



AUSTRALIAN GUILD *of* EDUCATION

Disability & Disadvantage Support Services General Information

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About

AGE promotes inclusion and educational access for people who experience disability or social disadvantage. We work together with students, their caregivers, medical practitioners, NDIS support workers or social workers to provide a study experience with opportunities and choices that are comparable with those of our students without disability.

Eligibility for support

We welcome AGE students whose study or participation in student life is being impacted by a disability, health or mental health condition, or social disadvantage that impacts their ability to access the studies, to use our services to create an Education Access Plan(EAP).

The range of students who can access an EAP is large, and the definition of 'disability' under the [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#) is broad, including permanent or temporary physical, intellectual, sensory, neurological, learning disabilities, mental health conditions and some health conditions that might not usually be thought of as disabilities.

Below are some examples of conditions, disabilities and situations which may impact a student's ability to study. If you have a condition or disability or are experiencing social disadvantage, which may impact your ongoing studies or if you are unsure of your eligibility to access an EAP, contact support@guildmusic.edu.au and request a confidential discussion with the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO).

Health conditions

Examples of health issues leading to periods of time where your study is impacted could include:

- Cancer
- Stroke
- Crohn's Disease
- Arthritis

Mental health conditions

Examples of mental health conditions which impact your ability to engage with study could include:

- anxiety
- bipolar disorder
- schizophrenia

Specific learning disabilities

Examples of specific learning disabilities causing difficulties with perceiving and processing information, which may benefit from alternate approaches to learning could include:

- dyslexia
- dysgraphia
- auditory processing disorder

Hearing impairments

Examples of hearing impairments resulting in a need for assistive technology to access content in class could include being:

- hard of hearing
- deafness

Visual impairments

Examples of visual impairments requiring content to be available in alternative accessible formats or requires access to assistive technology could include:

- having low vision
- being blind

Neurological conditions

Examples of neurological conditions could include:

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Epilepsy
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Multiple sclerosis (MS).

Intellectual disability

Diagnosed low general intellectual functioning and difficulties with adaptive behaviour.

Temporary or short-term disabilities or injuries

Injuries or broken limbs causing inability to attend classes for periods of time or requiring adjustments in exams.

Carers of people with disability

Someone who provides significant care to another person who has a disability, health or mental health condition.

Social Disadvantage

Social disadvantage occurs where a student, subsequent to enrolling in their course of study, starts experiencing homelessness, domestic violence and/or abuse or are unable to access their studies due to long-term disruption to services such as electricity or public transport due to political or social instability in their region.

Requesting support

To register for disability support, a student must email support@guildmusic.edu.au, with the subject heading "Request for Disability Support". The student will receive an email invitation within five business days of the request to arrange a consultation appointment with the DLO. This appointment

should take place as soon as possible to avoid delays in the creation and implementation of an Education Access Plan(EAP).

A request for disability support can be made at any time during a study period. However, it is highly recommended that students make the request prior to the commencement of studies or as soon as they are aware of a disability and that may affect their access to studies on a level comparable to a non-disabled student. Some Units require at least four weeks notice to create modified assessments and as such a student's progress can be delayed if an EAP is not in place when required.

The Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) Role

The DLO is there to advise and assist you to access available services that are appropriate for you through the development of an EAP. This may include recommending strategies that will help to minimise any educational disadvantage. The DLO is not a medical practitioner and all advice, assistance and measures included in your EAP must be supported by documentation provided by medical professionals.

At the first appointment with the DLO, you will be given information about the process for developing an EAP and provided with the relevant information and forms to be completed by you, your caregiver(s)(where appropriate), and your medical practitioner(s). You will be asked to outline your condition and how this impacts your studies or creates a barrier to your learning and educational participation.

The consultation process for the development of your EAP may include: discussions with you, your family, carers and other professionals to get ideas about the types of assistance that may be needed to help you access your education; reasonable adjustments that AGE can make to help you access your education on a par with non-disabled students; reviewing medical reports and recommendations that assist in understanding your disability and reasonable support that can be provided; confidentiality and if the student would like their diagnosis listed on their EAP; timelines for commencement of the EAP, review of the EAP and/or end of the EAP.

