



Disabled 101



YOUR GUIDE TO DISABILITY AND MENTAL HEALTH AT CAMBRIDGE

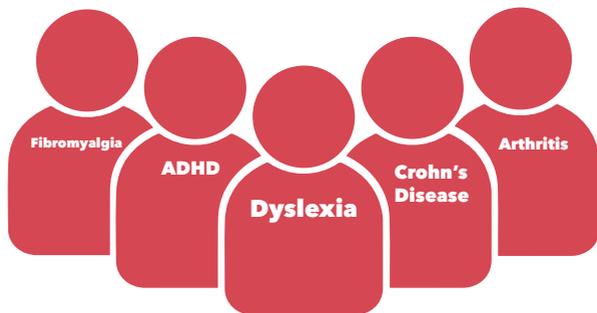
Welcome

Welcome to Cambridge, your new home for the next few years! All of us at the University's Disabled Students' Campaign just wanted to say hi, and let you know some super useful information which might help you out during your time here.

Whether you identify as disabled or not, chances are this guide will come in use at some point during your degree—so you should definitely hang on to it! If you lose it though, you can always find a digital copy on the CUSU website.

We hope you have an amazing time here, but if you're struggling, remember you can always get in touch with CUSU and we'll try our best to make things better!





A disability is legally defined as any long term impairment– mental or physical–which substantially affects your ability to carry out normal daily activities.

Yep, that's all! No wheelchair required (but always welcome)!

Here are some examples of things that 'count' as a disability:

ADHD

Lupus

Depression

Anxiety

PTSD

IBS

ASD

Dyspraxia

Diabetes

Dyslexia

Epilepsy

**Chronic Pain/
Fatigue**

Hard of Hearing

What is disability?

Disabled Rights

Disabled students have the legal right to reasonable adjustments. Examples include accessible buildings, lecture notes in advance, exam access arrangements, extensions to deadlines, accessible college facilities and more.

As long as they're reasonable, and you need them as a result of your disability, you are entitled to them—whatever anyone else might say!

Additionally, public bodies (including the University and individual colleges) have a duty to go even further in promoting the rights of disabled people. They must:

1. Promote disability equality
2. Take steps to eliminate discrimination and harassment
3. Publish a Disability Equality Scheme, setting out how they plan to do so.

If the University and its colleges are not fulfilling this duty then they are acting unlawfully.





The disabled community in Cambridge is incredibly diverse, strong and supportive. The Disabled Students' Campaign (DSC) has a vote in CUSU council to represent your interests. **Key people you can go to for advice, support, or if you just want to chat are: your college Disabled Student's officer, any member of the DSC committee, and the CUSU DSO.**

If you want to meet, hang out, and potentially campaign with other disabled students, there are DSC forums which happen multiple times a term. These will be advertised over Facebook, and can also be attended digitally, and live minutes will be taken and put online afterwards.

The DSC runs events throughout the term, such as socials panel events and a zine. There are also Facebook groups for lots of specific conditions, such as eating disorders, autism or BPD, which you can post on anytime for solidarity or advice.

Community

Mental Health

Crisis

Some people can find Cambridge to be a stressful environment which might be very tough on your mental health. Struggling is not unusual, but you do not have to just endure it - there are lots of people who are here to help you!

If you are in the middle of a crisis, there are people you can contact in the moment. **If you want to talk, there is Nightline, which is confidential and anonymous helpline** run by and for students. If you want to talk to a professional, **NHS 111 option 2 is always available and can refer you to further support.**

If you need longer term support, **some colleges have their own counsellors available, or there is counselling available through the University Counselling Service.** You can self-refer through their online form, or be referred by your college nurse. If you are BME, you can also request a BME counsellor.

Mental illness is a disability so does entitle you to adjustments. Please see the other pages on this guide outlining your rights, as well as the support and resources that are available.





