



BIRMINGHAM CITY  
University

# DISABILITY SUPPORT

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# HOW WE WILL SUPPORT YOU

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Support is available at BCU for students with a disability, Specific Learning Difficulty (such as dyslexia), a long-term health condition or a mental health difficulty. It includes:

- Appointments and drop-ins, whichever BCU campus you are studying on.
- Screening, assessment and support for students with Specific Learning Difficulties e.g. dyslexia.
- Reasonable adjustments you may need for exams, assessments, teaching sessions and course materials and information.
- Help with applications for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs).
- Study support workers e.g. mentors or study skills tutors.
- Advice about enabling equipment and software.
- Information about campus accessibility, car parking and other individual requirements.
- Counselling, mental health and wellbeing support, available to all fully enrolled students.



## WHY YOU MIGHT NEED SUPPORT

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You may need reasonable adjustments on your course to enable you to participate fully. This is not about giving you an advantage but removing barriers to enable you to engage in the teaching, demonstrate your learning and graduate with the best result possible. We also know that disabled students who claim Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) do better at university than disabled students who do not claim, so we want to help you apply for DSAs.

Studying at university is different to school or college – you are expected to be more independent, in your learning and in engaging with us to arrange support. Talk to us as soon as possible about what support you think you need so we can consider together what is possible.

If you would like to talk about mental health support, please contact the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team (details at the end of this leaflet).

It's also important to find out as much as you can about the course you want to study so that you know what's involved and whether there are any activities you might find difficult. If you have concerns, talk to us so we can work out whether reasonable adjustments can be made.



# DISABLED STUDENTS' ALLOWANCES (DSAS)

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DSAs are government grants that could help pay for extra costs you may incur whilst studying as a direct result of your disability or health condition (including some mental health difficulties). They are not means-tested and you do not have to pay them back.

DSAs can help pay for specialist equipment (such as a computer and assistive software), a non-medical personal helper (e.g. study skills tutor or mentor), extra travel costs, and other course-related costs.

You can apply for DSAs from early spring in the year you will go to university. You do not have to know which university you are going to. Find out more at [www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas](https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas).

To apply, you must provide evidence of your disability or health condition. You will also need to give this to the team supporting you at BCU. More about this below.

If you need guidance on applying for DSAs, we are happy to help.



# PERSONAL SUPPORT

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If you have someone who helps you at home and/or during the day at school or college, you may require similar support at university. This could include help with:

- Shopping, cleaning, laundry, ironing, making and eating meals.
- Finding your way around.
- Personal care - such as washing and using the toilet.

Even if you will live at home with your family whilst at university, if you normally need help during the day to use the toilet, get food etc. you need to arrange this for university.

DSAs cannot pay for personal support and nor can the University help with this, as it is not study-related. To arrange this help, contact the social services department where you live, to discuss a support package. This can take a long time to arrange so you should do this as soon as possible.



# EVIDENCE ABOUT YOUR DISABILITY

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You will need to give us medical evidence that explains your disability. For example:

- A letter from a consultant or other qualified medical professional that gives a diagnosis of your condition and the effects it has on you. We can give you guidance to show to the person who will be writing the letter.
- A diagnostic assessment report by an educational psychologist or specialist teacher assessor diagnosing a Specific Learning Difficulty e.g. dyslexia, ADHD etc. We cannot accept Form 8 applications for access arrangements or reasonable adjustments nor screenings completed at school or college.

- An Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

You will be able to use the same medical evidence for your Disabled Students' Allowances application. Contact us if you need more information about this or would like us to check any evidence you have.

We cannot arrange reasonable adjustments for you unless we have received your medical evidence. If you don't give this to us in a timely manner, this may mean your support is not available when you start university.

Send your medical evidence to us by email or post – see the end of this leaflet.

# ACCOMMODATION

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If you are leaving home to come to university and have specific accommodation requirements due to a disability or medical condition, please contact BCU Accommodation Services to talk about this as soon as possible.

Accommodation Services will ask for information about your disability. Please provide this when you apply for a room.

Depending on your disability, you may be able to stay in university accommodation for the whole of your time at university.

Information and contact details at [\*\*www.bcu.ac.uk/accommodation.\*\*](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/accommodation)



# **ACCESSIBILITY**

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We strive to ensure our campuses are accessible, however, we know that individuals can experience a wide variety of difficulties.

If accessibility is a priority to you, we recommend you visit the University for a tour. Please contact us if you would like to arrange this.





# DISCLOSURE AND DATA PROTECTION

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Information about your disability will be held securely and confidentially on databases within the Disability Support Team and/or Mental Health and Wellbeing Team. This information is deemed to be sensitive personal data and is only used to advise you about the support that may be available. The University ensures that all personal data is held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulation.

Exceptions may arise where the service has a legal obligation to share information, for example, if there is serious concern about risk to your health and wellbeing or that of a third party. Even then we would usually seek your consent first. You have the right to access any information held about you.

If you come to study at BCU, we will seek your consent to share information about your disability with a limited number of third parties who need to be involved in your support, such as your Faculty and any study support worker you might have.

If you have any queries regarding Data Protection Act issues, please contact the Information Management Team at [\*\*informationmanagement@bcu.ac.uk\*\*](mailto:informationmanagement@bcu.ac.uk) or on +44 (0)121 202 2900. You can also read our privacy notices here [\*\*www.bcu.ac.uk/privacy-notices\*\*](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/privacy-notices).



# WHAT TO DO NEXT

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If you receive an offer from BCU, here's what to do next:

1. Tell us how your disability or health condition affects you and what support you might need at university. Email us or complete the profile form at [\*\*www.bcu.ac.uk/disability-form\*\*](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/disability-form)
2. Visit us, at an open day or applicant visit day, to look at facilities and find out about the course you'd like to study. You can have a chat with the Disability Support Team or Mental Health and Wellbeing Team on that day, or arrange an appointment on another day if you prefer.
3. Apply for Disabled Students' Allowances - [\*\*www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas\*\*](http://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas).
4. Talk to Accommodation Services if you have specific requirements and are planning to live in University accommodation.
5. Talk to your local social services department if you will need personal support.





## **CONTACT US**

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### **Disability Support Team**

Email: [disability@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:disability@bcu.ac.uk)

Telephone: **0121 331 6495**

### **Mental Health and Wellbeing Team**

Email: [sa.wellbeing@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:sa.wellbeing@bcu.ac.uk)

Telephone: **0121 331 5188**

### **Post:**

Disability Support Team / Mental Health and Wellbeing Team,  
Birmingham City University, 1st Floor, Curzon Building,  
4 Cardigan Street,  
Birmingham B4 7BD

**@BCUsupport**

