Disability and Neurodiversity Support (DNS)

Contents

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE BIRMINGHAM

Our Service to you

Here at University College Birmingham, we have a dedicated Disability and Neurodiversity Support (DNS) team on hand to support you across the duration of your studies.

This support may include:

- Support sessions in the Academic Skills Centre.
- Screening and support for students with some Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) e.g. Dyslexia.
- Reasonable adjustments for exams, taught sessions and course material (where appropriate).
- Assistance with applications for the Disabled Students' Allowance.
- In-class support from an Academic Support Worker (college and sixth form only).
- Various assistive technologies, and training on how to use them effectively.
- A dedicated Mental Health and Well-being Team. (Provided by Student Services)

Please note: all services arranged or provided by the Disability and Neurodiversity Support (DNS) team are subject to satisfactory supporting documentation submitted by the individual student.

Types of disability and disclosure

At University College Birmingham, we pride ourselves on our ability to provide a wholly inclusive environment for our students, supporting all abilities to achieve positive outcomes, irrespective of any SpLDs or additional needs.

These may include:
- Dyslexia/Dyspraxia/Dyscalculia
- Autism/Asperger's Syndrome
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Epilepsy
- Mobility difficulties
- Sensory difficulties

Telling us about your disability

Disclosing your disability is a positive step towards realising your potential and fulfilling your career aspirations.

We recommend that you provide information about your disability on your application form when you first apply for a course at UCB. Alternatively, you can inform your course tutors, who will then contact the Disability and Neurodiversity Support team (DNS), or book an appointment with a Specialist Support Tutor, who will be able to provide you with advice and support.

To make an appointment to see a Specialist Support Tutor, please email: DNSupport@ucb.ac.uk

When disclosing a disability, we want to ensure that we support you in every way that we possibly can. To do this, we may need to share information with other staff members at UCB, though this will only be done with your permission.

If you choose to not disclose your disability or neurodiversity, or limit access to the disclosure, we will do our best to support you. However, this may limit your access to our full range of support.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

Details of all disabilities disclosed to us will remain completely confidential unless written consent to share between departments is provided. This consent will remain in force whilst you are a student at UCB, unless you otherwise withdraw your consent. All information and personal details provided will be electronically stored and/or as paper records, both of which are securely protected and processed according to the guidelines of the Data 4-c Protection Act (1998) and GDPR (2018). Please note that if you consent to have a Learning Support Plan (LSP) this will be shared with appropriate staff e.g. Exams and curriculum staff. If students do not give consent for the plan to be shared then the reasonable adjustments discussed as part of the plan may not be implemented.

Support Process for Higher Education (HE)

At University College Birmingham, we will endeavour to ensure that your time with us is enjoyable and that your degree studies are manageable, by providing reasonable adjustments to meet your academic needs.

- You should declare your need on application for your chosen course.
- You will then be contacted by the Disability and Neurodiversity Support team (DNS) requesting supporting documentation of your need e.g., a letter from a medical practitioner which outlines diagnosis and its effects, or in the case of a learning need, a diagnostic report completed by a qualified SpLD assessor or educational psychologist (EHCPs will not be accepted as sufficient evidence).
- Once received, it will then be reviewed to assess its suitability.
- You will then be contacted again to start putting an individual Learning Support Plan (LSP) together, where the specifics of your needs can be addressed, in addition to identifying provision that can be put in place.

Support plans may include provisions such as:
- In-class assistance (e.g. rest breaks, note taking devices, coloured overlays).
- Written assignment concessions
- Written exam support (e.g. extra time, assistive technology)
- Alternative assessments (subject to curriculum specification)
- Placement support
- Other (medication storage, use of guide dogs, practical support)

Please note: it is important that you start your application for Disabled Students' Allowance alongside this process, which is done via Student Finance England (SFE).

