

Lead Scotland



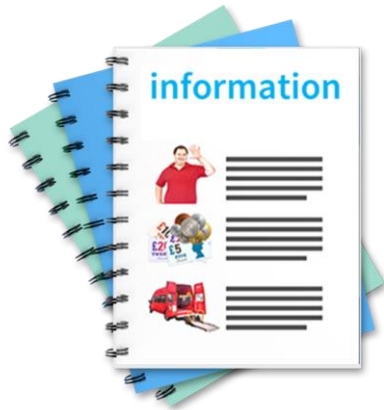
All about your needs assessment when you begin a course



Easy Read



What this document is about



This is an information document.



It is for disabled students who are going to college or university in Scotland.

It will tell you about **needs assessments** at college or university in Scotland.



A **needs assessment** is when a Disability Advisor from your college or university meets with you to see what kinds of support you might need to do your course.



This document will tell you about other things that might help you.



This information document was written by:

- disabled students

and



- Lead Scotland

About needs assessments



Near the start of your course you can ask for a needs assessment.

You can ask for it as soon as you have accepted a place on your course.



This needs assessment will be a meeting with the Disability Advisor at your college or university.



You can tell them the things that will help you to do your course.

This might be:

- equipment – things like laptops
- support – things like a sign language interpreter
- **adjustments** – this means things like more time in exams



After the meeting the Disability Advisor will write a report.

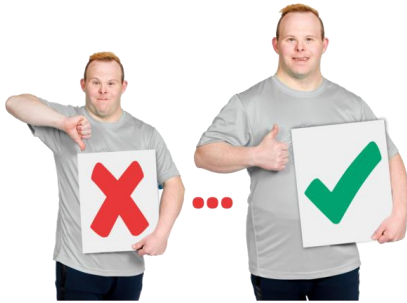
The report will say what kinds of help you should get.



Some of the support might be:

- money from the Disabled Students Allowance
- money from the Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance

What a Reasonable Adjustment is

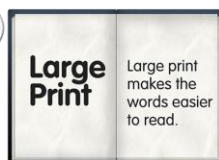


Reasonable adjustments are the things that colleges and universities have to do to make sure that disabled students can take part in everything.



The law says that colleges and universities have to make reasonable adjustments.

It means that disabled students can take part in all areas of their education and life at their college or university.



Reasonable adjustments can be things like:

- lifts and accessible toilets
- large print or braille course handouts
- having laptops with helpful software



In exams, reasonable adjustments can be things like:



- having extra time
- having someone to write your answers down for you
- a digital tool that lets you zoom in to see the questions more easily

The Disabled Students Allowance and the Additional Support Needs for Learning Allowance might pay for:



- support workers to help you with taking notes or using British Sign Language
- equipment like special computer software
- one to one help from a Learning Support Assistant

What to do before your needs assessment

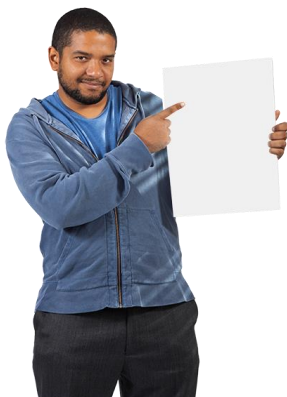


Get in touch with your college or university to tell them you want a needs assessment.



To help you do this they might have:

- a disability service
- a student support team
- a supported learning department



You might be asked to bring medical paperwork to show you have a disability.

But sometimes you won't need to show anything.

Just ask your college or university.

Find out things like:



- what you need to bring to your needs assessment
- how often and long your classes will be
- where your classes will be
- what kinds of things you will do in classes
- how you will be tested

You will be asked about your life.

Think about things like:



- how your disability affects your day to day life
- what kind of equipment you use
- what kind of support you think you will need
- what kind of help has been good for you in the past

What will happen at your needs assessment meeting



Someone from your college or university will do your needs assessment.

They might be called a Disability Advisor or a Needs Assessor.



The needs assessment meeting will be a friendly chat about the support you think you might need.



You can bring a friend or parent with you if you feel a bit nervous.

Be really honest about the things that are tricky for you and the support you might need.



The Disability Advisor might also be able to show you some things which you might get to help you.

You might get a chance to try new equipment or digital tools.

You will get the chance to ask any questions.

What will happen after your needs assessment



After the meeting the Disability Advisor will write a report.



The report will say what kinds of support your college or university thinks will help you.



If you are going to college, you might also get a Personal Learning Support Plan.

If you are going to university, you might also get something like a Learning Profile.



You should get copies of these reports to keep.

Or you will get the right link and passwords to reach them online.



If you do not agree with anything in your report, you can ask your college or university to change it.

Tools



Tools mean things that can help us to do something.



Here are some examples of tools that have helped other disabled students:



- the Glean app

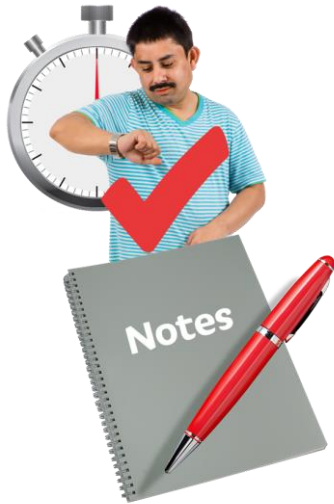
This app can save documents with sound recordings next to them.



- the Live Scribe Smartpen.

This pen records everything you write or say.

It uses a tiny camera and a tiny microphone.



- getting learning information before your classes happen

This can make you feel better prepared for each class.

And it takes away the stress of having to write fast notes.

Technology

Technology means devices like:



- smart phones
- laptops
- computers
- tablets
- digital tools



There are lots of technology tools that can help us:



- **screen readers**

Screen readers read the text on the screen out loud, to help people who are blind or have sight loss.



Some examples of screen readers are:

- Voiceover
- NVDA
- JAWS for Windows



- voice tools

For example Dragon Speech Recognition Software.

This lets someone control their computer with their voice.

- reading tools



For example Texthelp Read And Write.

This helps someone by reading text out loud and explaining hard words.



Another example is ClaroRead.

This also reads text on the computer screen out loud.

- ideas tools



For example Mind Genius. This helps you collect and sort out your ideas.

Speaking up for yourself



Speaking up for yourself and your needs is also called **self advocacy**.



The more you can tell your Disability Advisor about how your disability affects you, the better support you will get.



You might feel like you just want to get by like other people without any support.



But this is not fair on yourself.

You have a right to get the support that means you can join in with your course like everyone else can.



Your Disability Advisor understands that some days are easier and some days are harder.

You can be very honest with them.

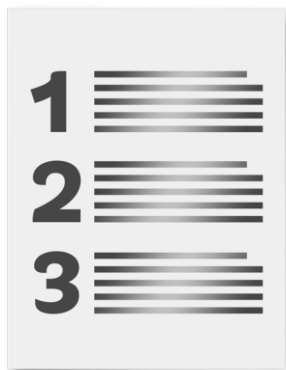
Things to remember



Be prepared – get your needs assessment done as early as possible.



Do not hide your needs – think about what would really help you to be excited about learning.



Make a list of your questions.

And write down the answers so you remember them.



Ask to try out any new technology before it gets added to your needs assessment report.



If you want to find out more about needs assessments or support for disabled students:

- you can email us at info@lead.org.uk



- or you can call us on

0800 999 2568