

Hearing Impairment

Information pack for students



Definition of a Disability

The Equality Act (2010) replaced the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) in providing protection and legal rights for disabled people. It uses the following definition of disability:

“The Act defines a disability as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term (i.e. has lasted or is likely to last for at least twelve months) adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.”

More information on the Act can be found at

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/RightsAndObligations/DisabilityRights/DG_4001068

► Where To Get Support

There are a number of hearing impaired students studying at Oxford, studying a range of subjects. The nature of each course does have implications for the range of support needed and there are a number of people who you can approach in order to set up support arrangements and discuss issues that arise over the course of your time at University.

For an undergraduate student your college is ultimately responsible for your teaching and welfare whilst for a graduate student your department plays this role. Once support arrangements are in place undergraduates should approach their personal tutor, college disability contact, college office staff and Senior Tutor in order to deal with any issues that arise during their time at Oxford. Graduate students should approach their Academic Supervisor, Course Director or the Director of Graduate Studies for this as college plays a mainly pastoral role. There is likely to be an adviser or tutor for graduates in your college if you have any other queries.

University Disability Office staff are available to give advice if needed. When you first disclose a disability, however, it is very important that your needs are clearly established so you can link up with appropriate services and support systems within the university. At this early stage

your college, department, and the Disability Office will work together with you to ensure that your support needs are met.

▶ **Financial Assistance**

Information about applying for funding can be found at:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das/funding/>

▶ **Assessing Study Needs**

- A study needs assessment will enable you to discuss any study requirements you may have and to find out about equipment and funding which may be available to you. The assessment report can be used when applying for funds for equipment.

An informal discussion of needs can be conducted by the Disability Office staff, after which a formal assessment can be organised if appropriate.

You may like to approach;

- The Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID) for information on equipment available to support you.
- The University Disability Office for advice.

▶ **When to apply for DSA**

The process of application can take several months and so should be done as early as possible. This is particularly important for students who will require communicators/interpreters as this can take a long time to organise. If you are a new student it is a good idea to begin the application process at the same time as making your grant application. Once funding has been agreed it can take several more months to organise your support, so start as early as possible.

Current students can apply for DSAs at any time during the course of their studies.

An additional information sheet on the DSA is available from the University Disability office.

▶ Useful Equipment

Equipment to assist you as a student will vary according to your level of hearing and preferred communication methods.

The websites below for RNID Products and Connevans, list most of the equipment that could be useful to you.

▶ Useful Contacts

RNID

John McCormack
RNID South West
Ernest English House Square
Buckwell Street
Plymouth, PL 1 2DA
Tel: 01752 228657
Text: 01752 604862

john.mccormack@rnid.org.uk

RNID

RNID South West
Berkley House
Lower Bristol Road
Bath, BA2 3BH
Tel: 01225 485 765
Text: 01225 485 765

information.southwest@mid.org.uk

RNID PRODUCTS

1 Haddonbrook Business Centre
Orton Southgate
Peterborough, PE2 7YK
Tel: 0870 789 8855
Text: 01733 238 020

solutions@rnid.org.uk

CONNEVANS

54 Albert Road North
Reigate
Surrey, RH2 9YR
Tel: 01737 247 571
Text: 01737 243 134

www.connevans.com

Terptree

Office 3 Thatcham House
Turners Drive
Thatcham
Berkshire
RG19 3XL

Tel: 01635 886264
Text: 07944 655810

interpreting@terptree.co.uk

www.terptree.co.uk

Speech-to-text operators:

- **RNID**

0845 685 8000 / Text: 0845 635 8001

Fax: 0845 645 8002

Email: communication.services@rnid.org.uk

19 – 23 Featherstone Street,
London,
EC1Y 8SL

- **Bee Communications**

Telephone: 0207 739 2849

Mobile: 07931 584 165

email: <mailto:beth@bee-communications.com>

Website: <http://www.bee-communications.com>

13 Kent Court, Kent Street, London, E2 8NU (based in London but have interpreters all over the UK.)

Information on speech-to-text:

Signature

<http://www.signature.org.uk>

Signature

Mersey House

Mandale Business Park

Belmont

Durham, DH1 1TH

(tel) 0191 383 1155

(text) 0191 383 7915

(fax) 0191 383 7914

(e-mail) durham@signature.org.uk

▶ Study Skills

Planning ahead

Note taking in lectures and participating in tutorials will require forward planning. Lecturers will use a mixture of teaching aids in lectures such as PowerPoint, overhead projector slides (OHP), handouts and writing on the board. If you are lip reading or using an interpreter you will not be able to simultaneously read an OHP or read writing on the board whilst the lecturer is speaking. You may find it useful, therefore, to be supplied with OHPs and handouts in advance of the lecture or at the beginning of the lecture so that you can read this information beforehand. Similarly, if you are lip reading or using an interpreter you may find it difficult to note take at the same time. You might, therefore, find it useful to employ a note taker. DSA (for home students) is the funding method for note takers. Talk to the Disability Office for information on how to get a note taker.