Additional Support

Starting university is an exciting new chapter in your educational journey, where you will acquire and develop lifelong skills that will support you going forward into your chosen career paths. However, during your studies you may feel at times overwhelmed with the expected workload. We will support you through these periods where possible by:

- Providing 1-1 specialist support aimed at developing academic and study skills
- Providing assistive technology for notetaking and proofreading

For students who experience difficulties in relation to the autistic spectrum, you may:
- Receive 1-1 mentoring support

Disability, Neurodiversity and Personal Support
Please note: if you have a health need, disability or neurodiversity that may affect your day to day living such as a visual or hearing impairment, diabetes, epilepsy or mobility difficulties, please ensure that you disclose this information on your application for accommodation. (Please note accommodation services are managed by Student Services)

If, due to your disability, you have any specific accommodation requirements and/or will require assistance with day to day living tasks, please refer to the UCB specialised accommodation page at: www.ucb.ac.uk/student-life/specialised-accommodation/

Please note: for personal care, you will need to contact your local authority social services.

In-House Screener

If you have never been formally diagnosed with any specific learning difficulty or disability but feel as though you may have additional needs that are preventing you from achieving your desired outcome within your coursework, you may be eligible for an in-house screener.

Our digital screener will provide us with an overview of your individual strengths and weaknesses in your reading and writing skills but does not constitute a full diagnostic of a specific learning difficulty.

To enquire about our in-house screener, please contact: DNSupport@ucb.ac.uk

Disabled Students' Allowance

If you are a Higher Education student living in the UK who has received a diagnosis of any form of disability or neurodiversity including...
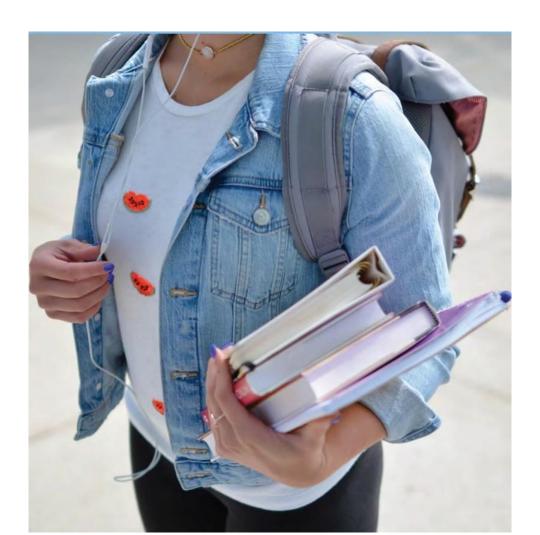
- Long term health conditions
- A mental health condition
- Or an SpLD such as dyslexia

...you may be eligible to apply for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) providing you meet the definition and criteria of disability, as described by the Equality Act 2010, which can be found here:
www.gov.uk/definition-of-disability-under-equality-act-2010

We encourage all students who believe they are eligible for DSA to apply for it as soon as possible to prevent any delays in receiving the allowance, prior to the beginning of the academic year.

For further assistance in the application process for Disabled Students' Allowance, please contact: DNSupport@ucb.ac.uk

Support Process for Further Education (FE)

At University College Birmingham, we will endeavour to ensure that your time with us is enjoyable, and that your college course studies are manageable, by providing specifically tailored support packages to meet your individual requirements.

These Support Packages may include:
- Exam concessions
- In-class support (with an Academic Support Worker)
- One hour per week of 1:1 support with the Academic Skills Centre in Summer Row
- Assistive Technology
- Out-of-class support

How to access support
If you wish to access all or certain aspects of the support we provide to students completing college courses, then you will need to provide us with supporting documentation of your disability or neurodiversity. This will generally be in the form of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), a Learner Support Plan, or a letter from your doctor or mental health practitioner.

For queries regarding your supporting documentation please see our FE facing Disability and Neurodiversity Support (DNS) team on the 6th floor of The Link building, or write to evidence@ucb.ac.uk
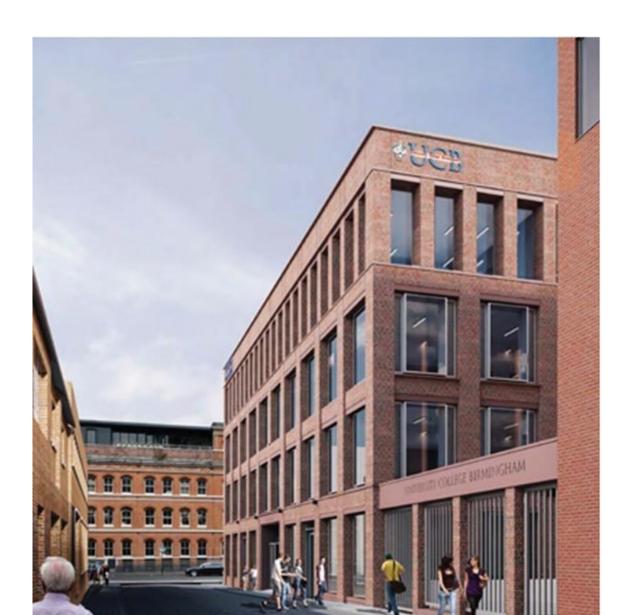
Exam Concessions

