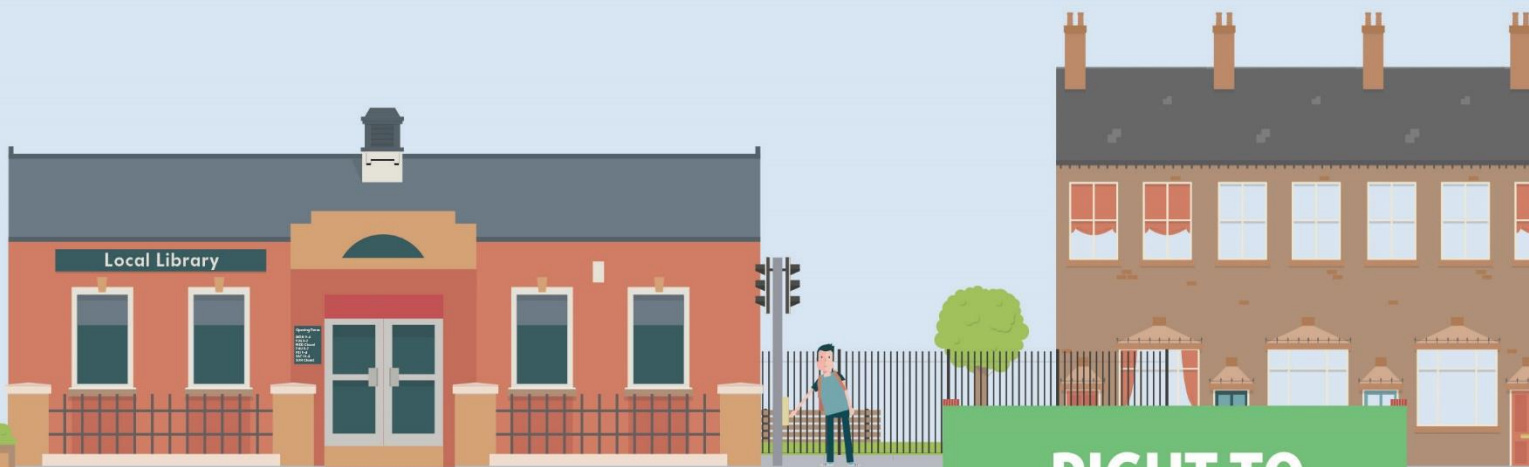


## Education

# Current student - Exams and assessments

Higher Education -  
Told them about disability - No



**RIGHT TO  
PARTICIPATE**

## Useful knowledge

The Equality Act covers exams set by higher education providers. This means colleges and universities are expected to make 'reasonable adjustments' to exams and assessments to make them accessible to disabled students.

Common examples include:

- Extra time or opportunities to take rest breaks
- Exam papers in your preferred format
- Assistive technology e.g. screen reading software
- Use of a separate room so that you're not disturbed by other candidates, and they are not disturbed by you
- Assistance from another person such as a prompter, scribe or reader

Usually a college or university will need to know that you're disabled before they provide individual support for exams and assessments. They should take reasonable steps to find out and give you lots of chances to tell them about your needs, for example when you start your course and each time you have exams.

This can also be covered in your needs assessment, if you have one

## Useful knowledge

- Effective communication
- Record-keeping

## Ways to assert your legal rights

1. Ask for a confidential chat with the staff member responsible for disability. This person is usually called the learning support adviser or disability adviser. Tell them about any difficulties you're having with your exams, assessments or assignments and ask what support can be put in place. Don't wait until it becomes a big problem.

2. If you prefer, you could send an email or letter, telling the college or university that you have a disability. You don't have to go into detail about your condition but it may be useful to include the following wording:

*I would like to request all reasonable steps be taken under the Equality Act to alleviate the substantial disadvantage I am facing in my exams/assessments/assignments. I would appreciate advice on the services available and I am happy to work with you to help assess my needs.*

Make sure to describe any disadvantage you're experiencing. Feel free to suggest options for reasonable adjustments and the type of support you think would be helpful.

## You can have confidence in the process because

Colleges and universities have been covered by the Disability Discrimination Act since 2001 and the Equality Act since 2010. Most have a good understanding of their legal duties and well-developed systems for making sure disabled students progress in their studies.

We regularly hear examples of students who have successfully negotiated the support and adjustments they need through informal discussion and working through the learner support or disability service.

## You can get more help from

The [Equality Advisory & Support Service \(EASS\)](#) runs a free helpline assisting individuals with equality and human rights issues across England, Scotland and Wales.

**Telephone** • 0808 800 0082  
**Text phone** • 0808 800 0084  
**Email** • [through websites form](#)

Disability Rights UK [student helpline](#)

Telephone • 0330 995 0414

Email • [students@disabilityrightsuk.org](mailto:students@disabilityrightsuk.org)

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Disability Rights UK [Into Higher Education](#) guide

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Disability Rights UK free factsheets on  
[Understanding the Equality Act](#) and  
[Making a complaint](#)