

Student Support Worker Guide

Information for Students with Support Workers

<p><u>Support Worker:</u></p>	<p><u>Tel:</u></p>	<p><u>Email:</u></p>	
<p><u>Disabled Student Support:</u></p> <p>Open 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday</p>	<p><u>Tel:</u></p> <p>01782 294977</p> <p><u>Text Service:</u></p> <p>07766 520358</p>	<p><u>Email:</u></p> <p>disability@staffs.ac.uk</p>	<p><u>Address:</u></p> <p>Student Enabling Centre, Cadman Courtyard, College Road Stoke Campus</p> <p>One Stop Shop, D001, Beacon Building, Stafford Campus</p>

Student Enabling Centre
www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices

Introduction.

Without the dedication, professionalism and commitment of the Support Workers at Staffordshire University many disabled students would fail to realise their potential. Because of this, I have no hesitation in welcoming you to this guide which I hope you will find useful in helping you to understand the Support Worker Scheme and how it works for you.

We recognise that sometimes things aren't always as straightforward as they might be and when things get difficult we want you to know that you aren't on your own.

The Disabled Student Advisors can often help but you may wish to discuss matters with me or my Deputy. To do this, simply drop us an e-mail or give us a ring with your details and we'll get back to you.

We can be contacted as follows:

Dave Allman, Head of Student Enabling Centres.

Telephone 01782 294973
e-mail dave.allman@staffs.ac.uk

Jenny Stephens, Deputy Head of Student Enabling Centres.

Telephone 01782 295718
e-mail j.l.stephens@staffs.ac.uk

Best wishes,

Dave Allman

The Support Worker Scheme

- The support worker scheme was established at Staffordshire University in 1995 to enable disabled students to participate equally with their peers and to take part fully in the student experience.
- Our support workers are recruited from a variety of backgrounds and have different skills and knowledge to offer students.
- Support workers can provide practical support in the library, or practical classes; mobility support, handwritten or electronic notes; or a combination of these, dependent upon their individual qualifications.
- Our support workers are employees of Randstad and are professionally qualified. They have an awareness of disability equality issues, insight into the implications of note-taking with students who have a range of impairments and an understanding of the role of note-taker in terms of boundaries, attitude and professional skills.

It is your responsibility to:

Inform Disabled Student Support of any change in your circumstances or contact details.

Treat your support worker with the same courtesy with which you would like to be treated yourself. Although your funding is paying for the work your support worker does, you both have rights and responsibilities in your working relationship so please remember:-

- Make sure your lecturer knows you will be using a note taker.
- Keep your support worker informed if a session is cancelled or if there is a change to the time or venue.
- If you are unable to contact or have not heard from your support worker, please contact Disabled Student Support to inform us.
- Your note taker will not take notes in your absence unless prior approval has been agreed.
- Inform Disabled Student Support as soon as possible if your regular support worker is unable to attend a supported session to enable us to seek emergency cover.
- If you use a support worker for examinations, you need to check with your regular support worker that they are able to provide this support.
- Let Disabled Student Support know if you have any examinations that your regular support worker is unable to cover.
- If you do not normally have a support worker, but require reading or scribing support, you need to contact Disabled Student Support as soon as you know the dates of your examinations to enable us to allocate support.

- It is a good idea to exchange contact details with your support worker if you are both happy to do so. A lot of time can be saved, for example if you need to contact them at short notice. Let them know if any of your details change.
- Your support worker can only provide the type of support and the number of hours for which your Local Authority/ Funding body has agreed funding; if you feel you need more hours you should discuss this with a Disability Advisor.
- Respect boundaries. Your support worker will not speak for you without your permission nor do your work for you. Plagiarism (presenting another's work as your own) and collusion (improper collaboration in production of work) are cheating – please ensure that you only ask your support worker to act as a 'pair of hands' in assisting you with your work. Don't expect your support worker to give you instruction or write your assignments. If this should occur, you will be accused of dishonesty, which is taken very seriously by the University.
- Be respectful of the professional role of your support worker –they are not an academic tutor or counsellor. We can put you in touch with the appropriate professionals - please ask us to help.
- It is your responsibility to provide any paper, discs or highlighters and pens used in the provision of your notes. If you have had a Study Support Needs Assessment, the allowance for consumables will have taken this into account.
- Complete electronic time sheets with your support worker, accurately and on time.

