



## Useful information for students with additional support needs in transition to HE

### 1. Preparation for Transition

- Preparing students for what to expect:
  - This may include raising awareness about what higher level study and living away from home involves.
  - How support may change or the steps necessary for organising continuing support in advance of course start date.
- Starting as early as possible
  - Using information available online, by phone or during in-person visits students can get a clearer idea of the demands of their course, as well as what the university is actually like;
  - Liaising with the Disability Team for advice about what is available and what they need to do to access support/resources available in-house and externally.
  - Think about how their disability/health condition may impact their learning. Active preparation in advance can significantly reduce issues and enhance the study experience
    - Eg, site navigation and familiarisation activities helpful for those with sensory and mobility impairments, as well as those with ASC. Students with MH conditions may receive information on local nhs and charitable support services.
    - If there is an EHCP, the process of ceasing a plan helps to focus those involved on the **health and social care** elements rather than just education.

### 2. Personal and Social Care Support

- Personal care support whilst at university is distinct from the educational support that the university may provide. (see below)
- It is funded by Social Services Departments in the area **where the student lives.**
- This can be used to pay for **additional student accommodation for live-in support** if needed.
- **Social care support** (eg, a PA, equipment and resources). Students eligible for this should apply to be assessed for **Personal Independence Payments (PIPs) with their home local authority.**
- Employing Care Providers - LAs encourage students to find domiciliary care providers or advertise themselves to directly employ care workers. Care providers need to have completed DBS checks and induction training etc. Students should ask their LAs for advice about this.

### 3. Health Care Services

- Child to Adult Transition: School leavers aged 18, accessing regular health services will be in transition from child to adult health care services. Students cannot assume continuity of care, and need to request active referral to Adult services either in the home locality or that of the university.

#### 4. Disclosing a disability on UCAS

- Makes HEPs aware of the student and to begin the process of communication to clarify details;
- Allows relevant preparation in advance of study, eg, inductions to independent living, life skills; manage any medical conditions they have i.e. ordering prescriptions/sharps bins/taking their medication; communicating with staff; study skills;
- Advice regarding arranging any personal care arrangements prior to starting university;

#### 5. Types of support available at university

- **HEP In-house support**
  - Universities – higher education providers - offer educational support and ‘reasonable adjustments’ depending on needs and circumstances, such as arrangements for examinations, education support workers in lectures, seminars and tutorials. Students are advised to look at the website and/or contact the university of choice for specific details in their case.
- **Disabled Students Allowances**
  - Students can apply for funding from the Disabled Students’ Allowances, attend a study needs assessment producing recommendations for a range of items, including equipment, assistive technology to aid study, accessories, additional travel costs arising from disability, specialist 1:1 support such as AT and Non AT based Study Skills, specialist mentoring support.
  - Students can apply from March onwards of the university entry year. More about this process in the DSA section.

#### 6. Accommodation

- Early booking is strongly recommended.
- Check when intended university accommodation is open for booking.
- Adapted rooms get booked up very quickly;
- If further adaptations are needed, the chosen university’s accommodation team need to know as soon as possible.
- Requests should be reasonable and timely, ie, 6 weeks or more in advance of moving in.
- Most universities’ on-line booking forms have space to indicate specific requirements.

#### 7. Eligibility for support at university.

- To access support whether in-house adjustments or DSA funded support, medical conditions must be confirmed in writing by a qualified medical practitioner.
  - Eg, a GP practice, use **headed paper, signed by the practitioner, with a practice stamp** if applicable.
  - SFE and SFW have medical evidence request forms that students can ask their GPs to complete as evidence.
- Diagnostic evidence needs to
  - confirm the diagnosis

- confirm that the condition is expected to last over 12 months.
- Outline the expected impact on study-related activities (including sleep disturbance, motivation, concentration, energy levels, ability to travel independently to and from campus etc., as well as reference to academic tasks such as reading, writing, communication, attendance etc.)
- Diagnostic assessment for specific learning differences, eg, Dyslexia, a full educational psychologist report written to SASC guidelines.
  - FE with access arrangements or JCQ form 8s, not suitable for HEPs to provide the full range of support.
  - Disability and Inclusion webpages for chosen University may have information about what to do if the student doesn't have a full diagnostic assessment.
  - Some universities offer assistance with the costs of obtaining a diagnostic assessment.
- EHCPs
  - In principle funding bodies now accept EHCPs. In practice, depending on whether the information needed to confirm eligibility for funding is included in the EHCP, the funding body may ask for more information.

#### **8. Types of DSA funded support available:**

- Students attend for a study needs assessment, a detailed discussion with a needs assessor about the impact on study of the eligible condition, and specific items of support that would ease those impacts. This is a valuable experience, enabling students to put their condition and their study demands into context. This often reduces worries and brings greater optimism as they begin to see how they can gain greater access to their course and study effectively. Their assessment centre is also there for advice if further questions arise about DSA funded support for the duration of their course of study.
- Recommendations for support are made on the basis of study needs arising as a consequence of the eligible condition authorised by the funding body, so not all items will be relevant for students. Needs are decided on a case by case basis.
- Students are expected to have their own computer, or to pay a £200 contribution to a computer funded by the DSA to run assistive technology programs.
- Ergonomic equipment, for students with relevant conditions
- Assistive Technologies – may be recommended, eg, software mind mapping, screen-reading, voice recognition software for dictating ideas, or accessories for notetaking
- Specialist AT Training in the use of AT for study is important for enabling students to be able to use their AT with confidence to bypass study obstacles.

## 9. Applying for DSA funded support

- Application – start early. Students can apply from March onward as the DSA application form for the year of commencing study becomes available. eg, March 2020 for September 2020 start date.
- Submit suitable medical evidence with the application to the funding body.
- There are various stages:
  - i. Application to confirmation of eligibility, if the medical evidence is accepted
  - ii. Booking the assessment of study needs
  - iii. Attending the study needs assessment
  - iv. The report being sent to the funding body
  - v. The funding body agreeing funding and so authorising support;
  - vi. DSA funded support being put in place in practice, eg
    1. Ergonomic equipment/accessories, if recommended, may require an onsite inspection to ensure that the equipment is suitable for the space.
    2. Assistive Technology Equipment/software and Training.
    3. Specialist Non-Medical Helper Support – Study Skills Tutor, Specialist mentor.
    4. Travel – liaising with taxi provider to ensure that the services are understood and operating smoothly if applicable.
    5. Reclaiming agreed general expenses, eg printing costs or other miscellaneous items.