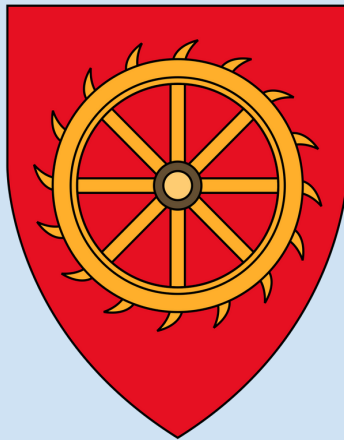


Booklet of useful things to know and do before arriving as a disabled student



Me! Mhairi, your disabilities rep

Disabled Students

"DOES IT COUNT?"

Mental Health, Disability, and
What's Available to You

**NOT ALL DISABILITIES
LOOK LIKE THIS**

Disabilities can be visible or
invisible - and most are the latter!



The EQUALITY ACT 2010...

States that any long-term
impairment - mental or physical -
which substantially affects your
ability to carry out normal daily
activities counts as a disability.

* SOME EXAMPLES *

Depression/Anxiety	Cystic Fibrosis	IBD	
Personality Disorders	ASD	Fibromyalgia	
PTSD	Chronic Fatigue	IBS	Chronic Pain
Diabetes	Dyslexia/Dyspraxia/Dyscalculia etc.		Lupus
Hard of Hearing	Epilepsy	ADHD	And Many More!

What's Available to You

If you feel like you fit the above - you have the right to
REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

This can include: Large print materials, focused reading
lists, recording lectures, extra time or rest breaks in
exams (and lots of other things you might need!)

Book an appointment with the Disability Resource
Centre, or speak to your college/CUSU's Disabled
Students' Officer to find out more!

Congrats on getting into Cambridge! I know as a disabled student starting uni can be especially stressful with all the things you need to get sorted, but the more you can get done now, the easier it is when you arrive.

Sorry if the guide here is a bit long and seems overwhelming, don't panic! I've just tried to include as much information as possible and show you how much support there is from lots of different places.

Please still have a look even if you don't consider yourself 'disabled': the term covers so much including mental health and specific learning difficulties. It is always better to have support in place, and you would be surprised how much help there is available.



Disabled students allowance:

- Covers equipment costs, extra travel or other costs as a result of your disability.
- Anyone can apply, it is not means tested nor is it a loan you will not have to pay anything back
- Apply online: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>
- Needs assessment:
 - Don't stress about this it's not an interview or interrogation,
 - The people are looking to see how they can help you and will suggest things you may never have thought of.
- Ordering equipment
 - This can be a bit complicated as you have to wait for a report and then claim the equipment through specific website: so it's best to get this sorted asap so you have everything ready for starting uni
- <https://www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/funding/>

Disability resource centre (DRC):

<https://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/incoming-students>

- This is the Cambridge centre responsible for helping disabled students at Cambridge.
- Fill out the student information form (in link above)
- It is worth getting in touch with them before you start and if possible organise a meeting with them
 - Deb Taylor is the advisor for Catz
- They will advise you on what help the uni can offer you
 - Cambridge takes on some of the responsibilities that are usually covered by the DSA: such as in the case of non-medical helpers (note takers, library/laboratory/practical/examination assistants, mentors)
 - The DRC can help you apply for DSA if you find you need it after starting uni, or just offer support in the process if you are applying before term starts
- A student support document (SSD) will be created
 - This will be sent to supervisors, lecturers, tutors etc (but you can control who sees it)
 - The document lays out what specific adjustments need to be made for you

- This can be typed essays, extended deadlines, accessible rooms, later starttimes (generally not possible for lectures though), recording lectures, handouts in advance, exam arrangements the list goes on!
- Transitional events
 - The DRC will run transitional events before the start of term I would recommend going if you can (they can cover travel costs)
 - They provide lots of information about the possible support available and general life at Cambridge as a disabled student
 - It's also an opportunity to meet other students before you start and it's nice to know that you won't be the only person in a similar situation

College:

<https://www.caths.cam.ac.uk/study-us/undergraduate-study/students-disabilities-learning-difficulties-autism-illnesses-and>

<https://www.caths.cam.ac.uk/about-us/visiting-and-viewing-college/accessibility-guide>

- College should be aware of your disability if you disclosed it on UCAS
- Otherwise the college Nurse sends out a survey to all students before the start where you can disclose necessary information
- There is also a Freshers questionnaire that will also include information about accommodation
 - Request can be made for level access rooms, ensuite, fridge in your room (if needed for medications/avoiding contamination etc - would recommend as gyp fridges can be slightly grim)
 - You should not be charged extra for these requirements
- David Bainbridge is the disabilities tutor so feel free to get in touch with him with any questions, or just to check in

Mental health and counselling services

- University counselling service (UCS)
 - What they offer
 - Free counselling, including BME specific counselling.
 - Group sessions and workshops
(<http://www.counselling.cam.ac.uk/studentcouns/studentgroups>).

- Information leaflets on a wide range of specific student issues, as well as carefully selected self-help and signposting to specialist websites.
 - How can you use it
 - Self-referral
 - Fill in the 'Student Pre-Counselling Form'
 - <https://forms.counselling.cam.ac.uk/titanium/wcmenu.aspx>
 - Contact your tutor or any college staff
- College counselling
 - This is for more urgent or longer term counselling
 - You cannot self-refer for college counselling but instead must be referred by a member of college staff (tutor, nurse, chaplain, senior tutor)
- Check out the Welfare Guide for more info on using counselling services and other mental health support

GP

- It is worth registering at the GP during freshers week: you can either register there fully or as a temporary patient
 - It depends how you want to do it, as you spend almost equal time in Cambridge and at home, so you can either register in Cambridge and then temporarily register at home during the holidays or visa versa
- During the registering process (very easy, as during freshers week they have a system for students registering)
 - You will most likely be flagged up during the initial assessment to have a later appointment to sort out prescriptions etc in more detail
- Closest GP is right opposite college: Trumpington Street Medical Practice

Final bits I promise!

Join the 'cambridge uni dsc community' for general disabled student community
 There are also more specific facebook groups: mental health, chronic pain/fatigue, BME, digestive, neurodivergent, deaf/hard of hearing, PCOS

<https://www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/facebook-support-groups/>

Check out the student union disabled campaign website, which is full of information including a uni 101 and disabled 101:

<https://www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/resources/>

<https://www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/disabled-101/>

Sign up for the first ever disabled students campaign family scheme!

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdFtPHGp3T5386mIVa8RuR4tx-Q9CgTUaneC_Z1lcna5wlzZg/viewform?fbclid=IwAR3Rcm9hiyIUwmZmM0HU2pAVL-pKyNedHzv4cZJV8I8M2BYbi4mQjIW53lo

In case you are still unsure about what you should be doing, or if you have any questions, or just fancy getting in touch add me on facebook, and send me a message if you have any questions or just want a bit of advice. I will try to answer your questions the best I can, or I will find someone who has a similar experience, as unfortunately I cannot be an expert on all disabilities!

