**Supporting Disabled Staff at Loughborough University**

**Who is defined as disabled?**

There are many kinds of disabilities, some more widely understood and visible than others, some have constant impact whilst others are intermittent. Disability can happen to anyone at any stage of life and includes some mental health conditions.

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is likely to be considered disabled if they have a mental or physical impairment that has an adverse effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities. This effect must be:

* Substantial: in other words, not minor or trivial. The person is still considered disabled if the effects of their impairment are alleviated or removed by ongoing treatments or aids.
* Long-term: this is usually taken to mean that it has lasted, or is likely to last, for more than 12 months.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**I have a disability – do I have to tell the University?**

It is your choice whether you tell the University that you have a disability**.**

Telling us that you are disabled is particularly important if you might need any adjustments to carry out your job and if you have applied to [Access to Work to apply for an Access to Work grant](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply). The University has a duty to support you but cannot offer support if they are unaware of your needs. In addition, telling us can also help the University to improve the way it works with disabled staff – for example this information can help us to assess the impact of University practices on disabled staff.

To disclose a disability please update your disability status on iTrent, this will trigger a process where you will be offered a consultation with an Occupational Health Adviser. If you have any concerns or questions about this process, please contact Occupational Health on 01509 222850 or occupationalhealth@mailbox.lboro.ac.uk.

**Can I disclose a disability at any time during my employment?**

Yes. It would be helpful if you can tell the University once you have a disability which may happen at any time during your employment. You can make this disclosure to your line manager confidentially and this may include where you believe you have a disability even if a diagnosis has not been provided.

It is important that your manager is able to consider your unique situation including what reasonable adjustments may be helpful throughout your employment.

**What can the University do to assist me?**

Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to remove or reduce or mitigate against a disadvantage related to someone's disability. The Equality Act defines 'reasonable adjustments' as adjustments to:

* Provisions, criteria or practices (the way things are done)
* Physical features (the built environment)
* Auxiliary aids (providing specialist equipment or services)

Some disabled people might not need or want adjustments, although this might change over time and the University can consider reasonable adjustments for staff at any stage.

**Occupational Health and Wellbeing**

If you are a member of staff who is new to the University who has or develops a disability you may require additional reasonable adjustments to support you in your role. The first step is to request that your manager submits a management referral to Occupational Health and Wellbeing. The clinical team will arrange a consultation with you to discuss your needs and make recommendations back to your manager.

**Disability Passport**

A person's ability to perform their job is sometimes supported by reasonable adjustments to their workplace. There is not always a need to record very short-term adjustments such as, where a line manager agrees to adjust working hours for a couple of weeks. Where more significant adjustments are likely to be needed, whether these remain temporary or become permanent, the University is committed to supporting individuals. Recording reasonable adjustments benefits the University and disabled staff members particularly when their role or line manager changes and helps them avoid having to frequently repeat their requirements.

The Disability Passport will provide a record of an individual's disability and agreed reasonable adjustments within the workplace.

The Disability Passport can be used to provide individuals with a disability or long-term health condition an opportunity to discuss how this affects them on a daily basis, and to assist managers to take into account all relevant factors when considering what support can be put in place.

The Disability Passport will be launched in early April and more details will be shared via the staff newsletter.

**Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Assessment**

If your workstation is not suitable for your needs, contact your local [DSE assessor](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/health-safety/contacts/dse/) for support. If this does not resolve the issue please complete the self-referral form for Occupational Health and Wellbeing who will come to your workstation to perform a DSE assessment and make recommendations back to your manager. [Self-referral link can be found online.](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/occupational-health/dse/)

**Buildings/ Physical Environment Concerns**

If you identify a disability access concern related to a building or physical environment requirement there are a range of forums that can consider next steps, please use the [Reporting Portal](https://rp.lboro.ac.uk/signon) and record your concerns (you don’t have to have witnessed or been involved in an incident). Or contact EDI@lboro.ac.uk so that your concern can be considered for discussion at a relevant committee or working group.