You can expect Disabled Student Support to:

- Allocate a support worker once we have received a copy of your Assessment of Study Support Needs Report or medical evidence.
- Do our best to match students with support workers who have similar academic knowledge or backgrounds.
- Provide copies of the support workers handwriting to make sure that you can read it.
- Introduce you to your support worker(s) if possible, but if this is not possible, it is important that you make contact either by telephone or by meeting them to discuss your support needs in more detail.
- Recruit appropriately qualified support workers to work with you.
- Monitor the number of hours of support you are receiving regularly to ensure you do not exceed the amount of funding agreed.
- Liaise with your Funding body on your behalf regarding the costs or type of your support.
- Make sure your funding is used to pay your support worker at an hourly rate. A management fee is also included in this rate, to pay for our costs in providing this service.
- Provide your Funding body with evidence of how your funding for support is spent.

- Maintain the confidentiality of information you provide within a framework of shared confidences.
- Provide all support workers with an identity card which can be produced upon request.

Study Skills Resources

ASK– The Assignment Survival Kit

ASK is the new web based tool aimed at undergraduate students faced with their first assignment. Simply by entering the assignment start and deadline dates, a detailed 10 step schedule is returned, mapping out key dates, how to plan, how to do research, how to find, use and evaluate materials, how to cite references and suggested timescales and activities.

ASK is the work of the Information Literacy Group within Information Services. It is intended to further refine the product by introducing discipline specific resources and approaches. It is also intended to introduce a number of web based enhancements to enable students to receive text messages on their mobile phones to make use of it via the portal and to receive email reminders.

ASK can be found at: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/ask>

Key Skills

This site aims to gather together a range of resources for staff and for students and to provide support for the learning and teaching of a wide range of key skills. Key skills are vital skills which underpin all branches of academic study.

Key Skills can be found at: <http://www.staffs.ac.uk/keyskills/>

Library Resources

The libraries have specialist subject librarians who will be able to give you guidance.

Your support worker will not be able to take out library books on their card for you. Support Workers are allowed to use a student's card on their behalf. To do this the student will need to inform a member of the Lending Services staff that their support worker is a proxy borrower. When items are taken out by the support worker they will need to present the student's card and their identity card.

If your Support Worker wishes to access Library buildings after standard opening hours they will need to show their identification card and complete a signing in slip.

Students can request individual tours of the buildings. This can involve locating resources within the building and use of wheelchair lifts. Lending Services staff can also demonstrate how to use the self service facilities.

If students wish to arrange for a tour please contact the site Operations Managers. The contact at Stafford is Lynda Hawkins, email l.hawkins@staffs.ac.uk, telephone 01785 353354. The contact at Stoke is Nicky Adams, email n.adams@staffs.ac.uk or telephone 01782 294553.

More information about services and equipment can be found on the Information Services website.

<http://www.staffs.ac.uk/uniservices/infoservices/addneeds/index.php>

The following specialist software is installed on PCs within the three main Student IT Learning Centres - Brindley and Cadman at Stoke and the Octagon at Stafford.

Dyslexic users

textHELP! Read and Write standard specialist software.

Blind and visually impaired users

JAWS screen reader software

Zoomtext screen magnifying software

Mind Genius is another piece of mind mapping software which is available on all student PCs on campus.

Laptops with TextHELP and Inspiration (a mind mapping software) are available for a two week loan period from the University libraries.

Using an amanuensis (Scribe) in Examinations

An amanuensis or scribe can be necessary for students who, for various reasons, are not able to handwrite or wordprocess their examination answers.

What does an amanuensis do?

An amanuensis is a person who will write (or word process) a student's dictated answers and will read back what they have written (if required).