Depending on the nature of your disability, your EAP will be fixed-term or ongoing with scheduled reviews. In most instances, EAP's are reviewed once a study period.

An EAP can not be applied retroactively. Any retroactive support should be applied for under the Special Consideration Policy.

Providing supporting documentation

In all cases, supporting documentation is required before an Education Access Plan can be created. Supporting documentation will assist the DLO in identifying and seeking support or adjustments suited to your situation.

Supporting documentation must:

- include information on your condition and diagnosis

Document Name: **Disability & Disadvantage Support Services Information Brochure (2024)**

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- describe how your study may be affected by your condition/ situation
- detail whether your condition is permanent, ongoing or temporary (and if temporary, the likely time frame for your recovery)
- be recorded in the Disability Supporting Documentation Form accompanied by report(s)
- include a provider number and/or stamp
- be dated and signed by the practitioner
- be in English (or be translated by an accredited translator)
- be completed by a registered health professional in the field relating to the disability or health condition.

Examples of healthcare professionals authorised to provide documentation may include a:

- General Practitioner
- Physician
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist
- Surgeon
- Occupational Therapist
- Speech Pathologist
- Optometrist
- Medical Specialist
- Audiologist
- Other - discuss with the DLO if you have documentation from a healthcare professional not mentioned on this list.

Providing supporting documentation for a learning disability

Supporting documentation for a Learning Disability must be a current (written within the 12 months) report from a psychologist or other qualified professional, trained in administering standardised tests and assessing learning disabilities.

Developing your Educational Access Plan(EAP)

An Education Access Plan is a study support plan prepared to minimise the educational disadvantage you may experience resulting from a disability, health condition, mental health condition, caring responsibilities or due to social disadvantage. Your EAP will detail the adjustments recommended to assist you to participate in and meet your course requirements.

It will also notify AGE of any adjustments or services recommended to you for undertaking your studies. With your permission, a copy of relevant adjustments will be forwarded to faculty and services staff whose involvement is required under your plan.

An EAP is not mandatory. Inclusive teaching and learning practice are a high priority at AGE, so in many cases your needs may already be met by standard practice. You may also liaise directly with faculty or services staff to arrange for your own access and learning if you choose.

Document Name: **Disability & Disadvantage Support Services Information Brochure (2024)**

If you and the DLO feel you do need an EAP, your DLO will prepare it with your assistance in the form of recommendations from your practitioner.

The DLO will review your EAP with you on an agreed schedule. You can make contact with the DLO prior to the time of a scheduled review if new developments mean that adjustments may be necessary.

Disability support services

Types of support available

Assistance communicating your needs to academic staff

The DLO can help you communicate your needs to lecturers and other academic staff.

Often the best way to do this is to create an EAP that is forwarded to your Unit Coordinators. Students are encouraged to use their EAP to discuss their needs with Unit Coordinators at the start of each Study Period. The EAP can include practical information to assist your lecturers to meet your needs, recommendations for inclusive practices, and study adjustments and pathways recommended for you.

Provision of study materials in accessible formats

If you are a student with vision impairment, deafness, a learning disability such as dyslexia, or if you have physical difficulty holding a book, you may need access to study materials in formats other than print.

Most of AGE's course materials are available in electronic and online formats, but if you require materials in another format, AGE can:

- Assist you to identify a suitable format
- Guide you through the process of accessing that format if it is offered by AGE
- Direct you to vendors that can produce your unit materials in the format and send them to you.

Remember to contact the DLO about your needs as early as possible and to tell us about any changes to your enrolment as soon they happen so you can get the right unit materials.

Alternative assessment arrangements

You may need adjustments to be made to assessment tasks to ensure you have the same opportunity to demonstrate your learning as other students.

Class-based assessments

The DLO can assist you in negotiating with academic staff for adjustments to class-based assessment tasks such as assignments, group work, oral presentations, in-class or online tests. These adjustments can be identified for you in an EAP, and can include:

- Additional time to complete time-based tasks or practical assessments
- Consideration of an alternative form of assessment (e.g. written work instead of class presentation, oral presentation instead of written).

