



The Open
University

Meeting your needs at residential school 2011–2012



Support services for students with additional requirements

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Preface

The Open University (OU) is committed to offering disabled students and anyone who has a health condition, mental health disability or a specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia) access to all our modules and the support and facilities they need to take part in every aspect of university life.

The Open University's Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan which is incorporated within our Equality Scheme sets out our policy and commitment, and is available on our website at **www.open.ac.uk/our-student-policies**. The Open University is always interested in improving its services to disabled students. If you're unhappy with a particular service – or feel you've had particularly good service – please tell us.

Although we will do all we can to provide students with services that meet their requirements so that they can study our modules successfully, we cannot guarantee that we will always be able to provide all services requested. We will give as much notice as we can of any limit on our services.

You'll receive letters and publications from us which will be in standard print, but if you tell us in the 'Communication from us' section of the Facilities Request Form 1 (FRF1), we will supply them, wherever possible, in a more suitable format.

This publication was prepared by Disabled Student Services and produced by the Student Services Communications Team. While we have done everything possible to make sure the information is accurate, the information may change in the light of altered regulations or policies, or because of financial or other restrictions.

All the websites mentioned in this booklet can be accessed from your personalised StudentHome website **www.open.ac.uk/students** where you will also find an excellent range of online resources and important information about your study. Make sure you log on regularly using your OU computer username and password.

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1 Introduction

This guide is one of three produced for Open University students who have particular requirements that affect their studies, such as a disability or a long-term health condition. Each guide addresses a specific aspect of the assistance the OU makes available. These guides are for your reference and you may not need all three.

The three guides and their associated forms and support documents are described below. To request the services and facilities described in each document, you must complete and return the associated Facilities Request Form.

1 Meeting your needs

- How to tell us about your needs
- Financial allowances available to support your study
- Study skills
- Assistance available for particular disabilities or additional requirements
- Alternative formats for your module materials.

With this guide you receive a Facilities Request Form (FRF1) to register your requirements with us, and information on how to claim the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA).

2 Meeting your needs at residential school

- Preparing for residential school
- Support at residential school
- Equipment available at residential school
- Residential school venue information
- Module information.

If you have told us about your requirements, and your module includes a residential school, you will either be sent a printed copy of this guide or you will be sent details about accessing the online version from our website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools where you'll also find other important information about your residential school. You should use the Facilities Request Form 2 (FRF2) to tell us about your requirements at residential school.

3 Meeting your assessment needs

- Types of assessment you may find on your module
- Examination papers in alternative formats
- Extra time in examinations
- Alternative locations for examinations
- How to get more help.

If you have told us about your requirements and your module includes an examination, you will automatically be sent this guide, plus the Facilities Request Form 3 (FRF3) on which you should indicate the arrangements that you think would help you in your examination. If your module does not include an examination, you should still read this guide to find out what help we can offer you with your other assessment activities. You should contact your regional or national centre if you need any advice about the support available for other types of assessment.

Please note that in these guides the terms 'requirements' or 'additional requirements' are used to refer to your need for specific services because of your disability, health condition, mental health disability or a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia.

How to use the guides

You do not need to read everything in these guides. They are designed to be reference documents with particular sections that you can refer back to when you need to.

The guides are available:

- ▶ in print and audio format from the Student Registration & Enquiry Service
- ▶ online from www.open.ac.uk/disability

Please see the Appendix for full address and phone details of the contacts given in the text. However, if you need help with anything straight away, or if you have any questions, you are very welcome to contact your regional or national centre. (See Appendix 2 for details.)

How we use your information

Once you have returned the FRF1 form, we collect the information you submit to create a Disability and Additional Requirements (DAR) profile.

Your DAR profile is a brief summary of the ways in which your disability or additional requirements affect your study. It is compiled from what you put on your FRF1 form and what you tell us via other contact with the University. It is a confidential statement available only to OU staff who have a role in making sure your requirements are met, and your tutor. Its main purpose is to ensure that appropriate services are put into place and your tutor knows how to offer you the right support.

All students have access to their profile and those who are going to study with us for more than one year have a regular opportunity to update the information on their FRF1.

We ask all students who receive a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) for their permission to record details of their DSA award on their record.

We may record our phone calls with you to make sure that we have carried out your instructions correctly and to help us improve our services through staff training.

What to do now

By reading this guide as you make your preparations, and discussing any concerns you have with the Disability Resources Team, you will learn about the support available at residential school and be able to decide whether you can attend. Once you have read all the relevant information you need, you will then be able to follow these four important steps:

Step 1

Fill in FRF2 and send it to us

Step 2

Book your place at a school

Step 3

Check whether you can get funds to help you study

Step 4

Check in advance that everything is ready for you

Step 1 – fill in FRF2 and send it to us

- ▶ An FRF2 is enclosed with the print version of this guide; it is also available on the 'Additional support' section of the residential schools website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools. (Please refer to page 9 of this guide for more information.)

