Information for students who are claiming DSA to be paid from September 2015 or later and their DSA Study Needs Assessors

It is important that students and DSA Study Needs Assessors are well-informed about access, support and facilities at a student’s place of study, in order to make informed decisions about what DSA funded support to recommend. It is particularly important in the context of University of the Arts London, since UAL is a large, specialist art and design institution, in which teaching is delivered in non-traditional ways.

This briefing is intended to provide a useful point of reference for students and DSA Study Needs Assessors. Students are strongly encouraged to take a copy of this briefing along to their DSA Study Needs Assessment appointment. This briefing is not exhaustive. Students and Study Needs Assessors should contact the University Disability Service if they require any additional information.

Access to disability-related advice and support

The University Disability Service provides advice and coordinates support for disabled and dyslexic students across all of the University’s constituent Colleges.

Students have a named Disability Adviser (assigned according to which course the student is studying) who co-ordinates their support throughout their studies.

The University Disability Service co-ordinates a range of Non-Medical Helper Support, funded through the DSA. Full details are included in the NMH Template.

UAL Disability Service is a registered provider of DSA-funded Specialist One-to-One Study Skills Support.

The University directly employs a large team of Specialist One-to-One Study Skills Tutors, who are an integral part of our service.

The University recruits, interviews, trains and supervises a pool of Specialist Mentors, who are employed by our partners Randstad. Many of our mentors have completed training and are compliant (Under the DSA QAF) to work with students who have autistic spectrum conditions.

Specialist One-to-One Study Skills Tutors, Specialist Mentors are provided with confidential space within University premises, in which to work with students.
The University co-ordinates other forms of Non-Medical Help which takes place on University premises, in partnership with Randstad:

- Practical Support Assistant
- Library Support Assistant
- Workshop/Laboratory Assistant
- Study Assistant
- Manual Note taker
- Electronic Note taker.

The University also works in close partnership with City Lit for provision of BSL Interpreters, Communication Support Workers and Language Support Tutors for Deaf Students.

The University is unable to provide confidential space for mentoring or tutoring sessions delivered by providers other than UAL and Randstad.

**Reasonable adjustments typically provided to UAL students**

With their Disability Adviser, the student agrees an Individual Support Agreement (ISA), which is then communicated to key staff who need to know about the student’s access needs. ISAs can cover a range of adjustments, in relation to:

- access to course materials
- recording taught sessions
- adjustments required in-class or for specific contexts (e.g. workshops, group work, placements)
- assessment adjustments (referred to as ‘Accommodated Assessment’)
- library requirements, e.g. extended borrowing time
- health and safety/physical access requirements.

Disability Advisers may also help students to communicate their needs in respect of access to accommodation or parking etc.

**Access to IT and assistive technology**

The University delivers courses on Mac-based and PC platforms.

Open Access IT suites (with Mac and PC platforms) are located at each College site, often within libraries. The Learning Zones at Central Saint Martin’s College of Arts and Design (CSM) and London College of Communication (LCC) have large suites. Some courses also provide access to computing facilities for students on their course.

For information on library and Learning Zone suites and opening hours, see arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/library-services/opening-hours-and-locations/

Free Wi-Fi is available at all University sites.

The University has site-licenses for TextHelp Read and Write Gold v10, Claroread, MindView and Inspiration. Students can install these applications on any University-networked computer which they are logged on to. These applications are not accessible remotely. At the time of writing, it is not possible for students to save their user preferences automatically in between sessions. The University is actively investing in its Assistive Technology expertise and provision, with a view to making improvements in 2016-17.

**Access to course information**

All students are provided with a course handbook, in a format that is accessible to them. The handbook includes the following information:

- Course structure and outline curriculum
- Learning and teaching methods, learning outcomes and assessment strategy
- Reading lists.

Students can access their timetables online. The University aims to publish timetables for core teaching in August each year/six weeks prior to the start of term.

It is not always possible to timetable all taught sessions well in advance. Students with specific access needs relating to timetabling are offered Individual Support Agreements (ISAs). ISAs communicate students’ requirements to the course team.

Teaching materials are made available to students in a range of formats, where possible. Hard copy materials are provided in clear font on non-glare paper.

UAL’s virtual learning environment is Moodle. The Disability Service strongly encourages all course teams to make teaching materials available via Moodle for students. Often this happens after sessions have been taught.

**Recording taught sessions**

Students are permitted to make notes in a way that is appropriate to their learning preferences e.g. on keyboard, or by recording. It is not permitted to share or distribute recordings to any other persons or organisations.
There may be exceptions, where recording of an individual, audience or event is not permitted. In these cases disabled students would be informed in advance and alternative arrangement would be made.

