

# Introducing the Disability and Dyslexia Service:

## A guide for students

# Introducing Queen Mary University of London







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It is also unique in offering a campus based student experience within central London, which makes it a particularly attractive choice for disabled students who wish to study at a Russell Group institution renowned internationally for the quality of its teaching and research.

This brochure provides an overview of the support provided by the Disability and Dyslexia Service, as well as general information for disabled students who are thinking of applying to study at Queen Mary University of London.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Disability and Dyslexia Service for more information – our contact details can be found on the back page.



# Introducing the Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS)

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This Disability and Dyslexia Service provides information, guidance and support to disabled students, including those with specific learning differences like dyslexia and mental health difficulties. We are located on the third floor of the Bancroft Building at the Mile End Campus, although one of our specialist tutors is based at our Whitechapel campus for one day per week.

In the most recent survey of student satisfaction at Queen Mary University of London, the Queen Mary Student Survey (QMSS) recorded the Disability and Dyslexia Service as having an overall satisfaction rate of 93%, one of the highest scores amongst Professional Services at the university.



# Introducing the Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS)

The opening hours of our main reception office, room 3.06 on the third floor of the Bancroft Building, are as follows:

**Monday to Friday: 10.00 am – 4.00 pm**

**We also run a weekly drop-in query session in the same room each Wednesday from 2.00 – 4.00 pm for students who may not need a full appointment.**

**Appointments with individual advisers can be made by dropping into the reception office at the times advertised above, by contacting us through the website [dds.qmul.ac.uk](https://dds.qmul.ac.uk) or by telephoning +44(0)20 7882 2756.**

**Enrolled students can contact us to request an appointment through the student portal.**

The Disability and Dyslexia Service act as a point of contact between the student and the remainder of the university, including the Department, School and Institute that the student is based in. This means that we communicate regularly with Student Support Officers and Managers based in the university's Schools and Institutes, as well as with relevant academic colleagues.

## Amongst the various strands of support that the service's various advisers provide are:

- Assistance with applying for a Disabled Student's Allowance (see below)
- 'Cover Notes' for students with specific learning differences
- Advice on reasonable adjustments in terms of access, assessment and teaching
- Library concessions
- 'Examination Access Arrangements', e.g. additional time. This can also be offered to some students with short-term conditions, e.g. students with broken limbs or who are pregnant

However, we will only do so with student's express consent and we take students' confidentiality extremely seriously.

As part of the university's employability remit, the Disability and Dyslexia Service work with students to develop independent coping strategies to ensure that they are competitive in the job market, as well as enabling them to obtain a degree commensurate with their underlying ability.

### **Pre-application enquiries and visits**

Disabled students are offered the opportunity to evaluate the campus at the 'College Open Days', usually run in June and October. Applicants coming through clearing may wish to satisfy themselves that the university is fully accessible to them before applying or accepting an offer.

Disabled people, including those with specific learning or mental health difficulties, who are interested in studying at the university are welcome to contact the Disability and Dyslexia Service for an informal discussion about their support needs while studying.

### **Further support provided by the Disability and Dyslexia Service**

The service manages three dedicated resource rooms for disabled students: one in the library at the Mile End campus, one in the School of Law at the Lincoln's Inn Fields campus and one on the second floor of the Bancroft Building at Mile End. All three rooms contain a number of networked PCs, screenreading and magnification software and other hardware, including two HD CCTVs, Braille embossers and

height adjustable desks. This device is placed alongside a workstation for visually impaired learners.

In addition, the screenreading program JAWS, the magnification tool ZoomText, the text-to-speech program ClaroRead Plus and the mindmapping package MindView are networked across the university's Teaching Service.

### **Accessing your course**

The Disability and Dyslexia Service can provide assistance with arranging non-specialist human support, including note-takers, practical support assistants and laboratory assistants. We will also help you if you need to arrange for the transcription of course materials into Braille, large print, audio or electronic format.

In addition to our own pool of non-specialist human support workers, who are employed by the recruitment agency Randstad - they are recruited and trained by the Disability and Dyslexia Service and then matched to our students - we can also liaise with other institutions and specialist organisations to ensure that our students receive appropriate human support.

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## **Examination Access Arrangements**

Disabled students, including those with specific learning differences and mental health difficulties can request access arrangements in their examinations.

These include additional time, ergonomic seating, an amanuensis, or 'scribe', a reader, exam papers in enlarged font or alternative formats and specialist equipment.