There are lots of support services and resources available to you if you are a disabled student or are having mental health concerns. Here are just a few:

UCS– University Counselling Service–Free counselling available to all students, just fill out the online form

DRC– Disability Resource Centre–Great first port of call for all disabled students, will help you get the support and adjustments that you need. This will usually be in the form of a personalised Student Support Document (SSD) which will contain all of the adjustments and support that should be available to you

SensusAccess– A new self-service system which allows you to convert documents into a more accessible format

Disabled Students' Campaign– Informal support, solidarity, advice, campaigning and fun for all disabled students

SUAS– Students' Unions' Advice Service–see the back cover of this brochure

Support &

Resources

Exam Adjustments

If you believe your disability will cause you to be disadvantaged in or uncomfortable during your exams - often three hour exams - then you will likely be entitled to unique exam adjustments. You do not have to pick from a list; the University is legally obliged to provide adjustments to suit your specific needs, so don't hesitate to ask for what you need. You may be the only person in the University to have your specific adjustments, and that's ok!

Some examples of exam adjustments are: extra time, rest breaks, doing your exams in a separate room, typing exams, handwriting then transcribing.

You will need evidence of your disability to get exam adjustments. This will likely be either a medical note from your GP, a specialist report, or an assessment from the Disability Resource Centre. If you need an assessment, there are lots of people you can speak to. You should speak to your Director of Studies, tutor, or college nurse to kickstart the process and put you in touch with the right people, or contact your Disabled Students' Officer at any time.





If you have mobility needs, or other needs that mean standard accommodation may not be suitable for you, you are entitled to accommodation that meets your needs. For example, if you have mobility issues, you may need accommodation nearer to your lecture sites; if this is not possible for your college to provide, it may be possible to move college. Other examples are step free accommodation or accommodation on the ground floor.

If your college charges you more for accommodation specifically suited to your needs, you should contact your Disabled Student's officer, and/ or SUAS. It is expected Colleges should not pass any additional costs of necessary adjustments on to students, as in line with the Equality Act (Chpt2Sec20(7)). As such it is always worth checking what price your room is compared to others, as your college may be overcharging you without telling you or realising their obligations.

Accommodation

Double-Time

Double Time (DT) is studying 'part time' for health and disability reasons, i.e. because your health reduces the amount of time you can spend working each day. You can do your degree over a longer period of time, and you get the same financial support each year.

Double Time is known formally as 'extension to period of study'. **You can find CUSU's guide on Double Time study here:** www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/Double-Time-Guide.pdf

If you are considering double-time, you should speak to your tutor about it as soon as possible, because the process can often last a long time. Point them to the guide if they aren't 100% sure what this involves, and possibly speak to your senior tutor.

The Disabled Students' Campaign has a designated officer and a private Facebook group for double-time students, and runs regular social events - don't hesitate to get in touch and ask as many questions as you like.





Intermission is taking time out of your studies, for example taking a year out from your degree to recover from an illness. We can support you through this process, as well as letting you know what adjustments might allow you to continue studying. Intermission is known formally as 'disregarding terms'. Lots of students end up having to intermit at some point during their degree.

You can read our guide on intermission here:
www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/Intermission-Guide-April-2017.pdf

The Disabled Students' Campaign provides lots of support to intermitting students, including through our Intermission Officers. We run regular socials throughout terms so that you can meet up with other intermitting students and ask for advice.

Intermission

The logo consists of a white, teardrop-shaped graphic with a small notch at the top, set against a dark purple background. Inside the white shape, the text "Students' Unions' Advice Service" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, stacked in four lines.

**Students'
Unions'
Advice
Service**

We offer free, confidential & independent support to all Cambridge University students.

You can come to the Students' Unions' Advice Service with any concerns you may have, whether it's the first time you have a question or as a last resort. Students often come for advice on:

- **Exam worries**
- **Welfare Concerns**
- **Academic issues**
- **Supervisor Relations**
- **Mental Health Issues**
- **Personal Issues**
- **University & College Regulations**
- **Disciplinary Issues**
- **Financial Concerns**
- **And much more...**

Our friendly Advice team includes four professional advisors. We can provide support by email, phone, in person or Skype. If we can't help you directly, we will find someone who can.

Contact Us:

We're located in the SU Building (CUSU & GU) at 17 Mill Lane on the upper ground floor.

Our office hours are Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm, all year round
Drop-in sessions are from 12pm-2pm on Tuesdays & Thursdays

01223 746999 | advice@studentadvice.cam.ac.uk