

Readiness to study at university

Students with disabilities are well supported by Bucks New University and we are proud of their success.

However, studying at university level is independent study. We can make reasonable adjustments for a disability or medical condition, but you must reach the same academic standards as all other students, once these adjustments have been made.

We have put together this short list of FAQs to help prospective students and their parents make sure that applicants are ready to study in Higher Education. We would be very happy to provide more detailed information. The term disability is used here very broadly to describe: dyslexia/Specific Learning Difficulties; Asperger Syndrome or Autism; Mental Health difficulties; a sensory difficulty; a physical difficulty or a medical condition.

Will students with a disability receive extra subject tuition?

No, the support that can be provided for a disability is not subject specific. Students need to be able to access lecture material and reading associated with the course independently, perhaps using assistive technology (e.g. a text to speech programme). They may receive some specialist teaching for developing independent study skills, as appropriate for their disability.

The University has a Learning Development Unit who can provide academic advice and guidance to all students whatever their course, year, or attainment level. For more information <https://bucks.ac.uk/students/learning-development-unit>.

Will students have someone to help them with their assignments?

All students receive guidance about assignments from their academic lecturers and the skills they need to be able to access the library systems etc. will also be taught.

Some students will be awarded a specialist study skills tutor (through the Disabled Students' Allowance) to teach them to develop their study skills strategies and interpret assignment details. This allows for these skills to be taught at an adjusted pace and at the correct starting point for the individual student. However, this would usually only be for up to one hour per week and the student will be expected to use assistive technology to support their studies e.g. downloading lecture slides in advance of the lectures and recording their lectures.

Students must be able to understand and engage with their own lecture notes, read and extract information to support assignments, generate and check assignments independently – using assistive technology where appropriate.

Lecturers may allow all students to submit an assignment plan for formative feedback, but a student's work will not be corrected by anyone before it is handed in for marking.

Will students be assigned a learning support assistant?

No. Students are expected to be able to work independently. Some individual person support may be provided if appropriate for the disability e.g. a British Sign Language communication support worker or a practical assistant for studio work.

Will students get help for placements, work experience or applying for jobs?

All students will work towards improving their employability skills as part of their course. This teaching and guidance begins in their first year of study and there is an online portal to support this. The Disability Service can provide advice and documentation for students to support these processes. Where necessary, the Disability Service will work co-operatively with the Careers and Employability Service at the university to support a student.

What skills does a student need before studying in Higher Education?

All students need to be competent users of IT before they arrive at university because:

- Assignments will be word processed and most are submitted for marking electronically.
- The university has an e-learning platform.
- Students will need to read and respond to emails from the university.
- Support for students with a disability very often involves specialist software programmes.

After teaching and guidance, and using methods that are right for the individual student, all students will need to:

- Find, print or download, and prepare their lecture notes, understand how to store them in files, be able to refer to them.
- Expect to read independently to prepare for lectures and seminars.
- Use books and academic articles independently to support their studies.
- Carry out independent research and make independent notes.
- Be able to work independently to answer assignments.
- Meet the university's regulations for academic standards and conduct.
- Organise work and meet assignment deadlines, unless there is a specific reason for not being able to do this e.g. a medical event or personal extenuating circumstances.