

## How to Manage Your Physical Disability at UCD

Managing any disability effectively at third level involves the utilisation of a number of available services and tools. It is also vital that each individual student takes responsibility for their own academic career at UCD. The aim of the UCD Access & Lifelong Learning (ALL) is to allow all students registered with Disability Support to become independent learners so they can develop the skills expected of successful graduates and take these skills into the workplace. The following guidelines are designed to help you to reach that goal.

### Communication

It is important that you communicate with UCD about your Physical Disability in order to overcome any disadvantages resulting from your disability.

1. You should register with ALL as soon as possible after you enter UCD/receive a diagnosis. Attending a needs assessment will ensure that you receive the appropriate supports.
2. You will receive a letter of registration from ALL following your needs assessment. This confirms that you are registered with ALL and outlines the supports you receive. You must provide this letter to your lecturers/tutors in order to inform staff about your support needs and request alternative exam arrangements for mid-semester exams, class tests or locally arranged exams.

### Supports available to all UCD students

- Writing Support Centre
  - UCD Writing Centre provides free, one-to-one tuition and a range of workshops on all aspects of the writing process. You can find this service in Link Space 2 of the James Joyce Library See <http://www.ucd.ie/writingcentre/> for more details.
- Maths Support Centre
  - The Maths Support Centre (MSC) offers free support in mathematics to students from all programmes in UCD. Support is given through one-on-one and small group tuition on a drop in basis during semesters. There is no need to make an appointment in advance. See [www.ucd.ie/msc](http://www.ucd.ie/msc) for more details.
- Student Counselling Service
  - UCD provide a free and confidential service staffed by professionally qualified psychologists and counsellors. UCD aim to provide easily accessible support for students when personal issues arise that affect their happiness, well-being, capacity to cope, relationships or learning. For more information and to arrange an appointment see: <http://www.ucd.ie/studentcounselling/>

### Exam Accommodations

- A number of exam accommodations are available to help students to overcome any disadvantage they may experience because of their disability. Based on your diagnosis and needs assessment ALL will grant you the supports necessary for you. Exam accommodations may include use of the alternative exam centre, extra time (10 minutes extra per hour in exams) or use of a computer. It is important to note that these supports are granted based on national guidelines. Therefore these supports may not be appropriate for every student with a Physical Disability.
- ALL organises alternative exam arrangements for end of semester exams only. If you wish to use an exam accommodation for any mid-semester exam or class test it is your responsibility to contact the module co-ordinator at the beginning of the semester. Failure to do this may result in you not receiving your exam accommodations as they can take some time to arrange.

## How to Manage Your Physical Disability at UCD

### Assistive Technology

There is a range of Assistive Technology resources available for students in UCD. These consist of software and devices which can help students with their day-to-day tasks in UCD. Assistive Technology of particular interest to students with a Physical Disability includes:

- **Recording Tool - Livescribe Smartpen:** The Livescribe Smartpen is an electronic pen that has a built-in recorder. The pen synchronizes the recording with the notes taken by the student in class. Afterwards the student can click on any part of their notes and the pen will play back that section of the class.
- **Voice Recognition Software:** Students can use voice-recognition software to compose their essays or assignments. The student speaks into a headset and the program interprets their speech and enters it as text on the screen. Students who make use of this software may have a disability which makes it difficult for them to express their thoughts in writing or have a physical disability which makes it difficult for them to write. Voice recognition software can also be used in conjunction with a handheld Dictaphone.

### Learning Support

- ALL provides learning support primarily through group workshops. These workshops are run numerous times over both semesters and are advertised to students via email. These workshops are designed to help you learn the skills you need to succeed at university. Topics include:
  - Note taking & Study skills
  - Time management, Organisation, Presentations and group work
  - Academic writing, Research skills, Avoiding Plagiarism & Exam Preparation
- All material used in workshops is made available via Blackboard. These materials include slides, handouts, exercises and an audio version of all workshops. All first year students registering with ALL are given access to this Blackboard module. To request access please email [disability@ucd.ie](mailto:disability@ucd.ie).

### Accessibility of Campus Buildings

ALL liaises with Buildings and Services to ensure that lectures are scheduled in an accessible venue, when there is a wheelchair user registered to take the module. If you have any issues with accessibility on campus please contact ALL as soon as possible so we may assist you.

### Use of a Personal Assistant

If deemed appropriate by both the student and ALL at the needs assessment the support of a Personal Assistant (PA) may be allocated. The PA is there to assist the student with academic life only. They will not contribute to the class unless they are assisting the student to make their contribution. The PA may take notes for the student and assist them in travelling between classes.

### Campus accommodation for students with physical or sensory disabilities

UCD Residences make a limited number of accessible rooms available for students who have a significant physical and/or sensory disability. All CAO applicants wishing to book accommodation must place their name on the priority waiting list by the beginning of May before the September in which they hope to attend UCD. Spaces are allocated on a first come first served basis. See [www.ucd.ie/residences](http://www.ucd.ie/residences) for further details. If you require accessible accommodation you must also contact ALL so we can ensure that you are offered an accessible room.

### Useful Online Resources

- [www.ahead.ie](http://www.ahead.ie)

If you find that you are having any difficulties in UCD please contact us as soon as possible!