from Student Counselling and Wellbeing please fill in the online form at: [http://students.leeds.ac.uk/counsellingandwellbeing](http://students.leeds.ac.uk/counsellingandwellbeing)
Campus information

Accessibility
The University of Leeds is a large and dynamic campus in the heart of the city. However, it is built on a hill and has numerous old buildings which means that accessibility can be a challenge at times.

There is a North-South campus access route which provides a step-free route across campus for anyone who has access requirements. The route begins at the main entrance of the University and ends at the Worsley building. It is marked by internal and external signage and involves the use of lifts at some points. Outside of the main University opening hours, you will need a key to access the North-South campus route. Fobs are available and coordinated from the campus security team.

To apply for a fob from campus security you need to complete an application form which can be found at:

http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10420/finding_your_way_around/728/accessible_facilities_on_campus

Accommodation
If you anticipate additional requirements for your accommodation, when applying for accommodation, answer “Yes” to the question: “Do you require accommodation which is adapted or do you require a specific type of accommodation because of a disability/medical condition?”

You should also complete an Additional Requirements Form. Some students may also be eligible for a reduction in rent if they require specific accommodation for disability related reasons.

You can contact the Accommodation Office for further information by email at accom@leeds.ac.uk or by phone on 0113 343 7777.

Leeds University Union
Leeds University Union is the Students’ Union on campus. They have over 30,000 members. They are a student-led charity providing clubs and societies, advice, campaigns and events on campus. You can find out more about them on their website: https://www.luu.org.uk/.
Campus Map
You can find an interactive campus map at www.leeds.ac.uk/campusmap. You can also download a large print version from this link.

Car Parking
The University has designated parking spaces on campus for disabled people. To use these spaces you will need to apply for a disabled parking permit for the University. If you have a Blue badge, you’ll need to show this and your student ID to the car parking administrator for processing.

Non-Blue Badge holders who require disabled parking, including those with a long-term mobility issue or other impairment, can apply for a University disabled parking permit through the Car Parking Team website which is:

http://carparking.leeds.ac.uk/contact-us/.
Useful Resources on Campus

Assistive Technology

There are assistive technology applications available across campus which are free for students to access. These include:

- ‘TextHelp Read & Write’ for help with reading and writing tasks
- ‘Inspiration’ and ‘MindView’ which are mind-mapping software
- ‘Dragon Dictation’ which is voice recognition software available in the disabled students’ rooms in the Laidlaw Library
- Outlook: use the calendar and tasks functions to set reminders.

DisabledGO

The University of Leeds works in partnership with DisabledGo, a national organisation who create detailed access guides to our spaces and buildings. This includes accommodation, teaching space, libraries and the Students’ Union. The aim of the guide is to give disabled users useful, accurate and detailed information about access and the facilities available. Information on the University of Leeds can be found at: 
http://www.disabledgo.com/organisations/university-of-leeds/

Lecture Capture

The majority of lectures are audio or visually recorded, and are available to use on Minerva (the virtual learning environment) following your lecture. This is not intended to be a substitute for attending lectures, but allows you to revisit and review content at your own pace, and aids preparation for both assignments and exams.

Skills@Library

The Skills@Library team help students improve and develop their study skills, including note-taking, referencing, revision and time management skills. There are online tutorials, free workshops and the option to meet one-to-one with a Learning Advisor. The Skills Zone is based on the first floor of the Laidlaw Library. More information is available at: 
https://library.leeds.ac.uk/skills
Within your school, there are a number of useful resources available to you:

- Each school has a Disability Contact who is responsible for working with relevant staff members, including personal tutors and module leaders, to ensure that appropriate arrangements are put in place for you within the school.
  - A list of Disability Contacts can be found on our website at: [http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10710/disability_services/1085/disability_contacts_in_schools](http://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10710/disability_services/1085/disability_contacts_in_schools) or you can ask in your School’s office
- Visit your Student Support Office to find out what support is offered in your school. Some schools offer support such as study skills or essay-writing help
- Speak to your personal tutor for advice and guidance
- Contact your lecturers/supervisors if you require clarification on points raised in your lectures. Often lecturers hold office hours where you can drop-in or you are welcome to send them an email
Online Resources

Useful Information

Disability Rights UK - www.disabilityrightsuk.org
Disability Rights UK provide a number of factsheets with information about funding in Higher Education for disabled students and applying for Disabled Students’ Allowances.

Disabled Students Allowances Quality Assurance Group (DSA-QAG) - https://www.dsa-qag.org.uk/
DSA-QAG provides information on booking a study needs assessment and locating an assessment centre near you.

yourDSA - http://www.yourdsa.com/
yourDSA produce step-by-step guides for: The Disabled Students’ Allowance (DSA) and Access to Work (AtW), including contact directories for: diagnostic assessments, needs assessments, assistive technology, specialist support, and assessments for work.

Leeds City Council - http://www.leeds.gov.uk/
The official local authority website for Leeds providing information on local services. They provide information about local services available such as applying for Blue Badges, playing disability sport and housing.

