LIVING WITH A DISABILITY:
AT JESUS COLLEGE CAMBRIDGE
2022
WHAT COUNTS AS A DISABILITY?

The legal definition of a disability is:

"A disability is any long-term impairment, mental or physical, which substantially affects your ability to carry out normal, daily activities"

As a result, it doesn't have to be diagnosed in order to 'count' as a disability, so long as it has an impact on your daily life. Disabilities can also be invisible, meaning you won't necessarily see how the person is disabled.

Even if someone doesn't describe themselves as 'disabled' they can still access support for their condition. If you're unsure about whether or not you qualify for support, it's always better to reach out and ask for support, as you might be able to access more support than you think!

Examples of a disability include:

- ADHD
- Dyslexia
- Diabetes
- Lupus
- Chronic Pain
- Chronic Fatigue
- Visual Impairment
- Hearing Impairment
- ASD
- PTSD
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Cancer
- Arthritis
- Dyspraxia
- Epilepsy
- IBS
- And many more...
GROUP CHATS AND PEER SUPPORT:

There are a number of ways to get involved with the Disabled Students community at Cambridge. At a university level, the Disabled Students Campaign leads most of the student support groups available!

These groups range from being practical groups to ask questions about support, to groups that organise social events for disabled students. I've linked some below that you might want to check out! At university, nearly all organisation of societies and events happens on facebook, so if you don't already have an account, it's worth signing up!

- cambridge uni dsc community!
- DSC SpLD/ASD/neurodivergent community
- Cambridge Uni DSC Freshers' Group 2022-23
- DSC/SMC mental health issues support community
- DSC ED support community
- DSC chronic pain &/ fatigue community

The disabled students campaign also has lots of really helpful information, and you can check out their website here: https://www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/
SUPPORT IN COLLEGE:

There are multiple sources of support in college, and please don't be afraid to get in touch with any of them if you ever need support or have a question! The college is here to support you.

STUDENT SUPPORT:
You're always welcome to get in touch with our JCSU Mental Health and Disabilities Officer, or any of our other lovely JCSU Welfare Officers! Contact information can be found here.

DISABILITY LIAISON TUTOR:
The college also has a newly appointed Disability Liaison Tutor, Dr Gareth Wilkes. If you need any support with figuring out how to access the DRC, or have any questions or concerns about support in college, please feel free to get in touch with him via grw46@cam.ac.uk.

TUTORIAL:
The tutorial department deal with a range of things, from accommodation to exam arrangements to applications for financial support. They usually email in January asking you to send in any exam arrangements you need, so they are a useful contact!

COLLEGE NURSES AND PHYSIO:
The college also has its own college nurse, college mental health nurse and college physiotherapist. You can find them in Library Court I, and offer free support to students. If you have a long standing physical or mental health condition, it's useful to tell the college nurses, so that they can make sure you get the support you need. More information can be found here.
The Disability Resources Centre: The DRC is the central, university support for Disabled students. The DRC can help to organise exam arrangements, mentoring and study skill support, and arrange assessments for SpLDs. You can find their website here: https://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/. It's helpful to fill out their student information form for incoming students as soon as possible, which is found here: https://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/student-information-form.

When you get in contact with them, you'll be given a disability advisor, who helps to co-ordinate your support. You'll need to meet with your advisor by booking an appointment on Moodle, and they'll help you put together a 'Student Support Document'. This is a document that can be sent out to your Directors of Studies and supervisors, that details how your disability might impact your learning, the accomodations you'll need, and any examination arrangements that should be put in place.

Student Support Documents are really useful, as they can be given to supervisors as evidence of the support you need. They might make a number of recommendations to support you, such as:

- extended deadlines for essays
- printed copies of handouts
- permission to bring food/drink into restricted areas
- larger texts
- longer library loans
- assistive technology equipment
- rest breaks in supervisions or practicals
- and more...
The Disabled Students Allowance:
This is a grant, provided by Student Finance England, that helps support disabled students with any additional costs they may encounter as a result of their disability. You'll need medical evidence to apply, and once granted the allowance, you'll be asked to have a DSA needs assessment. While this sounds scary, it's actually really supportive- they're not questioning whether or not you need support, as the meeting is about finding the support that works for you. In my experience, they offered loads of additional support I'd never even considered! The DSA needs assessment will also say that it costs money, but this will all be covered by the DSA, so you won't need to pay for anything!

Examples of what the DSA can fund include giving you a laptop, free printers (including paper and ink), laptop stands, accessibility software, non-medical helpers or specialist note takers, or funding for travel incurred as a result of your disability.

College Funding:
If you think you might need an assessment for a disability, but can't afford the cost of one, the tutorial department can help fund this cost. You can also apply for funding via the Crane's Charity, that supports students in need of medical support that show financial need, and they might be able to cover assessment costs or treatment, including therapy. All of this will be available through the tutorial office!
EXAMS:

EXAM ADJUSTMENTS:
Exam adjustments tends to refer to changes to an exam that help with your needs, without major changes to the exam itself. For example, these could include having rest breaks, extra time, sitting it in a smaller room/in college, using a word processor or having a larger paper.

