

# Ability Plus Newsletter

October/November 2010

Welcome all new and continuing students. Each term we forward to your Lancaster email addresses a copy of the new **Ability-Plus newsletter**, which is for students with disabilities, dyslexia and other support needs. If you do not wish to continue to receive this, please let us know by emailing us at [disability@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:disability@lancaster.ac.uk)

# DISABILITIES SERVICE

The Disabilities Service is the first point of contact for all students with disabilities, dyslexia, and other support needs. If you have any support needs, please make an appointment to come and see us as soon as possible.

## Who are we?

<p>Christine Quinn Manager/Head of Colleges Liaison and Student Wellbeing University House ext. 92109 Email: <a href="mailto:c.quinn@lancaster.ac.uk">c.quinn@lancaster.ac.uk</a></p>	<p>Debbie Hill Disabilities Services Disabilities Adviser A32 University House Ext: 92111 Email: <a href="mailto:d.hill@lancaster.ac.uk">d.hill@lancaster.ac.uk</a></p>
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## Making your academic departments aware of your support needs

The Disabilities Service will have forwarded to you a draft copy of Statement of Support Needs and an essay cover sheet (if appropriate). Please do make any amendments if you wish and when you are happy with it, return it to us and we will forward to your departments so that they are aware what arrangements you need whilst studying at Lancaster.



If you would like another copy, or would like us to send a copy to another department please let us know.

When moving into your second, third or postgraduate years, we can remind departments of your support needs. If you would like us to do this, please contact us.

## Never Too Early to Think about Examinations

Adapted Examinations may take some time to arrange, particularly if a scribe has to be found for you. If you are likely to need adapted arrangements for *timed tests* (which are in the first term of the academic year) and *examinations* (early ones in April 2011), it is essential that you come and discuss this with us as early as possible. If you leave it until the last minute to request alternative arrangements for your examinations, we may not be able to meet your needs. We cannot guarantee to meet requests made after the last day of the lent (spring) term.



**PLEASE NOTE:** If you have a specific learning difficulty or dyslexia please make sure that a copy of your psychologist's assessment has been delivered to the Disabilities Service, as we are unable to request alternative examination arrangements without this. The assessment should have been carried out by an appropriately qualified Educational Psychologist and should have been conducted since age 16, taking into account your study needs at university.

If you are unsure about your situation or require an updated assessment, please contact the Disabilities Service (ext: 92111) to arrange an appointment with the Psychologist. Assessment can usually be carried out on campus during term time. We may be able to contribute a small amount towards the cost of the assessment from ALF funds.

## Disabled Students' Allowances 2010/11

Disabled students allowances are there to help you access the support you need in HE. You have a right to ask your funder to determine if you are eligible. Usually you will be eligible for Disabled Students Allowances (DSA) if you are an undergraduate or postgraduate, part-time or full-time student with disabilities, who is eligible for tuition fee support from: Student Finance England, Local Education Authority in England and Wales /a Local Education and Library Board in Northern Ireland or the Student Awards Agency for Scotland.

Undergraduate students from Southern Ireland may also be eligible although postgraduate students are not at the moment. Postgraduate students funded by research councils or receiving a bursary from the General Social Care Council may also be eligible. DSAs are not means tested.

The DSAs are to help pay for extra costs which you may incur on your course because of a disability. DSAs are available to full-time and part-time students with disabilities although part-time students must usually be studying at least 50% of a full-time course.

You can only claim for costs related to your disability if they are directly connected with your studies. specialist equipment you need for studying - for example, computer software

a non-medical helper, such as a note-taker or reader

extra travel costs you have to pay because of your disability

other costs - for example, tapes or Braille paper

## MAKING AN APPLICATION

Follow the link for more information and advice on how to apply:

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/DG\\_171624](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/DG_171624)

If you need a first diagnostic assessment for dyslexia, it will cost about £380 plus VAT, and it will be your responsibility to cover the cost of this. You may be eligible for some help with this expense from the University's Access to Learning Fund (ALF) see section below. The Student Finance England or other funder will usually cover the cost of a subsequent assessment for study aids and strategies. The Disabilities Service will be happy to help you with this process. We can arrange for an assessment on campus.

If the funder agrees you are eligible, they will refer you to an Assessment Centre or other professional service for a Study Aids and Strategies Assessment (SAAS). We have an assessment centre on campus so it is quite easy to fit around your academic commitments.

Once your SAAS is completed, it will be sent to you to approve before sending it to the funder. Once the funder has approved the assessment report, they will write to you to explain what to do next.

If you have not heard from your funder after a few weeks, contact them to find out what is happening.

## Assessment Centre

Lancaster University has its own Assessment Centre. The purpose of an assessment is to identify study aids and strategies required to provide equal access to the curriculum, within the context of a chosen course of study.



Once your funder has agreed that you are eligible for assessment you can contact the Assessment Centre here at the university by emailing: [assessmentcentre@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:assessmentcentre@lancaster.ac.uk) or ringing ext. 92753.

## Access to learning Fund (ALF)

The Access to Learning Fund has been established by the Government to provide discretionary support for students where continuation in higher education might be inhibited by financial constraints, or where students face severe financial difficulties. Students with a disability needing special help to enable them to continue their studies may be eligible. For more information pick up a leaflet and application form from "The Base", University House, or visit the Student Based Services website at <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/student-services/funding/alf.htm>



## Lancaster University Library

If you have any questions about the Library or would like an individual tour please contact Fiona Rhodes. She can discuss any issues you have and ways they can be overcome. Either ring Fiona on 01524 592519 email her on [f.rhodes@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:f.rhodes@lancaster.ac.uk) or call to see her at the service desk in the library. Ask at reception for directions.