If you believe you are entitled to exam concessions such as extra time or a scribe, then use the relevant contact details below. You will be required to provide information regarding your difficulties, including supporting documentation.

For HE please notify a Specialist Support Tutor at DNSupport@ucb.ac.uk

For FE please notify the FE Access Arrangement Co-ordinator and Assessor as soon as possible by emailing FEExamsSupport@ucb.ac.uk. However, if you are unable to provide this supporting documentation, we may need to reassess you to ensure that you receive the appropriate exam concessions that you are entitled to. In these instances, an appointment will be made for an assessment of your reading, writing and processing skills.

Please note: this assessment is **not** a full diagnostic of any SpLD or disability. However, we can provide information and advice on how to access this if required.

Transitioning into Further and Higher Education

"Transition is a contested concept... which plays out very differently for different groups of students."
(French, Kempson and Randall, 2016).

We understand that transitioning into a higher level of education can be a daunting process and is a completely individual experience for every person. Finding your feet at a new institution can be difficult and unsettling, however, here at University College Birmingham, we will try to make that transition a little bit easier.

Periodically, Disability and Neurodiversity Support will run events targeted at new students who may need some additional support at getting to know their new environment, so be sure to look out for these being advertised.

However, if you are feeling overwhelmed, then you are welcome to visit us ground floor of Baskerville House, where we can provide advice and support as well as signpost you towards our available on- site services.

Health and Wellbeing Services
UCB has a dedicated Health and Wellbeing team who can be found in the Student Services office (Ground floor, Baskerville House), which is comprised of five key functions:
- Counselling
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Advice
- Nurse and First Aid
- Wellbeing Courses and Workshops
- Self-help information via Canvas

Nursing Service

You can access our on-site nurse for a drop-in service, located on the 3rd floor of Summer Row. The nurse will be able to provide you with practical advice and assistance for as long as you are a student with us. This includes issues such as:

- General health advice, such as smoking, diet, on-going illness or health concerns
- Contraception advice
- Advice on how to register with local GPs and dentists, and how to claim subsequent costs
- Provide non-prescription analgesics
- Treat cuts, burns, scalds and any other minor injuries

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our mental health and wellbeing team are available to support you with a wide range of difficulties, including if you are suffering with consistent low moods and associated worries, stress and anxieties, relationship difficulties, trouble with sleeping, low self-esteem or are dealing with loss and grief. In certain circumstances, it may be that our team also help you to access support outside UCB.

In order to access support with our mental health and wellbeing team, please fill out the registration form which can be found via the student portal under the 'student services' tab. Our team will assess applications as quickly as possible, normally within a 24-hour period. However, during peak times this may take up to 48 hours. The team will then be in touch via email with a date and time for an assessment session, which will be based on the availability you have indicated within your application.

Contacting UCB's Health and Wellbeing Team

Telephone: 0121 6041000 Ext: 2220   Email: wellbeing@ucb.ac.uk

Assistive Software and Web Browser Extensions

GRAMMARLY PREMIUM
There are lots of ways to check the spelling in your assignments, but what about the other features that go into a strong piece of writing?

Grammarly makes sure everything you type is not only correct, but also clear and easy to read. Grammarly's algorithms flag potential issues in the text and make context-specific suggestions to help with grammar, spelling and usage, wordiness, style, punctuation, and even plagiarism. The software explains the reasoning behind each suggestion, so you can make an informed decision about whether, and how, to correct an issue. Grammarly is also easy to use.

(Please note: Grammarly is good, but it is not perfect. It is your responsibility to ensure that your work adheres to UCB's referencing and presentation guidelines).