If you have been recommended exam adjustments in your Student Support Document, then you'll need to check with the tutorial office if they have received it, and if they have the correct exam adjustments organised for you. Usually, they'll send an email in January asking for anyone who has exam adjustments to get in touch with them.

Your student support document can be used as the supporting evidence for these arrangements. Annoyingly, you do have to email the tutorial office every year to make sure they have your examination arrangements in place, even if you had the same ones the year before.

ALTERNATIVE MODES OF ASSESSMENT:
If needed, you can also apply for examination via an 'Alternative Mode of Assessment'. This refers to when there are bigger changes made to the exam, such as changing a written exam to an oral exam, being graded on coursework instead of a final exam, or splitting an exam into two parts over two days. These arrangements are usually made earlier on in the year, so it's a good idea to get in touch with the DRC and college tutorial office as soon as possible if you think you'll need to apply for these.
Access needs for accommodation can be more diverse than you might think. They might include things such as needing lift access or a ground floor room, needing a quieter room, needing more natural light, having a fridge in your room, or having an en-suite. Jesus also has a small number of wheelchair accessible rooms available in Library Court V and in North Court.

If you need a specific room due to your access needs, please email the tutorial office here: tutorial-manager@jesus.cam.ac.uk

For second and third year, you can also request to be removed from the usual undergraduate ballot so that you can pick a specific room if you have certain access requirements. If your access needs also change in the middle of the year, you may still be able to move rooms. There are also funds available to cover adjustment costs, if you have to choose a more expensive room due to a disability. Please contact tutorial for any questions about accommodation!
AccessAble:
AccessAble is a website and app that has accessibility audits for all of the university cambridge buildings, including lecture theatres, departments and colleges. On the website, there are lots of photos of all the locations with information so you can find out if you can get to each location/site.

Mobility Support:
The college also has some funds available when students may need taxis to Addenbrooke's Hospital, or around Cambridge. If you'll need regular taxis, you'll need to speak to the tutorial department for these taxis to get approved, and then after that the porters can help you book them every time you need one.
IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING...

INTERMISSION:
Intermission is the word used when someone takes a year out of their studies, usually due to health reasons. Intermission is useful in cases when you have a health condition that is affecting your studies, and may improve if you take time out.

If you are considering intermission, or it has been suggested to you, you might want to speak to a welfare tutor, or the college nurse/mental health nurse and have an honest discussion about your situation. There is also a facebook group for students who are considering intermission, that can be useful to look at when you're deciding what the right choice is for you. You can find the group here: **Intermission Solidarity & Support**

Sometimes, when the college is seriously concerned about a student, they might initiate a 'Fitness to Study' procedure. If this happens and you want an external advocate to talk it through with, the **Student Advice Service** offers independent advice to Cambridge students and can act as an advocate in meetings.

DOUBLE TIME:
Another option is called Double Time, which falls under Alternative Modes of Assessment, but is slightly different from other options. It allows you to complete one year of studies over two years. This can be useful if you have a chronic illness that won't improve with intermission, but having your studies spread out may help you complete the course. There is a DSC officer who you can contact who is very knowledgeable about this, and is good to get in contact with, as double time is very rare so your DoS may not be aware of it!
AN OVERVIEW OF SUPPORT:

COLLEGE SUPPORT:
- Senior Tutor
- Director of Studies
- Welfare Tutor
- College Mental Health Nurse
- College Physio
- Tutorial Department/Disability Liaison Tutor
- Student Welfare Officers

YOU

EXTERNAL SUPPORT:
- Crane's Charity
- Friends
- Family
- Local Charities
- The NHS

INTERNAL SUPPORT:
- Student Advice Service
- Student Union
- Counselling
- The Disability Resources Centre
- Mentoring
- University Counselling Service
- CBT
- Sexual Assault and Harassment Advisor
- Mental Health Advisors
- University Union

UNIVERSITY SUPPORT:
- University Counselling Service
USEFUL LINKS

IN COLLEGE:

- JNET Pages on disability Support: https://jnet.jesus.cam.ac.uk/jnet/students/health-and-welfare/support-students-disabilities
- Disability Liaison Tutor: grw46@cam.ac.uk
- Tutorial Email: tutorial@jesus.cam.ac.uk
- College Nurse: Jacky Poskitt
- College Mental Health Nurse: Rachel Michel

IN THE UNIVERSITY:

- The DRC Website: https://www.disability.admin.cam.ac.uk/
- The DRC Email: DRC
- The disabled students campaign: https://www.disabled.cusu.cam.ac.uk/
- University Counselling Service: www.counselling.cam.ac.uk
- Student Advice Service
- Libraries Accessibility Guide: https://libguides.cam.ac.uk/accessibility

LOCAL SUPPORT SERVICES:

- NHS CPFT Improving Access to Psychological Therapy (IAPT)
- Keep Your Head Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- Cambridge Nightline: 01223 744444
- Lime Tree (STI Check): Brookfields Campus, 351 Mill Road, Cambridge, CB1 3DF
- AccessAble Cambridge: https://www.accessable.co.uk/university-of-cambridge