Students can apply for Examination Access Arrangements at any time of the year, but there are deadlines in each of the two main teaching semesters for applications to be processed in time for the January and May exam periods. Students are advised to consult the Disability and Dyslexia Service website for details.

## **Specialist One to One Study Skills Support**

The Disability and Dyslexia Service employs specialist one to one study skills support tutors to provide non-subject-based support for students, mainly those with specific learning differences such as dyslexia. This support is aimed at helping students develop compensatory strategies to overcome the effects of specific learning differences on their studies and ultimately to become more independent students.

This strand of the support we offer is subject to quality assurance by an organisation called the Disabled Students Allowance Quality Assurance Group (DSA-QAG).

## **Specialist Mentoring**

The Disability and Dyslexia Service offers on-site one-to-one specialist mentoring support for students with mental health issues, Autistic Spectrum Disorders and other disabilities. This support is co-ordinated by the service, although we use a number of external agencies to deliver this form of our provision for students. This provision is managed by the Mental Health Co-ordinator and the Mental Health Adviser.

Specialist mentors provide highly specialist, specifically tailored, one to one support which helps students address the barriers to learning created by a particular impairment. This could include a range of issues, e.g. coping with anxiety and stressful situations, how to deal with concentration difficulties, time management, prioritising workload and creating a suitable work-life balance. (Specialist Mentors do not act as advocates or counsellors).



The role of the mentors is to help students recognise their barriers to learning and support them in developing strategies to address these barriers, particularly at times of transition, e.g. when starting at university. For some students this support will need to be ongoing while for others it might be gradually phased out or only be required at certain points of their course.

### **Disabled Students' Allowances**

If you are classed as a UK Home Student and have a disability you will probably be eligible to apply for Disabled Student's Allowances (DSA) to cover the cost of additional equipment or support. This non means-tested allowance is available to full-time and part-time students, both undergraduate and postgraduate. Students can apply for DSA online using the Student Finance portal. Anyone needing a copy of the form in an alternative format such as Braille can email [brailleandlargefont@slc.co.uk](mailto:brailleandlargefont@slc.co.uk) or ring 0141 243 3686.

Students can find out more about the Disabled Students' Allowance by looking at the Disability and Dyslexia Service's website.

Almost all students applying for a Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) will need to have a study aids and strategies assessment, also known as a 'needs assessment', carried out at a recognised Assessment Centre. This assessment determines funding from the DSA or other sources to pay for appropriate specialist equipment, human support and specialist study strategies. This assessment aims to promote strategies for independent studies and can often help develop personal skills, which will be useful in your studies and future employment.

The Disability and Dyslexia Service at Queen Mary has an 'outreach' arrangement with the University of Westminster's 'CLASS' (Central London Assessment Services) assessment centre which means that Queen Mary students can have their needs assessments carried out at Queen Mary through the auspices of the CLASS assessment centre.

For information about the CLASS centre, please visit [www.class.org.uk](http://www.class.org.uk)

This centre, like all organisations carrying out Disabled Student's Allowance needs assessments, has to meet the quality criteria set out by DSA-QAG.

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Students applying for a new Disabled Student's Allowance through Student Finance England or one of the Research Councils are required to pay the first £200 towards the cost of any new computer which has been recommended via the DSA. Queen Mary has agreed to pay for the cost of this on a means-tested basis, so if your household income is less than £42,600 you should be eligible for help. Ask one of the advisers within the service for more information.

## International students

As part of the university's duty to anticipate the needs of all of its disabled students, the Disability and Dyslexia Service tries to mirror support for international students with that of home, UK based students. As such, we can provide loaned equipment and appropriate levels of human support, such as note-takers, specialist one-to-one study skills and specialist mentoring support.

## Loan equipment

If students are not eligible for funding to cover the cost of a full package of specialist equipment, they may be able to borrow specialist items from the university while studying here. If you are waiting to establish eligibility or for funding to be arranged, you may also borrow equipment whilst your eligibility is being confirmed (subject to availability).

# Accessibility

**Much of the Mile End campus, including all of the Student Village, has been constructed over the last twenty-five years and as such has good accessibility. Recent access audits have identified some older buildings which required more work and the Queens' Building in particular has seen improvements to its access over the past few years. Since 2015 the university has been working with an organisation called AccessAble to create a series of access guides to all university services and buildings, including our Halls of Residence. These guides can be accessed via the Disability and Dyslexia Service's website or via the 'Accessibility' link at the bottom of any Queen Mary webpage.**

In the event that an issue with accessing any part of the university's campuses becomes apparent we will endeavour to resolve this as a matter of urgency.

