



**Information for applicants and Students
with Disabilities, medical conditions or Specific
Learning Difficulties (dyslexia)**

University of Chichester

Information relevant to applicants and students with disabilities and/or specific learning difficulties (dyslexia)

This document is available in alternative formats from the Disability and Academic Skills Services (contact disability@chi.ac.uk)

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1. Introduction and our policy on access

Welcome to the University of Chichester. The aim of this statement is to provide current information on facilities and services for students and prospective students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties.

We invite applications from students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties. Our objective is to provide suitable facilities, and implement policies that enable students to undertake and complete their studies successfully. We have achieved higher than average levels of students successfully completing their degrees and a higher than average level of student retention. We have also scored highly on surveys of student satisfaction for several years.

Our Strategic Plan states:

'We are committed to developing opportunities for study and access to study, so that participation in higher education is extended, and we seek to provide opportunities for the education of all students.'

Our Disability Equality Scheme, supported by other institutional policies, seek to provide equality of opportunity in education. We aim to provide a positive environment by developing and extending our network of services and support, welcoming student comment and feedback to help us achieve this goal.

The University's Disability Equality Group and Equality Diversity Committee are charged with ensuring that the University complies with current legislation and works proactively to improve facilities and services for students with disabilities.

2. Confidentiality

We advise you to disclose relevant information concerning any additional needs arising from you having a disability, health related condition or specific learning difficulty. Telling us about the needs you have allows us to consider what adjustments might need to be made to ensure your needs are met. Students are required to contact the Disability and Academic Skills Services (contact details in the back of this booklet) to discuss their needs in confidence with an advisor. Any information you divulge to the team is

treated as confidential. Information is only shared with specified and relevant members of staff in the University with your permission.

3. Our Admissions Process

All applicants are considered on the same standard academic requirements, but some subject study fields may specify particular content, grades or points scores. Please refer to our Prospectus for these specific details.

When filling out your application form it is helpful if you indicate any disability or special need. The form allows you to describe what support you feel you may need on the course. You may feel reluctant to reveal a disability or specific learning difficulty. Although this is understandable, we encourage you to provide as much relevant information as soon as possible as we cannot accept responsibility for any special provisions until we are informed. The advantage of discussing your requirements at application, or before, is that it allows you and the University to agree, at the earliest opportunity, what might be needed in order for you to study at Chichester and whether the facilities and services would meet your needs.

If you indicate on your application that you have a disability or specific learning difficulty this will not slow or affect the application process. Your application will continue to be assessed on academic suitability while your details will be passed to the Disability and Academic Skills Services to assess your support needs.

If you note a disability on your application form, the Disability and Academic Skills Services will contact you. The response you receive will depend on the information you have supplied. For example, the team may request some further information from you regarding your disability. They may write to you detailing the type of support they can provide. In some cases they may invite you for an informal visit to discuss your support needs and to allow you to consider the accessibility of the campus.

If you apply during '*Clearing*' in August, we advise you to contact the Disability Services immediately (see end of document for contact details). We need to point out that it may not be possible to arrange 'extensive support' at such short notice.

We are pleased to offer help and advice in applying for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) when applicable. You can apply for the DSA to Student Finance England or the equivalent authorities for Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland or the Channel Isles (see section on DSA).

Health Declarations

Some courses will require all applicants to complete a declaration of health. For example, for Teacher Training Courses (QTS) The Training and Development Agency (TDA) regulations require a declaration of health to assess your general health and fitness to teach. A disability is rarely regarded as a barrier to teaching. Applicants to Social Work are required to make a similar health declaration.

International and EU students

If you are an International or EU student, please contact the International Welfare Adviser, who can advise you about the support available to you, and what charges might apply (Contact m.oriordan@chi.ac.uk, tel. 01243 812146).

4. College campuses and accessibility

The College operates on two sites, one in Chichester at the Bishop Otter Campus, the other at Bognor Regis. Both campuses are fairly compact, and are situated on generally level ground with some sloping areas. Both campuses are within a mile of the town centre. The route from Bishop Otter Campus to Chichester town centre is uneven in parts and there is a slight hill. The route from the Bognor campus to the Bognor Regis centre is flat.