You should discuss your lecture needs with all your tutors and ask for as much information to be provided in advance as possible. Some subjects have lecture lists posted on the web – always check this as a source.

It may be that you find reading English difficult, particularly if you are a BSL user. If this is the case you should ask for reading lists well in advance, with essential reading clearly marked. Students are provided with detailed reading lists and it is important to realise that you are not expected to read everything on the list. If you are unable to prioritise the reading ask your tutor to prioritise it for you.

Lectures

- Discuss your needs with each tutor individually. If you are lip reading, inform the lecturer so that s/he knows to try to face the front at all times. Ask for the script of the lecture if you are having difficulties note taking and lip reading/working with an interpreter
- Ask for handouts and paper copies of OHPs in advance
- You may be able to employ a note taker to assist you in lectures. The source of funding for this is Disabled Students Allowance
- Using a note taker can really make a difference to your enjoyment of the course, it relieves pressure and makes sure that you don't miss out on important information

- If you are using a note taker or communicator, don't forget to introduce them to the lecturer
- Communicators/interpreters – if you need to use a communicator or interpreter you will need to ask for details of your timetable well in advance of each term so that a suitable person can be allocated. DSA is the source of funding for communicators and interpreters.
- If you are going to have to watch videos during lectures or tutorials, try to get a copy before the lecture so that you have time to watch it at your own speed. An interpreter will need to see the video in advance before they can sign its meaning to you.

Group work and tutorials

- Group work and tutorials can be difficult for students with a hearing impairment as there is often more than one person speaking at a time. You should discuss your needs with your tutor and may even need to discuss the layout of the room if it is causing additional noise distractions. It may help for you to inform the other students of your hearing impairment so that everyone makes an effort to speak one at a time.
- Using a note taker can be useful in tutorials too, especially if there are discussions and debates. The physical presence of a note taker can also be helpful in reminding others of your needs.

▶ Further information and support

- Additional guidelines on teaching hearing impaired students are available from SKILL or the University Disability Office
- If you want to discuss your support needs and communicating them to tutors contact the University Disability Office. If you wish to discuss support and equipment options you may also like to contact the RNID
- If you have access to e-mail you might like to join the DeafLink mailbase, which is a newsgroup service for the use of deaf students in HE and the staff who work with them. To join, go to the web address:
 - <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk>
 - under browse alphabetically click on D

- scroll down and click on deaflink
- then click on Join or leave the JISCmail list (or change settings) and follow the instructions.

► **Communicators / Interpreters**

If your preferred method of communication is via an interpreter or communicator you *must* begin to organise this several months before the start of term. The Oxfordshire Sign Language Interpreting Service can help you to book communicators and interpreters.

The approximate cost for a 2-hour session is £90.00 plus travel expenses.

The RNID may be able to provide interpreters but they get booked up quickly. The RNID can also provide access to lip speakers and note takers.

Undergraduate students can receive financial assistance for the costs of interpreters from the LEA via the Disabled Students Allowance.

Contact the Oxfordshire Sign Language Interpreting Service, the RNID direct, or the Disability Office if you require assistance or more information.

Oxfordshire Sign Language Interpreting Service

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre/Deaf Direct

St Ebbe's

Oxford

OX1 1RL

(voice/answerphone/fax) 01865 243447

01865 722209

(minicom) 01865 243 447

RNID South West – contact details above

► **Examination Arrangements**

Information about applying for special exam arrangements can be found at: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das/exams/>

Requests for examination concessions must be applied for via the college office.

▶ Useful Contacts

Oxford University Student Union (OUSU)

Thomas Hull House, New Inn Hall Street, Oxford, OX1 2HU.

Vice-President – Welfare:

Tel: 01864 (2) 88461. Email: welfare@ousu.org

Web: www.ousu.org/welfare

OUSU has an active Disabilities Action Group, which works to raise awareness of disability issues in the University.

University video facilities:

Media Production Unit

5 Worcester Street

Oxford OX1 2BX

Tel: 01865 289980

External Contacts:

RNID (South West Regional Office) - contact details above.

Oxfordshire Sign Language Interpreting Service

The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre

St Ebbes

Oxford OX1 1RL

Tel: 01865 243447 (voice/fax)

Tel: 01865 246054 (minicom/fax/voice)

SKILL

National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

Unit 3

Floor 3

Radisson Court

219 Long Lane

London SE1 4PR

Telephone and Textphone 020 7450 0620

Helpline: 0800 328 5050

Fax 020 7450 0650

E-mail: skill@skill.org.uk

<http://www.skill.org.uk>

Disability Advisory Service

E-mail: disabililty@admin.ox.ac.uk

Website: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das

Tel: +44 (0)1865 280 459

Fax: +44 (0)1865 289 830