

# How to Get the Best Out of Your Support



## **DISABILITY SERVICES**

**University of Leeds**



# Our Support Schemes:

## Note-Takers

Note-taking support aims to provide you with a set of summative notes for each of your taught sessions (lectures, seminars etc.) according to your note-taking request. Depending on your needs and support recommendations this may be for certain types of sessions and may be handwritten notes, electronic notes or live typed notes.

## PA/Library Support

Support is provided primarily on campus to support you to access services and venues across the University; Retrieve/return/locate books at the library; Assist with PC work; Assist with physical tasks where appropriate; Mobility support or guiding.

## Specialist Mentors

Mentors can support you to: Implement strategies to help with organisation, time planning and managing your workload; Maintain motivation, focus on your academic progress and engage with university life; Make contact with your academic department and with other services; Understand coursework requirements, and break down work into manageable pieces; Orientation and signpost to sources of information and support; Additional support during the initial induction phase.

## DST/One-to-One Study 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.

# How Support Works

## Support Arrangements

Your support is intended to be flexible around your needs. You can choose to have regular support sessions (weekly or monthly for example), or opt for a more 'ad hoc' arrangement, booking in sessions when you need them. You can discuss with your support worker or the Support Worker Team what will best suit you. Note-taking support will generally be based around your timetable, but you can choose which sessions you would like the support to cover if you wish to.

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*“They helped me think more clearly about how to convey information and structure my work, as well as develop proof-reading strategies”*

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## Transferrable Skills

It is hoped that our mentor and DST support will support you to develop skills and strategies for University and beyond. Our study skills and mentor support are not 'subject specific', but aim to support you in building strategies for academic study. For example, a tutor would not be able to teach you details about your course, but will be able to work with you on how to structure your essay, or methods of researching your topic. A Specialist Mentor may support you to develop time management skills for organising your work and other demands.

## Timesheets

Any booked session of support will generate a timesheet which requires your signature. This is also true of sessions when you may not have attended, but did not give enough notice of being absent. The Support Worker Team may contact you to ask you to sign timesheets for your support which you have not yet signed. It is important that you sign all timesheets for your support, as without your signature we cannot claim the funds back from your funding body.



# Hints and Tips

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*“It’s just amazing to be able to get individual support!”*

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## Goals

Discuss with your support worker what your needs are and what you would like to get from your support. Eg. You might prefer your notes to focus on what the lecturer says rather than content from presentation slides, or you may want to work with your mentor on time management and prioritizing tasks. It is best to set goals for the semester and the year with your support worker. You should also briefly set session goals at the beginning of each support session. Reviewing progress towards these goals on a regular basis allows you to stay on track.

## Give Plenty of Notice

If you’re wanting to book in a support session, the more notice you can give us, the better we’ll be able to book in the session for you!

## Support Needs

If you feel like the support priorities detailed in your Needs Assessment don’t represent where your focus really lies, discuss this with your support worker, so that you both know what you would like to work towards. Support workers understand that your support needs may change over time, so keep each other up to date.

## Don’t Leave It Till The Last Minute!

Around exam revision time, lots of students come to us to ask for support! However, there is a process to go through to put the support in place, and if there’s any hitches along the way, you might not be able to access support as quickly as you’d like. Students who have set up their support earlier will have gone through this process, so might be able to access it more quickly when they really need it.

## Other Support

There are other sources of support at the University which you can also access in addition to ours. We’ve got a Mental Health Team, Leeds Student Medical Practice, Student Counselling Centre, Skills@Library, Lifelong Learning Centre etc. If you’d like to know how to access these, do get in touch to ask!

# Making It Work

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*The Support Worker Team wants to make sure you have the best support possible in place. Here are a few things you can do to help!*

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## **Funding & Eligibility**

We can't provide any support unless funding is in place. If you have any queries about your funding, how to apply for funding, or if you are eligible, please contact us on 0113 3433927. If you have applied for DSA and you will require support when you arrive at University, but you are concerned that funding will not be in place in time, please do get in touch to discuss this. Remember that some funding bodies require you to reapply for funding every year, particularly if you are a postgraduate or part-time student – do get in touch with us if you have any questions about your funding body.

## **Personal Requirements**

If you have any individual support preferences, please do inform your support worker or the Support Worker Team of these. For example, if you'd prefer your Specialist Mentor focused more on organisation strategies, or that your note-taker didn't use joined-up handwriting, make sure you let us know, and we'll do our best to accommodate!

## **Arriving on Time!**

Most support is considered cancelled if you don't arrive or make contact with your support worker within the first 10 minutes of a booked session. Do try to arrive on time, or let your support worker or the Support Worker Team know if you're going to be late.

## **Absences**

We appreciate there will be times you may not be able to attend your support for good reasons. If this is the case, please do inform your support worker with as much notice as possible that you will be absent. If you have missed a session without giving notice or reason, the Support Worker Team will contact you to understand why, and look at any possible issues.

# Problem Solving!

## What to do if things aren't working.

If you feel like your support is not working for you, there are ways to address this.

- In the first instance, we would advise that you discuss any issues directly with your support worker – they should be able to amend their working practices or priorities in order that the support suits you better.
- If this does not solve the problem, or if you do not feel comfortable raising an issue with your support worker, please speak directly to the Support Worker Team who can discuss with you how we can resolve any problems.
- It is possible to be reallocated a different support worker if you are having difficulties with your allocated support worker. However, we would advise that students consider this option carefully, as there can be drawbacks. All our support staff have the skills and experience required to perform their role. Reallocation to a new support worker can disrupt study progress, as it means starting from scratch again with someone new. This could mean a lot of disruption for no overall improvement. Many issues can be overcome simply by discussing the problem with the support worker. If this has not proved successful however, or you do not feel it would prove successful, then please do contact the Support Worker Team to discuss ways forward, and reallocation if required.
- If you do have any questions, queries or issues regarding your support, please do get in touch with the Support Worker Team on 0113 3433927

## Who We Are

The Support Worker Team coordinates the University of Leeds' Note-taking, Specialist Mentor, PA, Library, BSL and DST/One-to-One Study Skills Support schemes. They are:

- Martin Hall – Support Worker Team Manager  
[m.hall@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:m.hall@leeds.ac.uk)
- Paul Whitehead – Support Worker Team Officer  
[p.a.whitehead@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:p.a.whitehead@leeds.ac.uk)
- Charlotte Hendry – Support Worker Team Assistant  
[c.l.hendry@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:c.l.hendry@leeds.ac.uk)
- Andrew Ward – Support Worker Team Assistant  
[a.ward1@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:a.ward1@leeds.ac.uk)

## Contact Us

Please get in touch if you have any questions:

**Disability Services**  
**Disabled Students Assessment & Support**  
**Chemistry West Building**  
**University of Leeds**  
**Leeds**  
**LS2 9JT**

Phone: 0113 3433927

Email: [supportworkerteam@adm.leeds.ac.uk](mailto:supportworkerteam@adm.leeds.ac.uk)

Web: [http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled\\_students](http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/21810/disabled_students)

If you require this leaflet in another format eg. Electronic or large-print, please do let us know.