## [Library News](#)

Automatic push button opening doors have been installed on the wooden doors at the entrance to the Library. The push button is to the far right of the entrance going in, and the again the far right coming out.

If you will be unable to hear the fire alarm in the library you can collect a vibrating pager from the reception desk to use whilst you are in the library.

The Library has a new home page on the web, if you have any problems navigating around the page call and see Fiona and she will assist you.

***Do you know what book you want from the Library but you can't find the book or get to the shelf?***

You can get help with **"Remote Access"**

If you contact Fiona she can arrange for you to request books that are available on the shelf, through the catalogue, for collection from the Issue Desk at a time convenient to you. (They will keep them up to 1 week)

If you have a personal assistant or friend who helps you we can arrange for them to have a library card so that they can collect your books on your behalf. The details of the books collected will then appear on your Library card.

## **Student Learning Support - via your faculty**

Lancaster University provides students with an integrated language and learning support service to enable students to tackle their particular study issues. The Effective Learning Support adviser works in close partnership with the Disabilities

Service and Student Based Services to respond to specific individual learning needs.

Details can be found on the Effective Learning website at <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/celt/sldc/intro/sldc.htm>

Dyslexia Notice board

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/celt/sldc/support/dyslexianotice.htm>

Further study help

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/celt/sldc/courses/elp%20timetable.htm>

Log in to ELLVIS (Effective Language and Learning Virtual Information Service)

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/celt/sldc/>

## **Assisting with Research Projects**

From time to time, the Disabilities Service is asked to participate in research projects and requested to mail out questionnaires to students on our database. Please be assured that researchers are not informed of your personal details. Only you know you have received a request to participate and it is entirely up to you whether or not you make contact with the researchers or complete and return any questionnaires. In some cases, we arrange for the completed questionnaires to be returned to the Disabilities Service office, from where they can be forwarded to the researcher. In other cases, responses may be made direct. In either case, confidentiality rules OK!



## Campus Accommodation for next academic year (2011/12)



I know many of you have only just arrived, but if you will need to stay on campus next year because of a reason related to your disability or medical condition please let both your College Residence Office and Debbie Hill know so that arrangements can be made. Watch out for information around the college about accommodation next year.

### Keeping an eye on the campus

If you find any areas of the University inaccessible or difficult for you to use, please let us know so we can alert the appropriate people. Similarly, if you have any unexpected access issues with courses, please let us know.



*Any comments, queries, suggestions please to*

Debbie Hill  
Disabilities Service  
Colleges Liaison and Student Wellbeing,  
'A32' University House  
ext. 92111

*Disabilities Service webpage*

<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/depts/disabilities/index.htm>

### Health Issues and Keeping Healthy

1. If you find you need to miss one of your lectures/seminars because of illness, please make sure that you see a doctor/or the Nurse Unit, then collect a self certification



form from your department. Your department may request medical evidence.

2. It is best to try and keep healthy whilst you are at university, especially around examination time. Here is the link to some good advice about managing stress.



<http://www.lancs.ac.uk/studentservices/counselling/concerns/stress.htm>

3. For those who are keen runners the main perimeter road around campus is just short of 1.35 kilometres long including the perimeter of Alexandra Park.



4. The University Sports Centre will be taking requests for memberships throughout the academic year. Check out their website at <http://www.lancs.ac.uk/lancuni/sports.htm>. The Centre is accessible via a ramp from the spine and the swimming pool has a hoist to lift swimmers into the water. The Centre offers discounted rates for both wet and dry activities and staff are keen to help if they can, so do ask for assistance if you need it.

5. The Student's Union Athletics Union has around 31 different clubs (<http://www.lusu.co.uk/sports>) so if you are interested in any sport from Volleyball to Canoeing, this is the place to start to meet like-minded people.



## Counselling Service (Ground floor, University House)



When you need someone to talk to about what is happening in your life and how you feel about it, you can have a chat with a Counsellor. Call either The Base on ext. 592525 or ring the Counselling Service at ext. 92690 or email them at

[counselling@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@lancaster.ac.uk)

## Centre for Employability, Enterprise and Careers

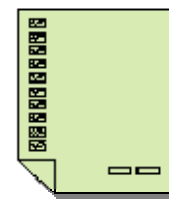
It is never too late to start checking out the Centre for Employability Enterprise and Careers. The sooner they, and you, know your plans, the better they can help you with your goals. If you don't yet have plans for your future you can check out the career planning software to give you a hand.

<http://careers.lancs.ac.uk/>



## ANY FEEDBACK?

Our aim is to make our best efforts to ensure you receive appropriate support throughout your studies. We welcome constructive feedback which can be used to help us to improve the service.



If you feel unhappy with any aspect of the support you receive from the Disabilities Service, please let us know, so that we can put it right.

## **Budding Author?**

Would you like to share your thoughts/ideas/advice/news/views with other students? If so, contact Disabilities Service, A32, University House if you would like to put something in any of our newsletters.



**For further information about events in the Lancaster area check out the website below**

**<http://www.lancasterukonline.net/whatson/index.htm#thismonth>**