The University is piloting the use of lecture capture. This is not currently widely available. Lecture capture or voice recording may not be suitable for many of the teaching environments (workshops and studios) that UAL teaching takes place in. Some environments can be noisy and it may therefore be necessary to consider additional note-taker support, rather than relying on recordings.

Practical demonstrations are supported by provision of other resources for students to refer to (e.g. written/pictorial instruction sheets, video demonstrations).

**Accommodated Assessment**
The University’s ‘Accommodated Assessment’ policy articulates the range of assessment adjustments which are available to meet disabled students’ needs. This includes (but is not limited to):

- Submitting work in an alternative format (e.g. an audio submission)
- Using specialist equipment, software or a support worker e.g. communicator
- Alternative assessment methods (e.g. viva voce instead of dissertation)
- Additional time for certain (not necessarily all) coursework assignments
- Examination arrangements e.g. additional time, use of a scribe/reader.

To find out more search for ‘Accommodated Assessment at arts.ac.uk

To access Accommodated Assessment, students must provide evidence that they are disabled and discuss their needs with their Disability Adviser. Accommodated Assessment arrangements must be negotiated in advance of deadlines – at least two weeks for additional time to be provided, longer for more complex arrangements.

**General information about assessment practices**
Assessment of students’ learning can take a range of forms e.g. written assignments, portfolios, reflective reviews, presentations, group work and ‘live’ projects’. Examinations are rare.

Detailed information about each course’s assessment methods is included in their course handbook. If more information about assessment for a student’s course is needed, please contact the Disability Service.

Learning outcomes are carefully designed and scrutinised to ensure that they are clear and easy to understand and that they are achievable and accessible.

Students are not penalised for spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors in writing, or lack of fluency in verbal presentations, unless this is part of the learning outcome being assessed.

To find out more search for ‘assessment’ at arts.ac.uk

The University has a no extensions policy for coursework. Exceptions can be made for students with disability-related needs (under ‘Accommodated Assessment’) or students with valid extenuating circumstances.

**Library access and support**
There is a library at each College (although not at every College site) and Learning Zones are located at CSM and LCC. For more information about locations and opening times:

arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/library-services/opening-hours-and-locations/

Library Services provide a range of facilities and services to facilitate disabled students’ access e.g:

- Extended library loans
- Personalised inductions
- Book-fetching
- Postal loans
- Access to assistive software/specialist equipment e.g. magnifiers, scanners
- Publications in alternative formats
- Sensus Access for the conversion of inaccessible documents to accessible formats
- Named contact for disability access at each College library.

To find out more about support offered to disabled students, please search for ‘library services for disabled students’ at arts.ac.uk
For all new acquisitions, the Library purchases eBooks wherever possible. Currently, most books on course reading lists are available in hard copy only. The University has one fastbook scanner and a scanning service is available for disabled students who require access to texts electronically. It is strongly advised that any student who requires electronic access to texts makes contact with the University Disability Service as early as possible to discuss their requirements.

Physical access
The University has six colleges and some colleges have several sites. Some sites include heritage or listed buildings and have little or no step-free access.

Students who require step-free access, or need minimal walking distances, are advised to contact the Disability Service as early as possible to discuss their needs.

Full access and route guides to all our sites are available on the DisabledGo website: disabledgo.com/organisations/university-of-the-arts-London/main

Parking
Some College sites have some parking facilities, many do not. Any student who may require a parking space is advised to contact the Disability Service to discuss their requirements.

Travel
UAL works in partnership with GLH Taxis to provide assistance to those students who are unable to access sites using public transport. This is occasionally put in place for DSA-eligible students before their final DSA support package is agreed and is then claimed back from the student’s funding body.

Accommodation
Any student who holds an offer of a place on a course may apply for University Halls of Residence. Demand for rooms is high. Applications from disabled students are prioritised, provided that students disclose their needs when they apply.

Other services available to UAL Students
Developing study skills
Academic Support is available to all students. Academic Support tutors lead workshops and other activities (some stand-alone, some embedded within courses). These sessions are intended to help students develop skills and confidence in studying. Students can also access one-to-one tutorials. These typically last 20-30 minutes and are booked on a first come-first served basis.

To find out more, please search for ‘Academic Support for students’ at arts.ac.uk

Language support
The Language Centre offers English language support to non-native speakers of English. It also provides a proof reading service to all students (charges apply).

To find out more, please search for ‘Language Centre’ at arts.ac.uk