Physical access to every area of the campuses is currently not possible for wheelchair users, and for those with mobility difficulties. Most central services are accessible. For example, the Learning Resource Centre on both campuses, Student Services, the Registry, Academic Services, Reception, Chapel, Health Centre, Students Union, bar and both Refectories are all accessible. The University has embarked on a series of works to ensure all areas will be accessible within the near future. Where buildings or classes are not accessible, the University makes a commitment to reschedule classes to more suitable locations. There are accessible toilets located on both campuses. Currently one public toilet on Chichester campus has an electric hoist. As with any institution, applicants are advised to visit the campus before applying for a place.

We advise all our students to familiarise themselves with the College's Health and Safety Policy. Copies are displayed in all buildings on both campuses. The University has a policy for evacuation of students with mobility difficulties from above the ground floor in an emergency. If you would like to receive a copy of this, please phone the Disability and Academic Skills Services on 01243 812076 or e-mail disabilityacademicskills@chi.ac.uk.

Travel and parking

There is a regular inter-site bus service for students. This is accessible to most students with mobility difficulties. Students and staff who wish to park on campus are required to apply for a permit and to purchase scratch cards. However, Blue Badge holders can park free of charge. There are clearly marked Disabled Parking Bays for blue badge holders.

Please note, students living on campus are not allowed to bring their cars to the university. The only exception to this will be holders of a Blue Disabled Parking Badge. Some of the Off-Campus accommodation allows students to park cars for an annual fee. Queries regarding this should be directed to the Accommodation Team (see below).

5. Student Accommodation on Campus

There are a variety of halls of residence available on each campus, but accommodation for first year students is highly competitive. Applicants with certain types of disabilities or medical conditions can be prioritised for accommodation on campus for their first year. However, they need to contact the Disability Services to discuss this before the 1st April before the academic year commences.

Currently the Bognor campus offers all rooms on a catered basis, while the Bishop Otter Campus at Chichester offers a mixture of catered and self-catered. All self catered and catered residences have shared kitchenette facilities. All rooms are well equipped, comfortable and centrally heated. Internet access is also provided. Both campuses provide a large number of en-suite and shared facility rooms. If an applicant has a medical condition which means they will need a certain type of accommodation (self-catered, en-suite etc) then they should contact the Disability Services before 1st April with medical evidence of their medical condition.

On the Bishop Otter Campus there are eight, en-suite, adapted rooms suitable for wheelchair users. On the Bognor campus there are two, en-suite, adapted rooms suitable for wheelchair users. Accommodation for carers can also be arranged, though students need to be aware that the rental for the carer is charged to the student at the normal rate. Students with disabilities that require particular types of accommodation or adaptations should contact the Disability Services in order to discuss this and arrange to view accommodation.

Applicants who require personal care support will need to discuss and arrange this with their home Social Services Department as the University is unable to provide personal care support.

Please note, students living on campus are normally not allowed to park their cars on campus. The only exceptions to this are students who hold a blue disabled parking badge.

Further information about accommodation is available from the Accommodation Co-ordinator on 01243 812120 for Bognor or 01243 816069 for Chichester, or online at: www.accomm.chiuni.ac.uk. See Accommodation Policy.

If your medical condition necessitates the need for a particular type of accommodation (e.g. ensuite, self catered) you should contact the Disability Advisor to discuss as early as possible and certainly before the 1st April deadline.

6 Funding support (Disabled Student Allowance)

Support for students with disabilities, medical conditions and specific learning difficulties comes from the Disabled Student Allowance, or DSA. Prospective students who are likely to require some form of support for their studies should enquire about the *Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)* through Student Finance England, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland, or the local education authorities for Wales and the Channel Isles. This allowance is not income assessed, age related or affected by other eligibility benefits, and will not affect any of your existing benefits. It is available for full-time students, and part-time students following at least 50% of a full-time course, and is available for both undergraduate and post-graduate courses in most cases. This funding goes directly to the student, and not to the institution. You can obtain a free booklet '*Bridging the Gap*' explaining this financial support in higher education. Student Finance will also require evidence of your disability from a medical authority. In the case of a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia, they will require an assessment report from an Educational Psychologist.

The allowance can pay for a range of support for your studies. The support comes in four main categories, specialist equipment allowance, non-medical helpers allowance, general disabled student's allowance and extra transport costs.

- ❖ The equipment allowance may cover equipment you need for your studies because of your disability. Examples of equipment it might supply includes: computer equipment, specialist software, digital recorders to record lectures, adapted keyboards and so on.
- ❖ The non-medical helpers allowance can pay for Dyslexia Tuition, Mental Health Mentoring, note-takers, sign language interpreters and more.