**The AccessAble App**

Loughborough has partnered with [AccessAble](https://www.accessable.co.uk/loughborough-university) who provide a free digital platform, available via the AccessAble App and website, that guides users around venues across the UK and Ireland, including universities, colleges, hospitals, restaurants and more.

Many of the buildings featured in the Accessibility Guide offer information about the following:

* The location of toilet and changing facilities
* The car parking vicinities nearby
* Photos of all the entrances, with information on any ramps or steps
* Detailed facts and figures about the stairs and lifts within the buildings
* Other useful information, such as contact details of relevant teams based within each building
* Specific guides for lecture theatres, seminar rooms and IT labs

**Disability Access and Support for Teaching Purposes**

If staff have specific needs to enable successful teaching and lecturing Information about access requirements for staff can be submitted as part of the timetabling information on a per module basis by using [this IT Requests link.](https://lucas.lboro.ac.uk/priv-apx/f?p=TT_REQUESTS)

More info can be found on our website about [timetabling and room bookings](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/audio-visual-timetabling/timetabling/), as well as a link to the recently launched [Operational Guide](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/audio-visual-timetabling/timetabling/operational-guide-lboro/).

Alternatively, staff can submit information directly to their Timetabling Officer: [Timetabling Officer.](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/registry/timetabling/contact/)

Specific queries regarding teaching rooms such as access to lecterns and setting up equipment to enable disability software access for teaching can be made through the [Audio visual and Timetabling Support](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/audio-visual-timetabling/teaching-support/).

If specific furniture is required in teaching rooms and lecture theatres – please contact the [Domestic Services](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/fm/about/team/) Manager.

**Peer Support Options**

[The Disability Inclusion Staff Network](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/internal/groups/disability-and-inclusion-network/) offers informal support to the University in meeting its legal obligations to staff with disabilities as outlined in the Equality Act 2010, particularly in regard to the legal obligation for employers to make reasonable adjustments to ensure workers with disabilities, or physical or mental health conditions, are not substantially disadvantaged when doing their jobs.

Our [EDI Services](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/equity-diversity-inclusion/disability/) can also provide peer support networking options.

**Access to Work**

[Access to Work](https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work) support covers a wide range of interventions beyond ‘reasonable adjustments’ associated with overcoming work-related barriers resulting from disability. The support package is agreed based on individual need.

Examples of the kind of help available through Access to Work are:

* A communicator, advocate or BSL interpreter for a job interview, if you’re D/deaf or have communication difficulties
* A support worker, such as a reader for somebody with a visual impairment; communicator for a D/deaf person; a specialist job coach for a person with a learning difficulty; or a helper for personal care needs at work
* Specialist equipment (or alterations to existing equipment) to suit your particular need.
* Help towards the additional costs of taxi fares if you cannot use public transport to get to work

Support via Access to Work’s dedicated Mental Health Support Service [Able-Futures or Maximus UK.](https://able-futures.co.uk/individuals)

**Employee Assistance programme (Health Assured)**

Health Assured offers cover for you and your immediate family members\*, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year:

* Life support: Unlimited access to telephone counselling for emotional problems and a pathway to structured telephone counselling (employees only) at your convenience.
* Work-related problems can affect our physical, emotional and mental health. Common issues include job dissatisfaction, workplace injury, stress, discrimination and bullying, violence, accidental death and retirement.
* Management guidance - Managing staff wellbeing can be rewarding and at times stressful. We hope that you utilise our support services when difficult matters arise.
* Legal information: For any issues that cause anxiety or distress including debt management, accountancy, lawsuits, consumer disputes, property or neighbour legalities (employees only).
* Bereavement support: Health Assured offers qualified and experienced counsellors who can help with grief and related stress plus a team of legal advisors to help with legal issues.
* Medical information: signposting to trusted websites are provided

\*Health Assured define dependants as immediate family members (spouse/partners) and children aged 16 to 24 in full time education, living in the same household.

[More information can be found on our website.](https://www.lboro.ac.uk/services/hr/topics/employee-assistance-programme/)