



Guidance for GPs and other health professionals writing letters or statements supporting an application for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) and/or alternative exam arrangements (AEAs)

The University supports disabled students, including those with long-term health and mental health conditions, to apply for Disabled Students' Allowances. The student's funding body will determine whether an award will be made. The funding body requires supporting documents from a GP or other health professional as part of this process.

The University accepts self-declaration from students to agree common anticipatory adjustments including certain alternative exam arrangements. However, students requiring less common and bespoke alternative exam adjustments may require supporting documents confirming a disability, including long-term health and mental health conditions.

For supporting documents to have the best chance of being effective, letters or statements from a GP or other health professional must meet the following criteria:

1. Include printed name, signature and date on headed paper - the identity and position of the GP or other health professional as signatory must be discernable from the letter.
2. State a diagnosis (or working diagnosis where a firm diagnosis is not available).
3. State that the difficulty has lasted or is likely to last 12 months or more.
4. State that in the professional opinion of the author of the supporting document that the student's disability (including long-term health and mental health conditions) has a substantial negative impact on their ability to undertake normal daily activities. The supporting document will be strengthened if examples of negative effects on normal day-to-day activities can be provided.
5. Indicate whether the condition fluctuates, noting any known triggers.
6. Outline the effect that the condition may have on learning and/ or attendance at university, e.g. how the condition (or the side effects of any prescribed medication) will affect or have an impact on:
 - concentration/ motivation.
 - sleep/ energy levels.
 - time-management/ self-direction.
 - short- and/or long-term memory.
 - ability to mix in groups (e.g. where group work might be a source of anxiety).
 - ability to travel on public transport.
 - ability to live in community (e.g. in halls of residence).

The letter or statement should be passed to the student and can also be sent directly to Disability Services by emailing disability-services@bristol.ac.uk or posting to Disability Services, University of Bristol, Lower Ground Floor Hampton House, Cotham Hill, Bristol, BS6 6JS.