How to download Grammarly Premium to your device:
- Go to www.grammarly.com/enterprise/signup
- Provide your name, UCB student e-mail address and set up a password
- Check your inbox for the activation e-mail and click the link

Sonocent Glean

If you are a student who has sat our in-house assessment for strengths and weaknesses, and this has indicated traits of SpLDs, then you may be able to receive one of our complimentary licenses to the audio note taking software Sonocent Glean.

This software allows users to record, annotate, and engage more effectively with information slides and the information that is being delivered by your course lecturer. It has been designed to improve the learning and productivity of its users by combining audio recordings with multimedia notes.

How to acquire Sonocent Glean
This software is particularly effective for students who struggle to keep up with delivered information during lectures and seminars. If you feel as though Sonocent Glean might add to your learning experience, then speak to a Specialist Support Tutor on ground floor of Baskerville House.

Capture the moment with Glean

Glean is designed to make good note-taking come naturally. By recording conversations and presentations, Glean enables users to capture everything while **staying in the moment**. Glean never lets time, talent or insight go to waste.

It's intuitive. It's easy to get started.
It's shaped by customers.
And it's ready for you to give to students.

"Glean solves my 'forever' problem – having a rapid way of taking notes. Because it's so quick I don't lose track of what's going on"
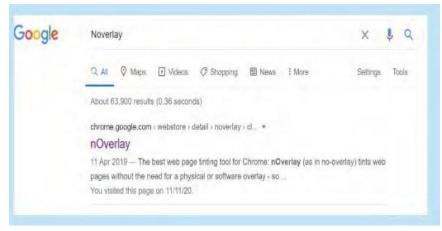
DSA Student, Nothumbria University

Why Glean?

- **Distraction-free note taking:** A simple user interface helps students better capture, organise and utilise information

- **Intuitive design:** The user is 1 minute away from opening their invite email to recording in class

- **It's fun:** Glean's all about student engagement. So we've created a meaningful way to take notes (we even have emojis 😬)

- **It's accessible:** Glean works online and offline, with Chromebooks, and automatically uploads files to the cloud
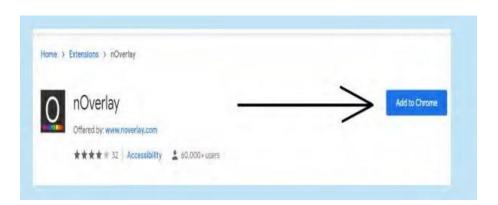
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nOverlay (for Google Chrome)

The best web page tinting tool for Chrome, nOverlay (as in no-overlay) tints web pages without the need for a physical or software overlay - so no more washed-out text or off-putting tinted image. It is designed exclusively to assist students with dyslexia towards reading digital text more easily.

To download, simply:

- Search nOverlay in Google Chrome

- Click 'add to Chrome'
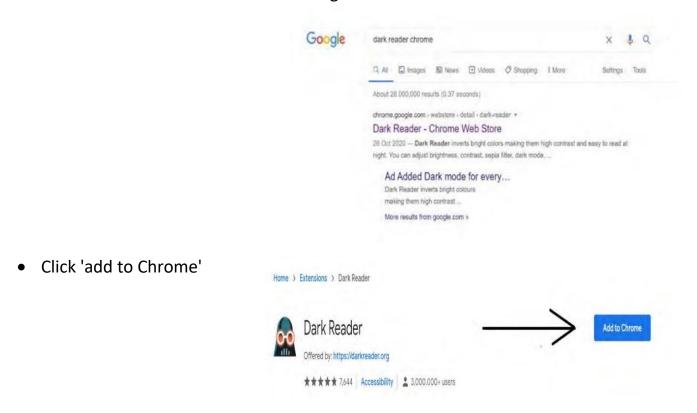

- Choose your preferred colour of screen overlay

Dark Reader (Google Chrome)

This is an easily downloadable tool that can be added to your Google Chrome browser. This eye-care extension enables night mode, creating dark themes for websites. Dark Reader inverts bright colours making them high contrast and easier to read, proving to be particularly useful for those who may suffer visual stress as a by-product of their SpLD, such as Dyslexia or Irlen's syndrome.

To download, simply:
- Search "Dark Reader Chrome" on Google

- Click 'add to Chrome'

- Toggle the 'on' button and adjust to your preferred settings