- ❖ The general allowance covers any extra expenditure you might have that is directly related to your disability, including extra books, photocopying and so on.
- ❖ The extra transport costs cover any extra travelling expenses caused by your disability.

In order to assess the appropriate support needs, Student Finance may request and fund an Assistive Technology and Needs Assessment, at a national access centre. This assessment establishes the kind of equipment and human support a student will need during their course. Any equipment provided will become the property and responsibility of the student. LEAs will normally pay for insurance and maintenance for the duration of your course.

(For information regarding the DSA and application forms phone 0800 328 8988 or go online at www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance).

7. An outline of specific facilities

7.1 Information for students who are blind or visually impaired

The Disability and Academic Skills Services has an experienced Sensory Advisor, able to advise students and staff. The Sensory Advisor can provide information and familiarisation trips around the campuses, as well as knowledge concerning local and inter-site transport, shops and leisure facilities. Prospective students with a visual impairment can contact the Sensory Advisor direct to discuss their support needs and the University facilities. The Sensory Advisor can also arrange to adapt any materials required by a student with a visual impairment.

Once a student is on their course, the Sensory Advisor arranges appropriate support:

- Experienced note-takers, readers and library assistants can be provided depending on individual need. This support is usually funded by a student's DSA.
- Alternative arrangements can be made if you feel you may have difficulty using the libraries, photocopiers, the alphabetical internal mailing system (PIPS), or accessing a Subject Office to hand in completed work etc.
- Specific study skills support can be arranged.
- Course materials can be provided in alternative formats. Audio versions of textbooks/texts, or raised diagrams can be provided when planned for in good time.
- The software Supernova is available in the computer room in the Bishop Otter Campus, or in Student Services on the Bognor Regis Campus. It can be used in the normal way to word process, access the Intranet, Internet, the computerised library system, and to scan and

read text. Smart Viewer and Magnilink, which magnify books from texts, are available in the computer room and the second floor at Bishop Otter Library.

- Printing can be made using a Braille-embossing machine. Other equipment includes a large screen computer and scanner for enhanced text and audio tape recording facilities.
- Current students use their guide dogs on campus. A dog pen is installed at Bishop Otter Campus.

For further information contact the Sensory Advisor on 01243 812145 or e-mail sensadvisor@chi.ac.uk.

7.2 Information for students who are deaf or hearing impaired

Specialist support and personal equipment is funded through the Disabled Students Allowance. The Disability and Academic Skills Services offer advice and practical help.

- We can provide you with experienced support workers including sign language interpreters, lip speakers, and note-takers. We monitor the work of all support staff to ensure quality support.
- Study skills support can be arranged to help you improve written language skills, and to give effective presentations.
- A portable loop system is available for use in lectures. A permanent loop system is planned.
- Some current students use portable radio microphones.
- Hearing dogs are welcome on campus.
- You can contact the Disability and Academic Skills Services by using type-talk or e-mail (contact details at the end of this document).
- Off air recordings can be made with subtitles.. If you wish a programme recorded with subtitles you should contact the Library Disability Contact on 01243 812097.

For further information contact the Sensory Advisor on 01243 812145, minicom 01243 812013, or e-mail sensadvisor@chi.ac.uk.

7.3 Information for students with dyslexia, specific learning difficulties and dyspraxia

The Disability and Academic Skills Services are available throughout the academic year. There is a Disability Co-ordinator, a Dyslexia Advisor and several qualified part-time tutors. In order to recognise a student's difficulties and to ensure appropriate support is in place, the University requires students to provide a full diagnostic assessment report, undertaken by an Educational or Chartered Psychologist. Where a student does not have this

the Disability service can assist with arranging this. The service offers the following support to students with specific learning difficulties:

- Advice and informal diagnostic assessments for dyslexia can be arranged if a student has not previously been assessed.
- Formal Educational Psychology assessments can also be arranged if the student does not have one, or if an update is required. However, students may be required to assist with the cost of this assessment.
- We provide advice and help in acquiring the Disabled Students Allowance.
- Study skills workshops are provided for all students who wish to improve their skills.
- Study skills tutorials can be arranged on a regular 1:1 basis, or in small groups, for students who have the Disabled Student Allowance.
- There is a drop-in support service for students who are waiting for the DSA or who are not eligible for funding.
- Two computers with large screens are available in the Learning Support base room. Specialist programs such as TextHelp and Inspiration, are available in the computer room at the Bishop Otter campus library, or in the Student Services Building on the Bognor Regis Campus.
- The library offers extended loans for students with dyslexia. Students can also arrange individual library inductions.

