

Information for applicants with learning differences, disabilities or long term mental health conditions

The term *disability* is used to define any long term physical or mental condition that has a significant impact on your ability to study. For more guidance on this please see the Support for Students booklet which can be found at:

http://www.rvc.ac.uk/static/support-for-students/learning-physical-and-mental-health-needs/RVC_SfS_2015.html

International/EU Students

If you are living with a long term physical or mental condition you may be eligible for learning support. In order to access this when you are studying at the RVC and to make the transition into University life as easy as possible, you need to come prepared.

If you have a learning difference (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, ADD/HD) you should ensure that you bring a copy of your diagnostic report with you to University. Overseas/EU students with a learning difference should be aware they will not automatically receive the same time allowance that they may have been able to access when studying in their home country. The standard allowance in the UK for written exams equates to 25% extra time (15 minutes per hour).

If you take long term medication you need to make arrangements with your physician in order to have access to it on an ongoing basis in the UK. The NHS healthcare system in the United Kingdom works very differently and some medications available overseas are not licensed or prescribed by UK Medical practitioners. You should ideally bring a 3-month supply with you when you first arrive into the UK. Please note that the NHS operates a waitlist for most non-emergency services and you may have to wait to see a specialist consultant for chronic or non-essential medical care.

If you have a long term chronic health condition or a long term mental health condition you need to provide medical evidence. This may be a physician's or psychiatrist's letter.

You are encouraged to contact the Advice Centre (email: disability@rvc.ac.uk) **in advance** of your arrival to discuss what can be available to you and the best way you can be supported. You can also find more information at:

<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/support-for-students/disabilities-dyslexia-and-long-term-health-issues>

Home Students

If you have a learning difference (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, ADD/HD), long term medical or long term mental health condition you should be eligible for apply for the

Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) this helps pay for equipment and support to assist you and help you get the most out of your studies. You should apply for this prior to enrolment in order that all support is in place when you start your course. You can find more information about this at:

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview>

If you have been diagnosed with a learning difference (Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia) to be eligible to apply for the DSA your diagnostic report needs to have been conducted by an appropriately qualified Assessor, when you were aged 16 or over. If your report does meet this criteria it is likely you will need to invest in an updated diagnosis.

A recommendation of extra time for 'A' levels or a 'Provision of Need' statement from your previous school or college may not suffice and will not automatically mean you are eligible for the same support at University. Students need to provide a diagnostic report completed by an Educational Psychologist or appropriately qualified Assessor. It is recommended you establish at the earliest opportunity, if the evidence you have is suitable for the purposes of Higher Education.

If you are unsure if your report will suffice you should contact the Advice Centre **in advance** of starting your studies to discuss a course of action (email: disability@rvc.ac.uk). Many reports that are conducted in-house by schools and colleges are unacceptable for the purposes of Higher Education.

You can find more information about the support you can access while studying at the RVC at:

<https://www.rvc.ac.uk/study/support-for-students/disabilities-dyslexia-and-long-term-health-issues>