

Disabled Students

This leaflet is a guide to the services available for disabled students at Sheffield Hallam. It is only a brief guide and you should read the 'Disabled Student Support' section under 'Learning Support' in the student portal.

ADVICE AND SUPPORT

The Disabled Student Support Team

Sheffield Hallam University has a specialist team who you may have already met. The team provides advice and guidance and co-ordinates services for disabled students.

The team can offer advice and support to deaf and hearing impaired students, visually impaired students, physically disabled students, dyslexic students, students with medical conditions (such as epilepsy, asthma or ME), and students with mental health problems. In fact, anyone with an illness, condition, or impairment which may affect them during their course. The team can assist you with:

- the admissions process
- Disabled Students Allowance (see below)
- your Learning Contract, stating what the University **must** do to support you
- accommodation needs
- adaptations and equipment.

The Advice Centre

The Advice Centre provides a generalist advice and information service to all Hallam students. Appointments can also be made with a Money Adviser. We are here to make sure you are aware of your rights and responsibilities. We can assist with any queries you may have regarding benefits, housing, finance, grants, employment, and legal problems.

The Student Union

The Academic Affairs Executive, Equal Opportunities Executive and Welfare Executive are part of the Executive Committee elected by students each year and are here to represent you. The Equal Opportunities is responsible for the Students with Disabilities forum.

If there are any general issues you think the University or the Students Union should be aware of, the Equal Opportunities Executive is the person to contact (See Contacts).

FUNDING & MONEY

You may qualify for a Disabled Students Allowance from Student Finance England. This allowance is for additional costs of study incurred due to disability and is not means tested. The Disabled Student Support Team can advise you on which expenses can be met, and they can also make your application for you. You may also be eligible for extra Student Finance England funding if you have dependants (see Students with Dependants leaflet).

Apart from the DSA there are no extra additions to your LEA funding (Student Loans, Grants and Bursaries). However, the Student Loans Company can make special repayment and deferment arrangements for disabled borrowers (See Contacts).

Students with extra costs due to disability may be eligible for financial assistance from the University's Access to Learning Fund. The Advice Centre can help if you require assistance with the application form.

Disabled Students and Benefits

If you are disabled you may fall into one of the few categories of students who are able to claim benefits. If you think that you may be entitled to any benefits contact the Advice Centre and we can do a full benefit check to ensure that you are getting everything you should be.

If you are a full time student and satisfy one of the following conditions then you are eligible to claim and Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

- You qualify for the disability or severe disability premium.
- You have been incapable of work for 28 weeks.
- You qualify for a disabled student allowance because you are deaf.

You may qualify for or Employment Support Allowance (from October 27th 2008) If you are a full time student and

- You qualify for Disability Living Allowance.

If you satisfy the following condition you are eligible to claim Jobseekers Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit.

- You are waiting to go back on your course having taken approved time out because of an illness or a caring responsibility that has now come to an end.

NB: This list is not exhaustive and you may have other circumstances which mean you are able to claim benefits as a full time student. If you are in doubt you should contact the Advice Centre

These benefits are means tested and any Adult Dependents' Grant, Student Loan, or Maintenance Grant you receive will be taken into account as income. This means that you may receive a reduced amount, or even nothing, especially during term time. The Advice Centre can check entitlement.

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

This is a benefit for people who have difficulty looking after themselves or people who find it difficult to walk or get around. You don't need to have someone helping you to qualify. DLA is not means tested so it is paid on top of any earnings, income or (most) benefits you may have. DLA forms are available from the Advice Centre and we can help you apply. DLA is divided into two parts.

The Care Component is paid if you have difficulty coping with personal care needs. Both physical impairments and mental health issues can be taken into account. It is payable at three rates:

- Higher: if you need attention and / or supervision during the day and night.
- Middle: if you need attention and / or supervision during the day or night.
- Lower: if you need "limited attention", or if you cannot prepare a cooked meal for yourself if you have the ingredients.

The Mobility Component is paid to those who have difficulty getting around. It is payable at two rates:

- Higher: if you are unable, or virtually unable, to walk
- Lower: if you need guidance or supervision most of the time in order to get around.

Incapacity Benefit- NB: this was abolished for new claimants from the 27th of October 2008

Incapacity Benefit is paid to people unable to work because of illness or disability. You must have paid enough National Insurance Contributions, or have become incapable of work before the age of 20 (25 in some circumstances) to qualify. Incapacity Benefit is not means tested, so the

amount you get does not depend on your income or savings. There is nothing to prevent students from claiming it. However, the Benefit Agency sometimes try and argue that if you are well enough to study then you are fit for work. We can help you appeal if this happens. Incapacity Benefit is being replaced by ESA (see below).

Employment Support Allowance (ESA)

From October 2008, ESA has replaced Incapacity Benefit (IB) and Income Support (IS) on the grounds of incapacity or disability for new claimants.

ESA is for people aged 16 to 65 who have limited capability for work.