- An amanuensis can be thought of as a very good writing and reading machine- responsive to verbal instruction, but free from the mechanical complexities of keyboards or tape-recorders.
- An amanuensis may or may not be someone known to the student.
- An amanuensis is not there to make any input into the interpretation of the answers or the content of the answers.
- An amanuensis should try to provide a calm and supportive atmosphere in the exam room so that the student is enabled to achieve their best.

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

Some students may have a lot of experience working with an amanuensis. Others, who are less experienced, or who may be taking the exam in this way for the first time, may find that doing an exam by dictation can be quite a challenge. These notes are designed largely for students who find themselves in the second group. However all students should carefully read the next section on administrative arrangements carefully.

Administrative Arrangements

- Your additional examination requirements will already have been agreed with a member of staff from Disabled Student Support in liaison with the Exams office and your academic School. Once agreed and these arrangements have been made, you do not have to

re-negotiate them each year. However you will need to contact Disability Support with each of your examination timetables, so that amanuensis support can be organised for you.

- Students who are using an amanuensis will be allocated a separate/private examination room so you will need to contact your Faculty office to make the necessary arrangements.
- It is your responsibility to arrange to meet your amanuensis 20 minutes before the start of the exam at the allocated examination room

Before the Exam

- During the revision period you should practice dictating some trial answers to a friend or member of the family. This will help you to gain some practice in voicing your thoughts and in composing your ideas at a speed, which is compatible with someone who is writing to dictation. It may be possible to arrange a practice with the person who will be your amanuensis during your examinations. If you are not able to do this, then you could use a tape-recorder to practice your skills. Preparing in this way should help to take some of the newness out of the situation so that, on the day, the thought of dictating your answers won't be an added source of anxiety.
- Think about how you are going to make notes or plan for your answers. Can you do this for yourself on paper or will you use your amanuensis to write down your plans from your dictation? Give some thought now to the instructions you will want to give your amanuensis about making notes and plans. Every student will have different ways of working or will find particular strategies helpful; for instance,
 - How detailed will your notes and plans be?
 - Will they be in any particular format (lists, flow diagrams etc)?
 - Will you make all your notes and plans at the beginning or will you continue to add to them or refine them as you are going along?
- Plans for answers of any length are particularly important for students working with an amanuensis. They provide a framework for your dictation, give you prompts for new points, and help you pace

the length of your answer and the time you give to individual sections and to stop you going off the subject.

- Wherever possible, arrange to make contact with your amanuensis a few days before the exam. If you have not previously met your amanuensis you should try to establish a good relationship at this stage and raise any matters that are on your mind- even if it is only to say that you are feeling nervous! The course you are studying may have technical terms in it, or difficult names, which your amanuensis might find useful to see before the exam. You could suggest sending a course glossary (if there is one) or a list of words that you have compiled. Before the day of the exam, arrange when and where you are to meet the amanuensis.

On the day

There are some practical arrangements that you will need to discuss with your amanuensis if you have not worked with them before, so try to have at least half an hour together before the exam starts.

- Will your amanuensis be reading the exam script to you or will it be in the usual or alternative format?
- Do you wish only to give punctuation breaks- new sentence, new paragraph, quotation marks etc – and leave the rest to your amanuensis? Or do you wish to dictate every punctuation mark?
- Agree on how to cope with words or spelling that the amanuensis may need to clarify. Do you want this done during the dictation, or would you prefer them to leave a space that can be filled in when you pause?
- If you anticipate using tables or diagrams in your answers you may need to discuss the sort of directions that you will give.
- Will you read what the amanuensis has written down or would you like it read to you?
- If you have rest breaks, you may wish to discuss how to organise this with your amanuensis.

In the examination

The Invigilator may have additional instructions to give, which relate to an exam where an amanuensis is to be used. If there are rest breaks or writing time then this should be clarified at this point.

There are some general points, which are relevant to all students, not just those working with an amanuensis:


- Make sure you understand the general instructions, e.g. How long the exam will be, how many questions you should answer etc.
- When you have read the paper (or had it read to you), it is a good idea to mark the questions that you don't attempt, this can save you time later on.
- Divide your time carefully between answers and don't over-run your allowances- you can always return to an incomplete answer at the end if you have time to spare.
- Before you start to dictate your answers make plans and /or rough notes.