The Disability and Dyslexia Service regularly liaise with the department that books teaching space to ensure that lectures are held in the most accessible rooms for those students with mobility issues.

## **Accommodation on campus**

If you have a disability substantially affecting your mobility, vision, hearing or stamina, you will be given priority with on-campus accommodation. Priority accommodation may not be available for clearing applicants because of high demand. A small amount of campus accommodation is adapted for wheelchair users or those who require personal assistance (i.e. 24-hour care).



# Introducing other departments at Queen Mary University of London

## **Library Services**

The Library can offer some disabled students a book fetching service; if you think this is something your disability necessitates, e.g. because you cannot physically retrieve books yourself, or you are visually impaired, please discuss this with your disability adviser. We can also recommend that students have access to individual study carrels.

## **Learning Development**

The university's Learning Development service offer students practical guidance in developing insights and practices that will contribute to their success whilst at Queen Mary University of London. Learning Development work with students on an individual basis and in both small and larger groups and by collaborating with academic teachers to improve design and practice in modules and programmes so that students are exposed to more effective and more engaging opportunities to become successful – in their disciplines and in their subsequent lives.

## **Student Health Centre**

All Queen Mary students are encouraged to register with the on-site GP surgery through the Student Health Service at Mile End.

## **Advice and Counselling Service**

The university's Advice and Counselling Service offers welfare advice to all students on a range of financial and other issues, e.g. visas, as well as a counselling service. They also run workshops throughout the academic year to help students avoid procrastination and on managing stress and anxiety.



# Useful contacts at Queen Mary University of London

## Disability and Dyslexia Service

Room 3.06, Bancroft Building  
Queen Mary University of London  
Mile End Road  
London, E1 4NS  
Tel: +44(0)20 7882 2756  
[dds.qmul.ac.uk](http://dds.qmul.ac.uk)  
Twitter: @QMUL\_DDS

## To arrange a campus tour:

Education Liaison  
Queen Mary University of London  
Mile End Road  
London, E1 4NS  
Tel: 020 7882 3064  
Email: [ukstudentrecruitment@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:ukstudentrecruitment@qmul.ac.uk)

## Advice and Counselling Service

Ground Floor  
Geography Building  
Queen Mary University of London  
Mile End Road  
London, E1 4NS  
Tel: +44(0)20 7882 8717 (voice mail available)  
Fax: +44(0)20 7882 3617  
[www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk](http://www.welfare.qmul.ac.uk)  
Twitter: @QMUL\_ACS

## Learning Development

Learning Development Rooms, Reading Room West  
First Floor Mile End Library  
Queen Mary University of London  
Mile End Road  
London, E1 4NS  
Email: [learningdevelopment@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:learningdevelopment@qmul.ac.uk) / [thinkingwriting@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:thinkingwriting@qmul.ac.uk)

## The Language Centre, SLLF

First Floor, Bancroft Building  
Queen Mary University of London  
Mile End Road  
London E1 4NS  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 2826/2827  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7882 7923  
<http://language-centre.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/contact-us>

## Housing Services

Queen Mary University of London  
Mile End Road  
London, E1 4NS  
Fax: +44(0)20 8981 8630  
Email: [residences@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:residences@qmul.ac.uk)  
[residences.qmul.ac.uk](http://residences.qmul.ac.uk)



# External organisations

## **Student Health Service**

Ground Floor  
Geography Building  
Queen Mary University of London  
Mile End Road  
London, E1 4NS  
Tel: +44(0)20 7882 8710  
Fax: +44(0)20 7882 7551  
[studenthealth.qmul.ac.uk](http://studenthealth.qmul.ac.uk)

## **Student Finance England**

PO Box 210  
Darlington  
DL1 9HJ  
Tel: 0845 300 50 90

## **Assessment Centres**

Assessment Centres provide the Study Aids and Study Strategies Assessment for students with disabilities/ specific learning difficulties and are subject to annual audit by the Disabled Students Allowances Quality Assurance Group (DSA-QAG).

For information on the activities of these centres - and to find your regional centre – please visit [www.dsa-qag.org.uk](http://www.dsa-qag.org.uk)



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