There are two strands of ESA:-

1. Contributory ESA (Replaces Incapacity Benefit)

- Students aged 19 and over can study full-time and can receive contributory ESA. There are no rules defining the type and hours of education a student do.
- Students under 19 can not qualify for **contributory** ESA if they are on a course of FT education (under 21 hours).
- However, to qualify you must meet the national contribution test or have limited capability for work which began before the age of 20.
- Any income from student loans/grants is not taken into account

2. Income - Related ESA (Replaces Income Support)

- Income-related ESA is means tested and is there to provide a safety net for those who do not satisfy the conditions for contributory ESA
- Full time students who do not satisfy the conditions for contributory ESA must get Disability Living Allowance to be eligible to claim Income- Related ESA. Students who do not get DLA cannot claim.

Claim by calling the Benefits Enquiry Line or visiting Jobcentre Plus.

Working Tax Credit

Most people claim Working Tax Credit because they have children. However, even if you don't have children you can still claim if:

- you are disabled physically or mentally and this puts you at a disadvantage in getting a job; and
- you received a qualifying benefit; and

- you work at least 16 hours per week.

Affect of benefits on Funding

When Student Finance England assesses your income, any funds you receive from the following sources are ignored:

- Income Support /Income-Related Employment Support Allowance
- Housing Benefit
- Child Benefit
- Any benefit paid by reason of disability. (Long term incapacity Benefit/ contributory Employment Support Allowance are subject to tax - but many LEA's do not take them into account as income).
- Any disability pension.
- Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit

NHS Charges

You may qualify for full exemption from NHS costs, or for help paying towards costs if you are on a low income. Fill out a HC1 form to get help on the basis of a low income (See Contacts). You automatically qualify for full exemption (and do not need to fill in the form) if you:

- receive Income Support or income based Jobseekers Allowance
- From October 27th 2008 - receive Income-Related Employment Support Allowance
- receive Child Tax Credit, or Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit, or Working Tax Credit including a disability element and your gross income is less than £15'050 per year.
- are aged 60 or over and receive Pension Credit guarantee credit
- are the partner or the dependent child of someone who gets the benefits listed above
- are under 16 or under 19 and in full time education.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Accommodation

The University Housing and Accommodation Office have a limited number of places for students with special needs (See Contacts).

The Learning Centre

The University Learning Centre department offers a range of services for disabled students with designated staff on each campus who can provide support in various ways (See Contacts).

Car Parking

The Disabled Student Support Team can help you find a parking space if you have a blue badge.

Useful Organisations

The "Disabled Students Handbook" has a full list of local and national groups.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT

The Disability Discrimination Act brings in new laws and measures aimed at ending the discrimination which many disabled people face. The Act gives disabled people rights in the areas of:

- Employment
- Access to goods and services
- Buying or renting land or property

Disability discrimination and the law

Part IV of the DDA covers virtually all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment. The Special Educational Needs and Education Act (SENDA) applies to anyone applying to, or studying at, University.

It is unlawful to discriminate against disabled students by treating them less favourably than others, Universities and Colleges are required to provide reasonable adjustments to provision where disabled students or other disabled people might otherwise be substantially disadvantaged.

For further details on the law and how it may affect you, contact the Advice Centre or the Disabled Student Support Team (see contacts).

CONTACTS

SHU Disabled Student Support Team

Student & Academic Services, 5th Floor, Owen Building

Tel: 0114 225 3813 or 3964 . Fax: 0114 225 2161

Minicom: 0114 225 3964

Email: disability-support@shu.ac.uk

www.shu.ac.uk/services/ssc/disability

Hallam Union Executive Officers

Sheffield Hallam Students Union

The HUBS Paternoster Row Sheffield S1 2QQ

Tel: 0114 225 4124

SHU Accommodation Services

38/40 Howard Street

Tel: 0114 225 4503/4504/4505. Fax: 0114 225 4501

Minicom: 0114 225 4513

Email: accommodation@shu.ac.uk

Web: www.shu.ac.uk/accommodation

Learning Centres

City Campus (Adsetts) 0114 225 3333

Collegiate Campus 0114 225 3333

Student Finance Centre

Second floor Surrey Building

Sheffield Hallam University

Sheffield S1 1WB

Telephone: 0114 225 2184

Student Finance England

Tel No: 0845 300 5090

Open: Mon-Fri from 8am to 8pm

Sat-Sun from 9am to 5.30pm

Web: <http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance>

Student Loan Company

100 Bothwell Street, Glasgow G2 7DJ

General enquiries Tel: 0845 026 2019. Fax: 0141 306 2005

Minicom: 0800 085 3950

Web: www.slc.co.uk

NHS Business Services Authority

(FOR HC1 FORMS)

Tel: 0845 08500 1166

Web: http://www.ppa.org.uk/ppa/HC1_form_intro.htm

Tax Credit Helpline

0845 300 3900

0845 300 3909 Textphone

Open Mon-Fri. from 8am to 8pm - seven days a week except for Christmas day, Boxing Day and New Years Day

Benefit Enquiry Line (BEL). 0800 88 22 00

Text phone 0800 24 33 55 (for hearing and speech difficulties)