



## A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SEND SUPPORT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Each year, more than 60,000 students with physical or mental health needs, long-term illnesses, or learning differences apply to university or college in the UK through UCAS. There's a wide range of support available to help them succeed with their studies and manage daily life.

### Accessing support

Young people starting higher education may find it hard to tell people about themselves and their needs. One positive reason to tell people is so the student can get the right support at university or college. A good place to start could be when providing a personal statement or in their UCAS application, when applying for a place.

At university or college, there should be a designated person from the disability support team to help and give students support. They will meet with the student (and sometimes parents or carers) to discuss what support is needed. This is a collaborative process, and students are encouraged to share what has worked for them in the past.

Under the Equality Act 2010, universities and colleges in the UK are legally required to make reasonable adjustments to support students with their SEND needs. This means they must take steps to remove or reduce any barriers that could put a student at a disadvantage compared to their peers.

These might include:

- Providing learning materials in accessible formats (e.g. large print, audio, or digital versions).
- Allowing extra time for coursework or exams.
- Offering support with study skills, using assistive technology, or navigating the library.
- Assigning a support worker to help with organisation and time management.
- Arranging specialist equipment or software to aid learning.



### Further information

You can read more about a young person's rights to reasonable adjustments from the websites below:

- Disability Rights UK's [factsheet on adjustments for disabled students](#)
- The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service's (UCAS) [guidance for disabled students](#).

### Financial support

Students with a disability are also entitled to apply for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). This is extra money available to buy any specialist equipment or support needed to meet their needs whilst they study. For more information on Disabled Students' Allowance, [please click here](#).



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## FAQS

### **Does my child need to share their EHCP with university or college?**

An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will no longer apply when your child goes to university. It can, however, be a good idea to share the plan with the university they want to go to. This will help them understand their needs and make sure the right reasonable adjustments are put into place.

### **Does my child need to have a diagnosis to qualify for support in higher education?**

No, they don't need to have a diagnosis to share a condition or impairment through UCAS, but they may need supporting evidence when applying for Disabled Students' Allowance.

### **Where should my child share their SEND information on the UCAS application?**

In the 'More about you' section application, they should select the disability from a list of options, and give some brief information in the free text box if they wish. They may also want to write more about their SEND needs in their personal statement.

### **How do I find out how inclusive a particular university or college is?**

In higher education, colleges and universities should have a Student Charter. The Charter says what they are doing for students. It might have a section on equality and diversity. You could ask for information to do with another law called the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). You should check your provider's annual PSED report to see their inclusion metrics and planned actions.

### **Are there any courses my child would be restricted from studying due to their disability?**

If your child wants to study medicine, nursing, or teaching, they may be asked about their health. This is because these careers have 'fitness to practise' rules set by professional organisations. These rules help make sure that people going into these jobs can do them safely and meet the demands of the role.

As part of this, students might need to:

- Fill out a health questionnaire
- Have a health check

Having a disability does not mean a young person cannot become a teacher or health professional. Universities must consider how they can make reasonable adjustments to help disabled students succeed in these careers.

### **What financial support could my child have access to?**

In higher education, your child might be able to get Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). This is money that can help pay for the cost of extra equipment, non-medical help or extra study support. Recent research shows that disabled students who receive DSA get better final grades than other disabled students who decide to do things on their own without support.

Some universities have money available if a student is struggling to pay for their studies. These are called hardship funds. Universities have different rules around who can apply for this money and how much you can get. For more information, contact the university, or visit the [Government's website](#).