When you are ready, begin dictating. Try not to go too fast. Pause now and then so that you can gather your thoughts and so that your amanuensis can relax their wrist. If you are visually impaired or if you find it difficult to read what has been written, then you can ask for your script to be read back to you as often as you wish. Don't feel under any pressure to be dictating all the time- you need time to think too! Plan to leave enough time at the end for checking and last minute corrections- this may take longer if your script is being read aloud.

Randstad - Opus Student user guide

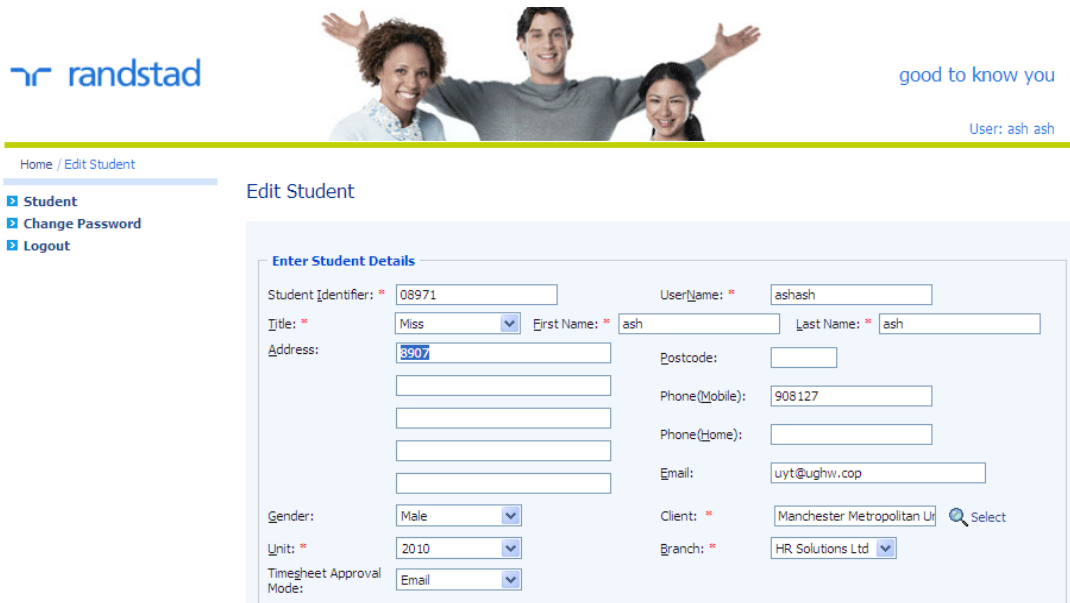
Getting started

Here are some key points to note when using Opus:

- Please be aware that Opus will only work on Internet Explorer 6 and 7
- Avoid using the back button.  Unlike most web pages, if you use the back button you will find the system logs you off and any changes you were making at the time will not be saved.
- If you are using Internet Explorer 8 then you'll need to ensure that your pop up blocker is off as some actions open in a new window.
- All mandatory fields will have a red asterisk next to them. The system will not allow you to confirm something if the mandatory fields have not been completed.
- Standard users are unable to delete records from the system. You will need to contact the Administrator if you need a record deleting.

Logging into the system

You will be sent an email containing your username and password. Type in <http://opus.randstad.co.uk> into the web browser, enter your username and password, then click submit.



The screenshot shows the 'Edit Student' page in the Opus system. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Randstad logo on the left and the text 'good to know you' on the right. Below the logo, there is a navigation menu with three items: 'Student', 'Change Password', and 'Logout'. The main content area is titled 'Edit Student' and contains a form titled 'Enter Student Details'. The form has the following fields:

- Student Identifier: * 08971
- Title: * Miss (dropdown)
- First Name: * ash
- Last Name: * ash
- Address: 3907 (text input)
- Postcode: (text input)
- Phone (Mobile): 908127 (text input)
- Phone (Home): (text input)
- Email: luyt@ughw.cop (text input)
- Gender: * Male (dropdown)
- Client: * Manchester Metropolitan Un (dropdown with search icon)
- Branch: * HR Solutions Ltd (dropdown)
- Unit: * 2010 (dropdown)
- Timeheet Approval Mode: * Email (dropdown)

