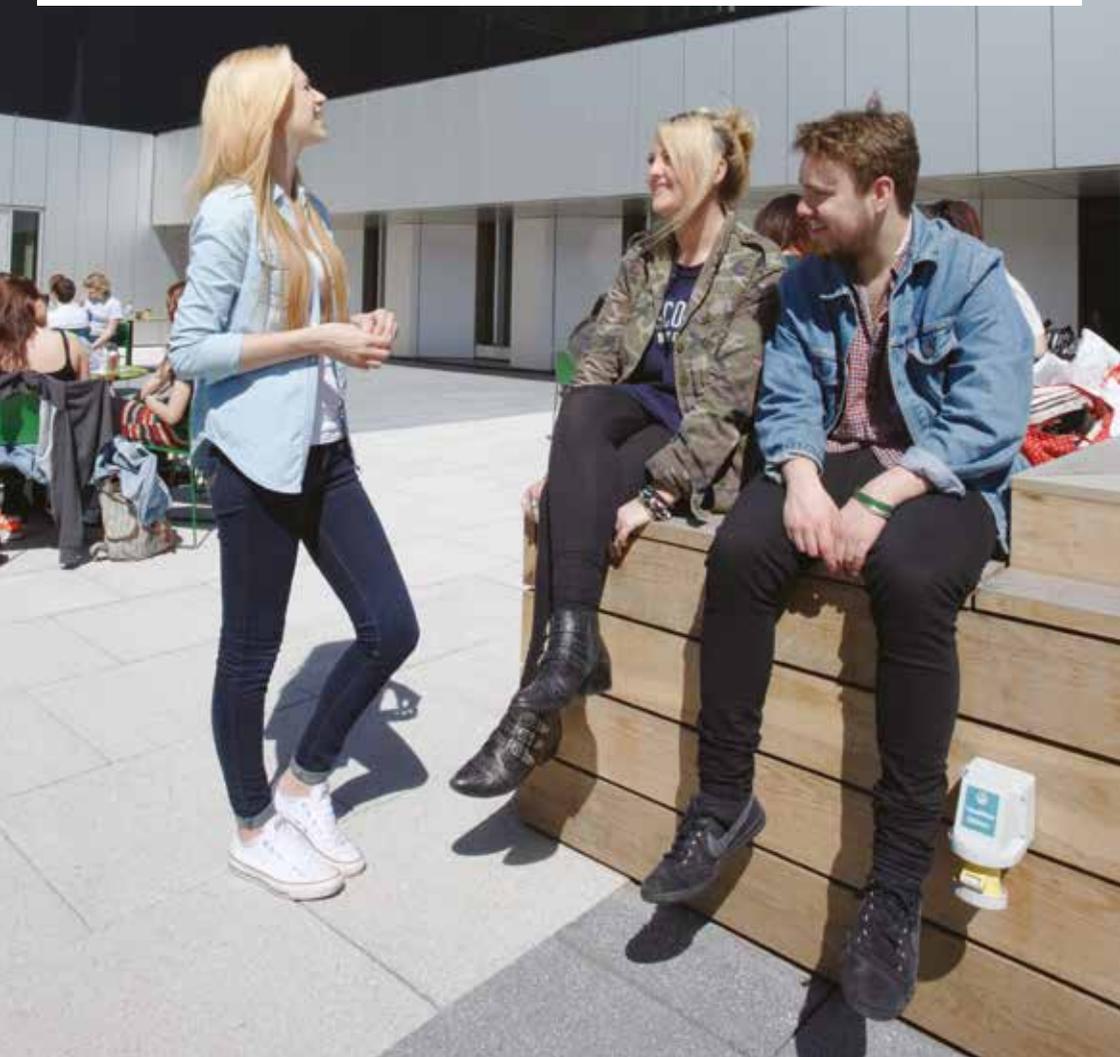


Disability Service: A Guide for Disabled Students and Students with Dyslexia

Frequently Asked Questions



What does the Disability Service offer?

The Disability Service provides information, advice, guidance and support within the university for current and prospective disabled students. If you have a significant disability, long-term health condition, mental health difficulty, or a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, you can contact the Disability Service for advice on the support available. The Disability Service can also liaise with staff in your department if appropriate to advise them of what reasonable adjustments may be needed to support your learning.

What counts as a disability?

Most people who use our service do not refer to themselves as 'disabled' however, under the Equality Act 2010 you can legally be considered a disabled person if you have:

“A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities.”

At university this can include Specific Learning Difficulties, such as Dyslexia, as well as a wide range of on-going health conditions which have significantly affected you for 12 months and more, or are not likely to be temporary in nature.

