

Role of the Disability Advisory Service

The over-arching goal of the Disability Advisory Service is to work with students and staff to create an accessible and inclusive learning environment for students with disabilities. We provide advice on individual reasonable adjustments designed to remove or reduce barriers to learning.

Advice and guidance for students

We are available to prospective and on-course students of the University, including both matriculated and non-matriculated students. All students registered with the service will be allocated a disability advisor, who will work with them and co-ordinate any necessary study-related support. DAS's work with incoming students or those newly registered with the service includes:

- establishing evidence of disability to meet University guidelines;
- contacting students who declare a disability/newly registered students and discussing with them the adjustments they have previously needed, considering the potential impact of their disability/disabilities on study at Oxford and discussing possible adjustments with them;
- ensuring that colleagues in the relevant department(s) and college are aware of the likely adjustments needed in advance of a student's arrival;
- assisting the student to access funding for disability-related study support;
- provision of transition events for incoming students;
- supporting students who contact the service with concerns about previously un-diagnosed disabilities and directing them to appropriate services for further investigation if necessary.

Student Support Plans

DAS makes recommendations for reasonable adjustments in the Student Support Plan, using appropriate specialist evidence, in collaboration with the student. The Plan summarizes the impact of the impairment on study and recommends adjustments in the following areas where relevant: access and orientation; teaching and learning; examination adjustments; IT and library provision; individual support. The disability advisor will incorporate information from colleagues about the demands of the course when making adjustment recommendations and discuss in advance any substantial or unusual adjustment recommendations with the college and department as appropriate. It is finalised and circulated as soon as the

relevant evidence has been collected and the student has approved the content.

The Student Support Plan is shared with the student's college Disability Co-ordinator, the appropriate Disability Co-ordinator in the lead department and, where necessary, the Disability Librarian at the Bodleian library, Estates Services, and the Examinations and Assessments Team.

Advice and guidance for staff

This DAS also provides advice and information to staff working with individual disabled students, working collaboratively within the collegiate university to support the implementation of adjustments. This includes:

- advising colleagues on the implementation of reasonable adjustments;
- advising staff who receive requests for individual reasonable adjustments, for example in the admissions process or in examinations, and give on-going guidance for adjustments and support for individual students;
- collaborate with staff in complex cases, attending cross-collegiate case conferences.

The overarching responsibility for decision-making in respect of reasonable adjustments rests with colleges in matters relating to college provision, and the University in matters relating to departments and faculties. DAS recommendations are made in order to support colleges and the University as they consider their obligations to make reasonable adjustments.

Monitoring and on-going support

The Disability Advisory Service:

- Works with every college to carry out an over-arching review of disability support arrangements up to twice a year if required, to support ongoing monitoring of the progress of disabled students at the college. Two members of the Disability Advisory Service team act as a first point of contact for staff at each college. There is one dedicated contact for mental health provision and one for all other provision.
- Revises Student Support Plans in response to student or staff requests to review, amend or develop support in light of new circumstances or evidence.
- Coordinates the provision of in-house study support workers where applicable.

- Coordinates the annual Common Framework monitoring exercise, to which all University departments are asked to make a return and which is used by the Student Welfare Subcommittee to monitor compliance with the Framework.

Embedding the Common Framework for Supporting Disabled students

The Disability Advisory Service:

- Promotes inclusive practice, anticipatory adjustments and compliance with legal responsibilities across the collegiate University in respect of students with disabilities.
- Develops and maintains the online handbook for supporting disabled students.
- Engages with students through liaison with the Oxford Student Union and other interested student groups to improve provision for disabled students and to promote inclusivity.
- Provides training and development opportunities for staff working in disability-related roles.

Other disability-related provision not delivered by DAS

- Completion of Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPS). This is the responsibility of the relevant safety officer for each building the student will be visiting. Guidance on completing [Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans](#) is available.
- Arrangements for social or personal care, and related financial support, falls to the social care service in the student's home town or country.
- Arrangements for medical care, medical assessment reports or the provision of mobility aids, falls to the student's social care service.
- Emergency support. In an emergency situation, contact the Emergency Services in the first instance.
- Disabled staff can find information about sources of support at work through the [Equality and Diversity Unit](#).

Contacts

Each college has one or two disability advisors linked with them to facilitate effective communication. Contact details for the disability advisors in DAS as well as details of their college links can be found on the contacts page below. This link also has the contact details for the nominated staff who provide disability support within colleges, departments and central services across the University. [Contacts page](#)