



STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

A College of Queen's University Belfast

Student Support

Stranmillis University College welcomes and encourages applications from students of all backgrounds. The University College is committed to creating an inclusive environment and seeks to ensure that students with a disability or a long term condition have equitable access as far as reasonably possible to all aspects of University College life.

In outlining this commitment, the University College will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all students can benefit from the full range of academic, cultural and social activities that the University College offers.

Students with a disability or a long-term condition are encouraged to register with Student Support at the University College to ensure their individual needs are assessed and relevant support recommendations are put in place for their chosen course of study and wider participation in University College life.

Our aim is...

...to provide prospective and current students and staff of the University College with appropriate information relating to disability issues, and to outline the relevant resources and services available at Stranmillis.

Student Support is also actively involved in:

- Providing advice on the development of disability policies and programmes throughout the University College
- Promoting awareness of disability issues by disseminating relevant information to both staff and students

Stranmillis University College is committed to creating an environment where students are comfortable in disclosing a disability or a long-term condition. The University College is also committed to a policy of equal opportunity in Higher Education and seeks to ensure that students with a disability or long-term condition have equitable access to all aspects of University College life:

Types of Support Available

Support available varies and is tailored to meet individual requirements, but may include the following:

- Recommending reasonable adjustments to a student's chosen course of study that ensure equitable access to teaching and learning opportunities

- Liaising with staff, tutors, library services and the exams office to ensure that they are aware of student requirements
- Assisting with student application for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) through the Needs Assessment Centre. DSA is available to students who are UK resident and studying an eligible full time or part time undergraduate or postgraduate course.

Support is provided to students with a wide range of needs, including:

- Physical and mobility difficulties
- Visual impairment
- Hearing impairment
- Medical conditions
- Specific learning difficulties e.g. dyslexia
- Mental health

Academic Support

Academic Support is considered within two main areas:

Learning & Teaching Support:

- Teaching materials in an alternative format e.g. large print, coloured paper
- Provision of reading lists in advance to allow time for suitable adjustments to be made
- Photocopies of relevant lecture notes and the provision of PowerPoint presentations in advance of lectures
- Staff might be asked to wear a microphone for use with a phonic ear system
- Permission to record lectures
- Arrangement of lectures in accessible venues

In-course Assessment Arrangements:

- Assessment papers in an alternative format e.g. large font etc.
- Use of a computer for class tests
- Extra time or extended deadlines for the completion of assignments or class tests
- Consideration for spelling, grammar and hand-writing

Programme Leaders will be informed of each student's support requirements and they, in turn, undertake to inform all the relevant teaching staff of individual student support needs.

Assistive Technology

Assistive Technology is hardware and software, which has been designed to improve the ability of the user to access computers or study more independently. Students with disabilities in Higher Education, who are in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) can be recommended and provided funding to purchase equipment that enhances their independent study. [Please note: *funded support through Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) is not provided by the University College but, Student Support staff will support students in the completion of their applications.*]

The following are some examples of assistive technology, which you may be offered:

- Software
- Hardware

- Voice recognition software
- Large Monitors
- Reading and Writing Tools

External Funded Support

UK Students

The main source of additional funding for students with disabilities or long-term conditions is Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA). DSA is available to full-time and some part-time undergraduate students who are resident in the UK, and to some postgraduate students.

Students must complete and submit a funding application to their relevant Student Finance funding body (e.g. Student Finance NI, Student Finance England, Student Finance Wales, Student Awards Agency Scotland or Central Services Agency or Social Services Inspectorate) to ascertain if they are eligible to receive funded support.

If eligible, students must undergo a Needs Assessment at an approved centre. Once a student's assessment is completed a report is compiled and sent to their funding body for confirmation and approval for the agreed support to be put in place. This process can take a number of months, therefore, students are advised to complete their funding application as early as possible to ensure support is put in place for the beginning of the academic year.

ROI Students

Students with disabilities and long-term conditions from the Republic of Ireland, can apply to its Department of Education's Special Fund for Students with Disabilities.