Disclosing your Disability

Do I have to tell the university about my disability?

Some people are reluctant to tell the university about (disclose) a disability because they fear it might prejudice their application or that university staff may treat them differently. However, under the Equality Act 2010, it is unlawful for a university to discriminate against a student or prospective student for a reason associated with a disability.

You do not have to tell the university that you are disabled; however, we encourage people to disclose to us as early as possible, because once you have disclosed there is then a legal duty for the university to make reasonable adjustments for you. Examples of reasonable adjustments might be giving you extra time or rest breaks in exams or allowing you to audio-record lectures.



Disclosing your Disability

What happens if I don't tell the university about my disability?

Although all universities have a duty to think ahead and to anticipate what 'reasonable adjustments' may be required for disabled people in general, it is not realistic to be able to anticipate every need that an individual may have. The university promotes an inclusive learning environment, however if you choose not to disclose your disability this may prevent or limit disability related support that you may be eligible for.

Please contact the Disability Service if you would like to speak to an adviser in confidence.



How Support is Provided

How is support at university different from school and college?

When you come to university from school or college you will face a range of new terminology and experiences; you may find that there are many differences between school or college and University.

Names of Departments

Schools, colleges and universities have different names for the same sort of things. For example, at school you may have met with a SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) who arranges class support, at MMU there are Disability Advisers who provide information and advice about the support available to you, both within the University and from other external agencies.

Organising and Managing your Support

There is a wide range of support available at university. It is important make contact with the Disability Service as early as possible to find out about all the support you are entitled to. You can do this before you start at the university. In particular, it is important to find out about support funded through the Disabled Student Allowances (DSAs). However, you need to remember that at University, YOU will have more responsibility for organising and managing your support. If you require any Personal Care, you will also need to arrange this yourself through Social Services.



Disabled Students Allowances

Disabled Students' Allowances

At college or school, support such as an interpreter or access to a computer with assistive technology was likely to have been provided within the school/college. At university, although some support is provided by the university, you may also need apply for a grant to pay for the study related equipment and support, if your disability related needs are greater than can be met by the university. The grant is called Disabled Students' Allowances and is administered by your funding body, for example Student Finance England. It is advisable to check the information on their specific website due to significant changes being made by some funding bodies. If you are an International or EU student, you may not be entitled to Disabled Students Allowances, so please contact the Disability Service directly for further information and advice.

How do I apply for Disabled Students Allowances?

Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) can take time to put into place, so please apply early. When you apply for your student finance you should be able to indicate that you wish to apply for DSA, however you will still need to complete the relevant application form for DSA. Forms are available to download online, from your funding body. We would advise you to allow three months to go through the DSA process. Application forms are usually available from early February.

Disabled Students Allowances

- Please do not assume support will be in place for you already when you start university, you will need to apply for DSA (as above), as some your support may be dependent on DSA. If you need guidance about applying for DSA and setting up your support please contact the Disability Service.
- If you qualify for Disabled Students' Allowances your funding body will advise you to book a DSA assessment and provide you details of how to contact a local assessment centre. This assessment will focus on identifying what support you will need for your studies.
- The DSA assessor will discuss your support requirements for university, based on your medical evidence or Educational Psychologist report and through discussion with you. Following the assessment, they will advise your funding body of your study related needs in a report.
- Once your funding body has approved the DSA assessment report, they will write to you giving instructions of how to order any equipment or arrange other support.

What medical evidence will I need to provide?

Before the Disability Service and your funding body can put support in place for you, both will require you to provide them with evidence of your condition.

All copies of evidence should be:

- Written in English and on letter-headed paper and dated
- Signed by the person writing the letter or report

Providing Medical Evidence

For students with physical, mental, or multiple impairments:

A letter from a qualified medical professional (e.g. GP, consultant or specialist nurse) which gives all of the following information:

- The nature of the mental/physical impairment/condition and the diagnosis (if applicable).
- When the impairment was identified and/or how long it has lasted and/or is likely to last.
- The main effects (including the severity) of the impairment on studies and carrying out of normal day-to-day activities including symptoms; this can include the side effects of any medication and also a description of the effect of the impairment without medication or auxiliary aids.

For deaf or hearing impaired students:

A letter confirming the hearing loss and the impact of this loss on daily activities/studies; this can be from a doctor or audiologist.

For blind or visually impaired students:

A letter confirming the level of sight loss and the impact of this loss on daily activities/studies; this can be from a doctor.

If certified as blind, severely sight impaired, sight impaired or partially sighted by a Consultant Ophthalmologist, medical evidence is still required although there is no requirement to detail the impact, as the impairment will be deemed to be a disability.