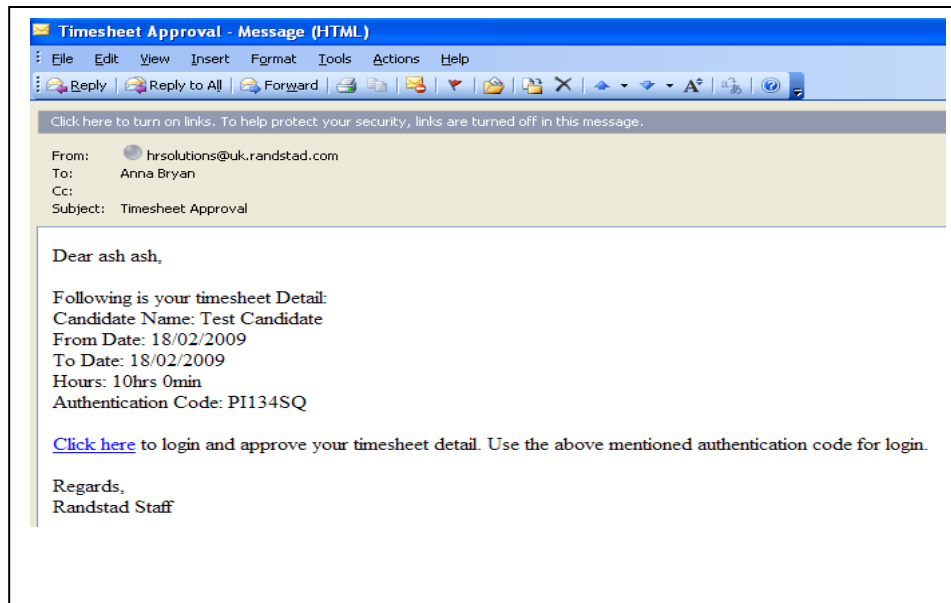
Changing your password

We would advise you to change your password on your first login for added security. You can do this by clicking on the 'change password' link on the main screen. You will be asked to provide your old password, then create a new password then click on save.

Authorising timesheets

When a candidate submits a timesheet, you will receive an email asking for authorisation

You can log into the system by clicking the link and authorise or decline the timesheet.



If you have any technical issues with the system, please email opus@randstad.co.uk

Support Worker roles

NOTETAKER

Purpose:

To assist students in their access to the teaching, learning and social environments of the university.

Main activities:

- Taking notes in lectures and taught classes for the students.
- Reviewing the notes at the end of the lecture/class and ensuring that they are accessible to the student.
- May on occasions be required to type up handwritten notes as directed by Student Enabling Centre.
- Liaising with the student with regard to their timetable.
- Liaising with lecturers/tutors regarding their presence in the class, and communicate information about the role of note taker.
- Maintaining a professional role as a note taker during working hours.
- Liaising with Student Enabling Centre regarding the needs of individual students in order to ensure that concerns/issues are brought to their attention.
- Maintaining strict confidentiality at all times.
- Completing on-line timesheet records. Keeping Student Enabling Centre informed of availability for work, weekly schedule of work, changes in contact details and qualifications.
- Undertaking continued professional development as appropriate to maintain accuracy of skills.
- When fully trained and experienced, undertake the role of mentor to new notetakers as requested by Student Enabling Centre.
- Contributing to the evaluation of the student support service by the University.
- Attending support workers team meetings as required.
- Following the Support Service Standards for support workers.