For further information contact the Dyslexia Advisor or Disability Support Co-ordinator on 01243 812076 or e-mail disabilityacademicskills@chi.ac.uk.

7.4 Information for students with mobility difficulties, and wheelchair users

You can apply for extra funding to provide mobility and learning aids, and support workers. Applications are made directly to Student Finance England (or equivalent) for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). The University offers a range of assistance for students with mobility difficulties:

- The Disability Service can offer advice and assistance with the DSA.
- The Disability Service can help you acquire experienced support workers, such as note-takers and mobility assistants.
- Alternative arrangements can be made if you feel you may have difficulty using the libraries, photocopiers, the alphabetical internal mailing system (PIPS), or access a Subject Office to hand in completed work etc.

- We welcome your comments on how to make our campuses more accessible, and to indicate any areas that are difficult.
- Most buildings are now accessible to wheelchair users and plans are in place to ensure all buildings will be accessible in the near future.
- **Some** lifts are not wide enough to accommodate chairs that are wider than 33cm.
- Every effort is made to ensure that students are timetabled to have classes that are accessible.
- There are clearly marked parking spaces for Blue Badge holders, with several optional areas available on both campuses.
- There are eight, en-suite rooms accessible to wheelchair users in the campus accommodation at Bishop Otter, and two at Bognor Regis.
- Please note, the University does not offer a Personal Assistance Service for students who require personal care.
- We have accessible toilets on both campuses. The toilet in the Medical Centre on the Bishop Otter Campus has a powered hoist for transfers. However, students need to arrange their own Care Assistants if they require this.

For further information, please contact the Disability Co-ordinator on 01243 812076, or e-mail disabilityacademicskills@chi.ac.uk.

7.5 Information for students with medical difficulties and unseen disabilities

A confidential health service is provided in the Medical Centres on both campuses during normal office hours. There are two Nurse Health Advisors who share the role across the week.

The Disability Co-ordinator can arrange various support to support students with medical conditions. We also recognise that there may be times when students with certain conditions require more help. Unseen disabilities such as arthritis, diabetes, HIV, epilepsy, M.E. and so on, can affect a student's ability to cope with the pressures associated with academic work, especially at examination time. The Disability Service can arrange for a wide range of adjustments to examinations to assist students with medical conditions. Adjustments can include: Extra time, rest breaks, scribes, special equipment etc. Students are required to meet with the Disability Co-ordinator to discuss their needs in advance.

You may also be advised to apply for the Disabled Students Allowance if this is applicable.

For further information on support, please contact the Disability Co-ordinator on 01243 812076, or e-mail disabilityacademicskills@chi.ac.uk .

To contact the Health Centre on the Bishop Otter Campus, please ring

01243 816111.

To contact the Bognor Regis Campus Health Centre, please ring 01243 812122.

7.6. Information for students with Mental Health Issues

The University recognises that students with mental health conditions may be reluctant to disclose these conditions before coming to the University. However, we would wish to assure you that we are committed to supporting students with these conditions. To this end the University has put various resources in place:

- The University provides a Mental Health Advisor. The Mental Health Advisor offers support to students on both campuses. This support includes advice on coping with studies and with dealing with community services. Students are welcome to contact the Mental Health Advisor direct (contact details at the end).
- The University has a counseling service with a team of counsellors available on both campuses. Students can self refer to this service (contact details at the end). This is a confidential service. We recognise that mental or emotional distress have varied and wide-ranging problems, often associated with other medical difficulties or disabilities. Sometimes stress associated with living away from home, and studying at a higher academic level can often cause feelings of anxiety, depression, and loss of self-confidence or direction. If students experience these difficulties, or have on-going problems when they come to university we advise that you contact our Counselling Service.
- The Disability Service can assist students with applications for the Disabled Student Allowance. They can also arrange adjustments to examinations if this is necessary, for example arranging for students to take examinations in separate rooms. In some cases the service can arrange Mentoring support to assist students with their studies.

For information on support needs, adjustments to teaching and examinations, please contact the Disability Co-ordinator on 01243 812076, or e-mail disabilityacademicskills@chi.ac.uk.