Providing evidence of a Specific Learning Difficulty

For students with dyslexia (and/ or other specific learning difficulties (SpLDs):

You will need to provide a report carried out by either an Educational Psychologist or a Specialist Teacher in accordance with the SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines.

Reports from 2007/08 onwards should contain a Practising Certificate number and state an issuing body e.g. British Psychological Society (BPS), Patoss or Health and Care Professions Council.

The report must have been produced after the age of 16 and must clearly state that you have Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. Dyslexia).

We cannot accept dyslexia screenings and JCQ exam recommendations as evidence of Dyslexia in higher education.

What happens if I cannot provide relevant medical evidence?

The Disability Service and funding bodies, such as Student Finance England, may not be able to accept your evidence if it does not contain all the necessary information and tests. Please note that the Disability Service may request more detailed evidence than will be required by a funding body for a Disabled Students' Allowances application, if the diagnosis or impact on your study is not clear.



Personal Learning Plan or Embedding Reasonable Adjustments in the Curriculum (ERAC)

What is a Personal Learning Plan?

The people who are involved in your teaching and learning are informed of the support you need through a document called a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) or Embedding Reasonable Adjustments within the Curriculum (ERAC) process. The PLP is a report which makes recommendations for what is known as 'reasonable adjustments'; this refers to the support that will be put in place to support your study due to your disability related needs. The ERAC process has been introduced specifically for students with mild to moderate Specific Learning Difficulties.

Some examples of recommendations include:

- permission to audio record taught sessions,
- support for disability related absence,
- examination support such as extra time, or language modified papers for D/deaf students.

The document also lists your responsibilities, as increased levels of independence and personal responsibility are expected from you at university, which may be different from what you have experienced at school or college.

You will be offered a one to one appointment with a Disability Adviser to discuss your support at university.

Personal Care Support

What is Personal Care Support?

Personal care is the practical help and support you may need in your daily life due to your disability, for example help with cooking, shopping or personal hygiene. You may already have a personal care package in place, but you may need a re-assessment before starting university. Your local Social Services Department is responsible for this aspect of your support. Disabled Students' Allowances only cover educational support, not disability related living costs. As personal care support can take a long time to arrange you should contact your local Social Services to discuss your requirements well in advance of starting university.

If you are an International student or EU student you will not normally be eligible for personal care support through Social Services and this type of support is not provided by the University. Therefore, you will need to budget and arrange this type of support before arriving in the United Kingdom or coming to university.



Accommodation

What should I do if I have specific accommodation needs?

MMU has a variety of accommodation available to students, details can be found on the MMU website:

www.mmu.ac.uk/accommodation

Wheelchair accessible study bedrooms with en-suite facilities are available in some halls of residence. There are vibrating or flashing light alert systems also available in some study bedrooms for D/deaf students.

If you have a specific need relating to accommodation it is important to contact Residential Services well in advance of coming to university. This is so Residential Services can assess the availability and suitability of such accommodation.

It is advisable for you to visit MMU to see accommodation and facilities on offer so you can discuss any problems well before you take up residence.

Accommodation - Manchester campuses 0161 247 2958 / MMU Cheshire 0161 247 5137

Any further questions?

See the Disability Service website at:

www.mmu.ac.uk/disabilityservice

or contact:

Disability Service – Manchester



Checklist

✓ Checklist

- Obtain suitable medical evidence or Educational Psychologist report
- Apply for Disabled Students Allowances, if eligible completing relevant application form
- Receive eligibility, for Disabled Students Allowances
- Attend 'Study Needs' Assessment
- Submit evidence to the Disability Service, along with completed Disclosure of Disability form
- Consider any additional needs (such as accommodation, personal care support)
- Arrange support set out in DSA approval letter
- Contact the Disability Service to arrange appointment to discuss course related support
- Attend appointment with Disability Service

Useful Contacts

Manchester Campuses

Disability Service

Employability Hub
Business School & Student Hub
All Saints Campus
Oxford Road
Manchester M15 6BH

Telephone +44 (0)161 247 3491

Fax +44 (0)161 247 6852

Email: disability.service@mmu.ac.uk

MMU Cheshire

MMU Cheshire

Student Services
Laurence Building
MMU Cheshire,
Crewe Campus,
Crewe Green Road,
Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 5DU

Telephone +44 (0)161 247 5725

Email: stsrvccheshire@mmu.ac.uk



[/DisabilityServiceMMU](https://www.facebook.com/DisabilityServiceMMU)



[@MMULDDS](https://twitter.com/MMULDDS)

This information is available in alternative formats, please contact the Disability Service on +44 (0)161 247 3491