STUDY SUPPORT MENTOR

Purpose:

To assist Staffordshire University students by supporting their access to the teaching and learning and social environment

Main activities:

- Providing one to one support, guidance and mentoring within the terms of the student's assessment of study support needs report.
- Assisting with the development of organisational skills, empowering the student to manage their own workload, interpret required responses to set tasks, break work into manageable pieces and meet deadlines.
- Identifying and addressing the ways in which a student's disability/mental health condition may impact on their studies, and vice versa.
- Assisting in planning, research and finding suitable sources of information.
- Providing guidance in finding appropriate solutions for queries and reassuring the student to reduce anxiety levels.
- Facilitating mentee's negotiations and discussions with academic tutors and faculties.
- Maintaining a professional role as a study support mentor and to be aware of the need to maintain this role with the student during working hours.
- Ensuring awareness and understanding of the student support services available at the University, particularly where support requirements fall beyond the boundaries of the mentoring role. This may include liaising with Specialist Student Advisors in the University's Student Enabling Centre regarding the needs of individual students and ensuring that concerns/issues are brought to their attention.
- The mentor and Specialist Student Advisors to work collaboratively to determine the appropriate course of action where liaison with third parties is necessary on a student's behalf.

- Maintaining confidentiality at all times through a joint confidentiality agreement with the Specialist Student Advisors in the University's Student Enabling Centre.
- Maintain accurate records of all sessions through the completion of Individual Learning Development Plans and complete on-line time sheet records of sessions with students.
- Keeping Student Enabling Centre informed of availability for work, changes in contact details and qualifications.
- Undertaking continuing professional development as appropriate to maintain accuracy of skills.
- When fully trained and experienced, undertake the role of mentors to new study support mentors as necessary.
- Contributing to the evaluation of the student support service by the University. To attend mentor support team meetings and supervision sessions as required.
- Following the Support Service Standards for support workers.

SPECIALIST STUDY SKILLS TUTOR

Purpose:

To assist students in their access to the teaching, learning and social environments of the university.

Main activities:

- Providing individual study skills and multi-sensory tuition to students with specific learning difficulties (SpLD).
- Providing students with support for:
 - Time Management
 - Assignment Planning
 - Writing
 - Numeracy
 - Specialist Software
- Contributing to a workshop programme for students with specific learning difficulties.
- Liaising with students in regards to their timetables and arranging tutorial times as appropriate.
- Providing constructive feedback to students upon receipt of Academic Support Forms.

- Working collaboratively with the team of specialist study skills tutors and the Student Enabling Centre.
- Maintaining professionalism as a specialist study skills tutor during working hours.
- Maintaining confidentiality at all times.
- Liaising with Student Enabling Centre in the University regarding the needs of individual students and ensure that concerns/issues are brought to their attention.
- Completing all paperwork as required including Individual Learning Plans.
- Completing on-line timesheet records.
- Keeping the Student Enabling Centre informed of availability for work, changes in contact details and qualifications.
- Undertaking continued professional development as appropriate to maintain accuracy of skills.
- When fully trained and experienced, undertaking the role of mentor to new specialist study skills tutors as necessary.
- Contributing to the evaluation of the student support service by the University.
- Attending support workers team meetings as required
- Following the Support Service Standards for support workers.

Specialist Student Advisors

Information for Students

A helping hand

Studying at university can at times be stressful. You may be finding it difficult to adjust, be missing home, worrying about money, feeling the academic pressure or just feel that you don't fit in, that "something just isn't right" and that you are finding it increasing difficult to cope.

The Specialist Student Advisors provide advice, guidance and support to any student who may be experiencing difficulties relating to their mental health.

We are here to support you at any point during your time at Staffordshire University, and can offer you a safe and welcoming space where, together, we can discuss any concerns that you might have, and how we might be able to help you to make a difference.

Who we see

Any student of the University who feels they may benefit from emotional support and guidance.

We are also happy to meet with you prior to starting if you would like to know more about the support available to you once you get here.

We acknowledge that your needs can change and the service is here to help at any point during your course.

We can also provide mental wellbeing advice to concerned friends, and/or academic staff.

You can be confident that you will be treated as an individual, not as a diagnosis, focusing on your wellbeing and your recovery from emotional distress or illness.