Useful Contacts

NHS BSA Student Bursaries
0300 330 1345
www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/students

Student Awards Agency for Scotland
0300 555 0505
Textphone: 0131 244 5107
www.saas.gov.uk

Student Finance Northern Ireland
0300 100 0077
Textphone: 0300 100 0625
www.studentfinanceni.co.uk

Student Finance Wales
0300 200 450
Textphone: 0300 100 1693
www.studentfinancewales.co.uk

Student Finance England
0300 100 0607
www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas
Frequently Asked Questions

Can Disability Services help me set up non-academic support (such as personal care and help with attending social activities)?

Disability Services provides support related to navigating academic barriers. For students who need other types of support they may need to involve other agencies. For example:

- Support with personal care will continue to be arranged by your local authority
- Leeds University Union (LUU) offers free, confidential and impartial advice on finances, including applying for state benefits.
- The Accommodation team at the University has obligations as a landlord to support students to ensure University accommodation meets your needs.

What if I’m not happy with my support?

Disability Services aims to set up your support to suit you. However please contact us by calling 0113 343 3927 or email us at disability@leeds.ac.uk if you would like to raise any concerns or suggest changes to your support.

Is there a disabled students’ society?

Leeds University Union (LUU) has a Disability Action Society who aim to provide a safe and friendly way of meeting other disabled students and those with an interest in promoting equality and diversity at the University. They are on facebook at the website: www.facebook.com/groups/leedsdag or you can find their contact details on the LUU website at: www.luu.org.uk/clubs-and-societies/
Disabled Students’ Allowances

Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSA) are funding provided by Higher Education Funding Bodies to pay for additional support to help you to manage the impact of your disability on your studies. This may include the provision of assistive technology and relevant training, support from people and assistance with travel costs.

If you are eligible for funding from any of the following funding bodies you should be eligible for additional disability-related funding:

- Student Finance England
- Student Finances Wales
- Student Finance Ireland
- Student Awards Agency for Scotland
- NHS Awards Agency for Scotland
- NHS BSA Student Bursaries
- A Research Council

In most cases you do not have to be in receipt of a student loan in order to apply for DSA, you just need to be eligible for one.

How do I apply for Disabled Students’ Allowances (DSA)?

If you are eligible for a student loan through Student Finance England, Wales, Northern Ireland, or Student Awards Agency for Scotland you can find further information and application forms on their websites. Alternatively you can find information at [www.yourdsa.com](http://www.yourdsa.com)

If you are or will be in receipt of an NHS Bursary, you will need to apply for DSA through your BOSS (Bursary Online Support System) account. You can find more information at [www.yourdsa.com](http://www.yourdsa.com)

If you are funded by a Research Council, you will need to discuss further funding with your Disability Coordinator.
What if I am not eligible for DSA funding?

If you are not funded by any of these funding boards (for example you are an international student), please contact your Disability Coordinator who will help you access other funding. Please be assured that all disabled students at the University of Leeds are eligible for funding and support.

What is a Study Needs Assessment?

A Study Needs Assessment isn’t like a diagnostic or a medical assessment. There are no tests. Instead an experienced Needs Assessor works together with you to find out how your disability affects your studies, and what support you might need. This is done through a structured but informal face-to-face discussion, along with a demonstration of equipment and software. The Needs Assessment itself usually takes about one and a half hours but can be longer or shorter depending on how much time you need.

Using information gathered from this session, the Needs Assessor writes a detailed report which recommends a range of equipment, software and/or support. This report is sent to your Funding Body and to you. Your Funding Body will write to you to tell you what support they have agreed and how to access this. It is your responsibility to contact the suppliers to arrange delivery of equipment and specialist training, but we can help by advising you if you encounter any problems.

Contacting Disability Services

**Front of House**
0113 343 3927
disability@leeds.ac.uk

**Mental Health Team**
0113 343 7458
smha@leeds.ac.uk

**Leeds assessment Centre**
0113 343 7537
assessmentcentre@leeds.ac.uk

**Support Worker Team**
0113 343 4399
supportworkerteam@leeds.ac.uk
The Process for Accessing Support

Registering with Disability Services

1. Disclose a disability on your application to University
2. Receive an email from us (typically early May for Undergraduate applicants)
3. Complete our online sign-up form
4. Provide evidence of your disclosed condition
5. Sign-up form and evidence are processed by our Disability Advisory Team (can take 10-12 weeks)
6. Your support summary document is created and sent to you and your school
7. Review your support summary document to check that you are happy with the recommendations in the report

Applying for External Funding

1. Apply for Disabled Students’ Allowances
2. Receive a letter requesting that you book a Needs Assessment
3. Book and attend a Needs Assessment
4. Receive an entitlement letter from your funding body
5. Contact the suppliers to arrange the delivery of your equipment and specialist training
6. Your support should now be in place! If you have any queries please get in contact with our team

Disability Services

0113 343 3927
disability@leeds.ac.uk
www.students.leeds.ac.uk