

Smoothing the Way

A Transition Guide for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Students



under the auspices of



Part 3 of 8. Getting Support or “Accommodations”

“**Accommodations**” is another word for “resources” or “support”, for example: equipment, interpreters, or extra writing time in exams.

All universities and polytechnics have a **Disability Co-ordinator**, **Disability Service** or similar, to organise any accommodations you may need.

Not all universities and polytechnics offer the same accommodations. Check what is available with your Disability Co-ordinator.

Your rights: the Human Rights Act (1993) says that universities and polytechnics **must** do what they **reasonably** can to make sure their environments are inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities.

What does the Disability Co-ordinator do?

The Disability Co-ordinator will:

- Meet with you to discuss what accommodations you may need
- Organise equipment or support, for example: radio mike, interpreters
- Talk with tutors and other staff about working with interpreters, note-takers, or specialised equipment

What kind of accommodations may be available?

- **Equipment**, for example: loop, mike, suitable lighting
- **Communication support**, for example: interpreter, note-taker
- **Extra learning**, for example: English, number skills
- **Room layout**, for example: making sure your seat is close to the front, facing tutor, your back to the light
- **Exam accommodations**, such as:
 - Extra writing time
 - A separate, quiet exam room
 - Reader to sign questions to you, you write answers
 - Writer to write your answers, you read the questions and sign answers

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For your first meeting with your Disability Co-ordinator...

- Contact the Co-ordinator to arrange an interpreter for your appointment if you need
- You can bring a support person if you like:
let the Co-ordinator know in advance who is coming
- Be ready to talk about what accommodations might suit you in class, in labs, and on field trips, placements etc
- Bring a copy of your audiogram if possible
- Bring a copy of your latest school or other exam results if possible

Your Co-ordinator can make copies for you if you need.

Working with interpreters and note-takers

Be on time to class!

Interpreters and note-takers won't wait around if you are late.

Note-takers won't take notes if you are absent.

At the start of semester, work out a way to let interpreters and note-takers know if you will not be in class.

Before class, discuss with interpreters and note-takers where it is best for you and for them to sit.

Interpreters and note-takers do not teach, or join in class discussion.

It is up to you to join in discussion through your interpreter.

If you have a note-taker:

- Collect your notes at an arranged time after your lesson
- Use your notes appropriately
- Give feedback to the note-taker about the usefulness of notes, and any changes needed

**If you have any problems with interpreters or note-takers,
talk to your Disability Co-ordinator.**