What we do

The support we provide can take many forms including;

- One-to-one support. An opportunity to talk through any difficulties you are having.
- The provision of mental health information & general mental wellbeing advice.
- Guidance and support in identifying any learning and study support needs you may have.
- Assisting you in applying for funding for the Disabled Students' Allowances, if appropriate.
- Help with identifying other appropriate sources of support internally and/or externally.
- Assisting you in liaison with faculty staff or other university departments such as finance or accommodation and/or with external specialist agencies.
- Helping with extenuating circumstances applications.
- Helping you to develop additional coping strategies including one-to-one stress management sessions and guided relaxation.
- Helping with goal setting and task breakdown.
- Helping you with self motivation.
- Providing advice on looking after your mental wellbeing through other holistic approaches including diet, exercise and sleep management.

How do I access support?

- You can phone or e mail directly to arrange a time for an informal chat.
- Support can be provided via face-to-face contact, phone or e-mail. The service will also be introducing Skype based internet chat support from mid 2010.
- The Specialist Student Advisors are based at both the Stoke and Stafford campuses, but will also provide support to Shrewsbury & Litchfield campus students by arrangement.
- If you would like to bring someone along, that's fine too.
- An appointment with an advisor will generally last between 45 minutes to an hour. We can work with you in a variety of ways, including seeing you for a one off appointment, working together over several meetings to overcome a specific obstacle, or working with you to access more appropriate ongoing support for the duration of your course.
- If you are unable to keep your appointment it is important that you let us know. You are welcome to book another appointment if you would like one.

Confidentiality

- All information shared with us will be treated in a confidential manner within the service and the parameters of this will be discussed with you.

Accessibility

- We hope that any student will feel able to access our service and receive an appropriate level of support, and that no student will feel excluded from doing so in relation to their ethnic or cultural background, gender, age, social class, religious belief, physical ability, sexual orientation, etc

- If you do experience any barriers to accessing the service we would encourage you to let us know. You can do this by visiting: [http://www.staffs.ac.uk/study here/disabled students/keep in touch/](http://www.staffs.ac.uk/study_here/disabled_students/keep_in_touch/)

Stoke-on-Trent Campus

Elsa Heffernan
Student Enabling Centre,
Cadman Courtyard,
College Road, ST4 2DE
t: 01782 294517
Fax: 01782 292786
Minicom: 01782 294564
e: e.c.heffernan@staffs.ac.uk

Stafford Campus

Heather Brown
One Stop Shop,
Beacon Building,
Beaconside, ST18 0AD
T: 01785 353615
Fax: 01785 353330
e: heather.brown@staffs.ac.uk

The service is available from 9.00am – 5.00pm Monday to Friday including vacations. Excluding public holidays and the week between Christmas Day and New Year

Other sources of support

Counselling Service

t: 01782 294977(Stoke)
t: 01785 353302(Stafford)

Student Health Centres

t: 01782 747174 (Stoke)

t: 01782 353570 (Stafford)

Multifaith Chaplaincy

t: 01782 294974 (Stoke)

t: 01785 353382 (Stafford)

Staffordshire Mental Health Helpline

Free and confidential helpline providing emotional support & impartial advice.

t: 0808 800 2234

Open 7pm-2am Monday - Friday

2pm – 2am Saturday and Sunday

Samaritans

If you are in crisis, despairing or suicidal.

Also provides access to services in other languages.

t: 08457 90 90 90 (24 hour helpline)

E mail: jo@samaritans.org

www.samaritans.org

Students Against Depression

Advice and links for any student who is affected by depression, low mood or suicidal thoughts.

www.studentdepression.org

Staffordshire Mental Health Information

Provides a resource bank of information on all the local mental health services and support available in Staffordshire.

www.staffordshirementalhealth.info

External Contacts

National Autistic Society

www.nas.org.uk

North Staffs Asperger/ Autism Association

www.nsaaa.co.uk

Students Against Depression

www.studentdepression.org

Student Health

www.studenthealth.co.uk

Mental Health related help/ advice/ support

There are a number of useful contacts on the University Counselling and Mental Well Being Advisors website which can be accessed through the A-Z index on the University home page

www.staffs.ac.uk

Dis-forum

A discussion list for disabled students and their support Staff.

<http://jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/DIS-FORUM.html>

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities

A national charity promoting opportunities for young people and adults with any kind of impairment in post-16 education, training and employment.

www.skill.org.uk