For general advice on mental health or accessing mental health services in the community, contact the University Mental Health Advisor on 01243 816402 or e-mail mentalhealth@chi.ac.uk.

To contact the University Counselling Service phone 01243 816042, or e-mail stucounselling@chi.ac.uk.

8. Information about Academic Services and other Learning Resources

8.1 Special arrangements for examinations

All students are bound by the same academic standards. It is our purpose to enable you to reach your true potential. We provide a variety of special arrangements for examinations and assignments when students, who for specific reasons, are unable to sit examinations or assessments under standard conditions. These are individually agreed, and are subject to written confirmation by Academic Services.

You will need to contact the Disability Service to discuss and record your requirements. It is your responsibility to request special arrangements as soon as possible, either before commencing a course or soon after. You will need to provide suitable evidence of your need, such as a recent Educational Psychology Report, or medical evidence from a doctor or another specialist, as appropriate, to support your request.

8.2 Academic Advisers

You will be allocated an academic adviser, or an equivalent member of staff who fulfils the same role, from the teaching team in your department. All students can arrange individual tutorials with their adviser to discuss academic progress. Advisers will recommend other appropriate support services if you seek help with other personal difficulties.

8.3 Learning Resources

There are two Learning Resource Centres, one on each campus, both accessible to wheelchair users. These centres include a full range of library services. Your choice of subject may determine which library you choose to use. However, you don't need to travel if the book you want is stored on the other campus. There is an integrated computer system that covers all the Library's services, and provides a valuable information system to students. If you require regular help to use the resources in the library, please contact the Disability Co-ordinator and they will inform the subject librarians.

All first year students receive an induction in how to use the library services, including I.T. and the University intranet, Portia. In addition, individual sessions can be arranged with subject librarians if necessary because of your disability.

Alternative course materials can be supplied in different formats (e.g. Braille/ audio tapes etc.) by arrangement with your subject/subjects librarian. The Disability Service and Subject Librarians can help you by acquiring specialist resources from other agencies. They do need to plan well in advance. Subject handbooks are available in the library. They outline useful resources such as web-sites, core texts, and CD-ROMs.

The majority of computer and study tables are of a standard height, and may not be suitable for all wheelchair users. However, an adaptable study table is available in each campus library and there are suitable wheelchair computer tables in the ground floor computer room in the Learning Resources Centre. This centre also has some specialist software and equipment, useful for students with a visual impairment and some students with dyslexia.

Once you have joined the library you can access the computers, Internet and Intranet. Specialist technical help is provided in the computer rooms. There is a loans service for multi-media equipment. Quiet study areas are available, and both group and individual study rooms can be booked. Videos and audio tapes can be reviewed on open access equipment. Opening hours are extended during the academic year in order to be flexible enough to meet the needs of students, and when they wish to study.

8.4 Student Services

Student Services provides a range of co-ordinated services that are available to all students on both campuses. Detailed information is contained in the free *Student Handbook* and on our Intranet web page. Student Services also provide access to other internal publications that you will find useful. Each service has more detailed information leaflets, available through Student Services.

- Accommodation
- Careers Advisory Service
- Chaplaincy
- Counselling Service
- Disability and Academic Skills Service
- Financial Welfare
- Health Service
- International Student Welfare
- Sports and Physical Recreation

Further information is available from www.chi.ac.uk/studentsupport.

9. Contact details

Disability and Academic Skills Services Co-ordinator Tel: 01243 812076 or e-mail disabilityacademicskills@chi.ac.uk.

Dyslexia Advisor Tel: 01243 812076, or e-mail disabilityacademicskills@chi.ac.uk.

Sensory Advisor Tel: 01243 812145, or e-mail sensadvisor@chi.ac.uk.

Mental Health Advisor Tel: 01243 816402. or e-mail mentalhealth@chi.ac.uk

University Counselling Service Tel: 01243 816042, or e-mail stucounselling@chi.ac.uk.

Bishop Otter Campus Health Centre Tel: 01243 816111.
Bognor Regis Campus Health Centre, Tel: 01243 812122. or e-mail studenthealth@chi.ac.uk

For information on the Disabled Students Allowance and copies of Bridging The Gap phone 0800 731 9133 or online at www.dfes.gov.uk/formsandguides, or from Student Finance England at direct.gov.uk/studentfinance

Accommodation on 01243 812144, or online at: www.accomm.chiuni.ac.uk.