Disability Services keep a supply of application forms, however, it should be noted that the closing date for applications is at the beginning of October each year so early application is essential.

Please note: DSA and ROI funded support is not provided by Stranmillis University College but Student Support staff can assist with the application process.

Library Services for Students with Disabilities

Access to the Library

Automatic doors and lifts are available to enable access to the ground floor of the library.

Using the Library

Staff can fetch books from the shelves if students are unable to come in to the Library, or access any materials within the library, because of your disability.

A number of the library resources are available in electronic format and are accessible from home.

One-to-one support

Students in receipt of funded support such as: Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) can choose to be matched with one-to-one (non-medical support) through the Register of Support Providers. The Register is an independent service contracted through the Department of Economy in Northern Ireland to deliver non-medical help on a one-to-one basis for students in receipt of funded support.

The following categories of Support Providers can be typically provided through the Register of Support Providers:

- Typists/Audio-Typists
- Dyslexia Assessors
- Dyslexia Support Tutors Update & Approve
- Note Takers
- Mathematics/Statistics Tutors
- Readers
- Library Helpers
- Information Technology Tutors

Stranmillis University College is committed to ensuring that its examination system is designed, as far as possible, to meet the individual requirements of students with disabilities. We will endeavour to ensure that our examination procedures are effective in assessing the knowledge and abilities of such students, while at the same time, ensuring the maintenance of academic standards. In order for University College staff to respond appropriately to the requirements of students with recognised disabilities, it is crucial that those with disabilities register with Student Support as soon as possible.

The University College currently offers a range of facilities at examination time, including:

Time Allowance

Students may be given additional time to complete an examination paper. The amount of additional time will be determined based on individual candidate requirements.

Rest Breaks

Supervised rest breaks may be granted as appropriate. Some candidates may require medical or other treatment during an examination. If an examination is interrupted for such reasons the duration of the break will not be deducted from the time allowed to complete the examination paper.

Separate Examination Venue

Some students may need to complete their examination in a room on their own either for physical or psychological reasons. This provision will be granted when it is deemed appropriate as a result of the candidate's disability.

Specialised Furniture

It is important that examination venues are as comfortable as possible for all candidates and therefore some candidates may require additional items of furniture, as follows:

- Adjustable chair with armrests
- Double-width desk
- Flat desk

One-to-One Support

Support Providers will carry out practical tasks for a candidate whose disability prevents them from doing so themselves. Support Providers are not permitted to give factual information or advise the candidate on how to structure responses. Examples of One-to-One Support include:

- Personal Assistant
- Reader
- Interpreter
- Amanuensis/Scribe

Alternative Presentation of Exam Papers

Depending on a candidate's disability, he or she may require an examination paper to be produced in one of the following formats:

- Different coloured exam paper
- Exam paper in large print

Technological Aids

The use of technological aids may be the most effective means of communication for some candidates with disabilities. If a candidate chooses to use a personal computer with assistive software it will be the candidate's responsibility to ensure that they are proficient in the use of their chosen tool.

Each student is treated on an individual basis to ensure that the facilities arranged meet their specific requirements.

Careers Support

It is important that students with disabilities and long term conditions are aware of their rights as detailed in the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) NI Order which states that it is unlawful –

- for employers to discriminate against applicants and employees who have disabilities.
- for employers to fail to make reasonable adjustments for applicants and employees who have disabilities

If students believe their disability or long-term medical condition may impact on employment or recruitment processes they are encouraged to speak to our College Careers Advisor.

Disclosing your disability to potential employers

It is important to approach the job market with confidence. The decision to disclose a disability or long-term condition when applying for a job is personal. There are advantages to disclosing a disability or long-term condition as early as possible as this will give employers time to make any reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process that may be required.

Reasonable Adjustments

An employer can make reasonable adjustments for an applicant both during the recruitment process and in the work place itself. This can involve anything from changing the format of an application form (for example increasing the font size or making it available in audio format) to acquiring and modifying equipment in the work place.

Further Information

Further information can be obtained by contacting the staff in Stranmillis University College Student Support Centre (Level 3, Stranmillis House) – 028 9038 4510.