End of Study Period examinations

Alternative arrangements can also be made for your Study Period examinations. Adjustments may include:

- additional writing time
- rest breaks
- use of a computer
- text to speech software
- use of a scribe

Don't forget to plan ahead as alternative assessment arrangements can take up to 20 working days to organise.

Where adjustments cannot be implemented, students may be eligible for Special Consideration. Special consideration is different to alternative assessment arrangements and must be applied for via the online form.

Access for academic support workers, including note-takers and interpreters

For some students, additional support in unit activities (classes or seminars) may be required. AGE has mechanisms for the accommodation of academic support workers and those who provide services such as notetaking and AUSLAN interpreting.

Access to assistive technology to help you study

AGE accommodates computer hardware and software for students with specific needs and provides text to speech software as part of the student software package.

You may be required to learn basic skills in the use of assistive technology where relevant. The DLO can direct you to suppliers and providers for advice and training.

Support during practical sessions and placements

Your course may require you to participate in off-campus activities such as concerts, recitals or practicums. If you feel you may need support to participate or identify a possible alternative to your prescribed off-campus activity please contact your DLO as early as possible.

Students undertaking off-campus activities should begin planning early in the Study Period to ensure they are aware of the expectations and to consider how they might meet these expectations. Where support or adjustments are required, students should begin discussions with the faculty early as some adjustments can take considerable time to plan for. The DLO is able to support these discussions if required.

Frequently Asked Questions

My disability is obvious, do I still need to provide supporting documentation?

Even if a disability is obvious you will benefit by providing supporting documentation as AGE does not make assumptions about what support you may or may not need. You may have other 'hidden' disabilities that impact on your studies.

An initial discussion with your Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) will confirm if documentation is needed.

There may be services that can be implemented or recommended without documentation in certain circumstances. This may depend on the degree of disability, whether it is permanent or temporary, the type of adjustment needed, and your ability to identify what might work for you in the educational setting.

Do I have to provide new supporting documentation every study period?

At the time your Access Plan is reviewed, the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) will advise if updated supporting documentation is needed. This will depend on the nature of disability, degree of disability and whether it is permanent, ongoing or temporary.

Do I have to review my Access Plan if my disability is permanent or ongoing?

As you move through your course, adjustments indicated on an EAP might change because of improvements or deterioration of your disability or health condition, or the adjustments may no longer appropriately address your needs. Changes might also be needed as you acquire confidence in using assistive technology or make changes to your course enrolment.

If you or a faculty academic staff member finds that the recommendations in your plan are not adequately allowing you to participate in your studies, then a review may be needed earlier than originally specified. You can request a review with your DLO at any time.

If you miss the Review date on your EAP, your plan does not automatically carry-over. You are encouraged to attend appointments to go through plan reviews with your DLO to ensure a smooth study process.

Will my status as a student with an Education Access Plan be visible to all staff at AGE, be on my transcript, or be visible to other students?

Your status as a student with an EAP will not be shared with anyone without your express permission, or with anyone who does not need to know as part of seeking appropriate adjustments and support. Confidentiality permissions are established at the time of activating your EAP.

If you choose, your diagnosis can be included in your EAP, but usually we focus on the impact of your disability on your studies, rather than the disability itself.

Relevant information may need to be shared with appropriate staff to action required adjustments. For example, the exams team may need to receive a copy of your Exam Adjustments, and the Unit Chair for your relevant unit would need to receive your Academic Adjustments in order for those changes to take place.

I will be unable to complete my assignment on time. How do I use my adjustment of extensions with/without medical documentation? Are extensions on assignments automatic if I have an Education Access Plan?

You always need to follow the procedure outlined in your relevant unit guide or AGE policy for applying for extensions or special consideration. Please remember that your extension is an online application, a request for more time, and will need to be approved by AGE faculty as for all students. Always discuss your extension request with your lecturer first if it is for a class assignment or the appropriate Unit Chair where it is an end-of-term or progression related assignment. Unit Chairs will consult your EAP when reviewing requests for extensions or special consideration.

I am unable to undertake my exam as a result of an exacerbation of my condition as covered in my Education Access Plan. What should I do?

If you are unable to undertake an exam because of an exacerbation of your condition, you will need to apply for Special Consideration.

Please carefully note that:

- You have up to two working days following your exam date to apply for Special Consideration
- You are required to provide documentary evidence to support your application.
- If you opt to sit your exam, do your very best as there are no guarantees that an application for a special exam will be granted.
- Approval for a Special Exam cannot be given prior to the assessment of an application for Special Consideration.
- Should you decide to sit the exam, but part way through feel that you are unable to continue, please ensure you advise an exam supervisor that you are unable to continue and the reason why.

I am a prospective student and I am interested in hearing about the type of support that I will be able to access as a future AGE student. Can I speak to a Disability Liaison Officer even though I am not a current student?

You are most welcome to speak to a Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) about your needs, your planned enrolment and what services you feel you may need to access in order to be successful in your studies. Once you have enrolled, feel free to register a request for Disability Support as soon as possible at support@guildmusic.edu.au so we can develop an Education Access Plan for you.

Are there deadlines within the Study Period to have an Education Access Plan put in place?

You can request disability support and an Education Access Plan at any time. There are certain adjustments that are difficult to accommodate if they are not planned well in advance. For example, exam adjustments can't be accommodated close to the exam period. We recommend having exam adjustments in place at least one month prior to the exam period starting.

My friend, child, partner, fellow student has(may have/appears to have) a disability and needs disability support. Can I make an application on their behalf?

Applications for disability support can only be made by the student with the disability, a legal guardian or authorised representative. We respect student privacy and are unable to discuss any personal matters pertaining to a student with a third party without formal authorisation.

I indicated on enrolment that I have a disability. When will I be contacted about the disability services available to me?

We are unable to approach students about the nature of a disability or assistance that they may want to access unless this is first explicitly requested by the student. Many students with a disability do not want to access support so in this way, the student's privacy is respected. Those desiring disability support receive it and those preferring to not access support don't feel pressured or unnecessarily identified as "disabled" if this is not their preference.

I think that a fellow student in my class has a disability and needs assistance. Can the DLO contact them and tell them about the disability support that they can access?

Due to student privacy rights, we are unable to approach students to offer disability support and/or discuss a student's health or other conditions with anyone other than a formally authorised person. If you believe that a fellow student should be accessing disability support, remind them to send a request to support@guildmusic.edu.au requesting Disability Support and we will be in touch with them within 3 business days.

Roles and responsibilities

Students

If you have requested for Disability Support and have an Education Access Plan in place to support you in your studies, your responsibilities are:

- Work proactively with the Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) to keep us informed of changes to your condition.
- Provide your Education Access Plan to your Unit Chairs at the beginning of each Study Period. Always notify your Unit Chair and/or tutor in the first instance if you will need any educational adjustments listed in your Education Access Plan during the Study Period.
- Put extension requests in writing to your Unit Chair through the online form prior to the deadline in line with AGE policies, and advise the Unit Chair of the application, noting, if relevant, the appropriate section of your EAP.
- Remind your Unit Chair you have an EAP when you talk with them and don't assume that your Unit Chair is always fully aware of all the details in your Academic Adjustments.
- Book a review appointment with your DLO when you are sent the invitation to review your Education Access Plan. Your Education Access Plan will become 'inactive' if you don't respond to requests to book review appointments.
- Contact your DLO if you have any questions related to your Education Access Plan.
- Abide by AGE's Student Code of Conduct.

Unit Coordinator

If you receive an Education Access Plan from a student enrolled in your unit, these are your responsibilities:

- Read the student's Education Access Plan.
- Identify and implement adjustments relevant to your unit.
- At times, some adjustments may require further consultation with the Dean or Registrar. The Disability Liaison Officer (DLO) listed on the EAP and you as the Unit Chair should form part of these consultations.
- Distribute EAP to staff directly involved in providing strategies and adjustments. The information cannot be made public (such as in classes or seminars).
- Contact the DLO listed on the EAP if you have any questions or concerns.

For further information please contact:

support@guildmusic.edu.au

And request a consultation with the Disability Support Officer

You will usually be contacted within five business days during active Study Periods