Step 2 – book your place at a school

- ▶ You'll also receive booking information and details of available schools by email or through the post, depending on your contact preferences, several months before the school is held. You can book online through the residential schools website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools or by contacting the Residential Schools Team on +44 (0)1908 653235. (Please refer to section 3 of this guide for more information.)

Step 3 – check whether you can get funds to help you study

- ▶ Many of the services described in this booklet, plus many more that are not (such as a study support assistant), can be paid for by a Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) or the Access to Learning Fund. If you are eligible for a DSA the University will only provide study support that cannot be provided by a DSA. (Please refer to section 2 of this guide for more information.)

The DSA application form and the FRF1 form sent with *Meeting Your Needs* are completely separate forms, used for different purposes, and you should have filled in both whenever possible to make sure you do not miss out on anything you are entitled to.

Step 4 – check in advance that everything is ready for you

- ▶ Please remember that the facilities of the site you attend may affect your choice of equipment, and whether or not you'll need an assistant.
 - The Disability Resources Team is your first point of contact. Staff there can answer your queries, advise on what is available and confirm that arrangements have been made.
 - Don't forget to finalise arrangements with any assistant you may have – either a friend or relative, or a Disability Support Assistant (Register), supplied by the Disability Resources Team – and discuss each other's expectations.
- ▶ Please contact the Disability Resources Team as soon as possible if your circumstances change. For example, if you need more or less support than you originally asked for on your FRF2.

Telling us about your needs

Facility Request Form 2 (FRF2)

To make sure that we have all the information we need to support you during your residential school, you will need to fill in an FRF2.

Before completing the FRF2 you will need to:

- think about what equipment, facilities or support you may need us to provide for you because of your disability, health condition, mental health disability or specific learning difficulty (such as dyslexia)
- if you have been to an OU residential school previously you may just have to update the form to show any changes in your requirements.

Please don't assume that we'll already know about your requirements, either from the Facility Request Form 1 (FRF1) that you gave us at the beginning of your module or from your DSA assessment, if you've applied for one. The FRF2 is a separate form. It is important to give us as much information as possible on your FRF2, so that we can provide the right facilities and support for your residential school.

Students who have been to a residential school before should find their previous details are either already on the FRF2 form or on their student record on StudentHome. Please check and cross out anything that is no longer relevant. You should tell us about any new or additional requirements you have.

The Disability Resources Team

Support for students with disabilities or additional requirements at residential schools is provided by the Disability Resources Team at our main office in Milton Keynes (see Appendix 2 for contact details). During your preparation, the team can discuss your requirements or get answers to any of your questions. They can offer guidance and talk to you about the support and equipment that can be made available at your residential school or they could just help you fill in your FRF2.

The Disability Resources Team is able to meet most reasonable requirements and is able to provide a vast range of equipment for you to borrow during your residential school. Equipment available includes hoists, bath seats, AlphaSmart keyboards, electric scooters, wheelchairs and digital voice recorders. Appendix 1 lists a very small selection of the equipment available. Please contact the team to discuss your requirements and to find out more about the range of equipment available.

2 Disabled Students' Allowances



Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) are government grants available to disabled students in higher education to help with the extra costs they may have to pay during their studies because of a disability or specific learning difficulty. DSAs are not means-tested and will not affect any benefits received.

Students who register to study at least 30 credits (for Scottish students this is 60 credits) and have a physical, sensory, mental health or specific learning difficulty, should apply for a DSA as soon as they register on a module. This ensures that any support needed for a residential school can be put in place in good time and some of the costs may be met from a DSA. However, please note that personal care costs cannot be funded from a DSA.

You can receive more information about DSAs from the guide *Meeting your needs*, which also contains an application form to apply for a DSA. Alternatively you can obtain a DSA application from:

The Disabled Students' Allowances Office (DSAO)

Telephone: +44 (0)1908 654136

Textphone: +44 (0)1908 659955

Fax: +44 (0)1908 659956

Email: dsa-queries@open.ac.uk

There is also a quick and easy eligibility test on our website www.open.ac.uk/disability as well as an online application form.

DSAs for students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The costs that may be met by the DSA include the following.

- ▶ Accommodation, fees and travel expenses for a study-support assistant to help with compulsory **study**-related tasks at the residential school (known as a 'non-medical helper').
- ▶ Fees and expenses for specialist hearing support e.g. British Sign Language (BSL) signers, lip speakers or professional note-takers.
- ▶ Technology that you might use for taking notes in tutorials, such as a digital voice recorder.
- ▶ Extra travel costs related to the residential school. By 'extra' we mean the difference between what a student who isn't disabled pays and what you pay, for example if you need to use a taxi because of your disability.

Some of these costs may be charged direct to your DSA but you or your helper may have to submit claim forms for other costs, e.g. travel expenses.

DSAs for students in Scotland

If your DSA has been awarded by the Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS), some of the study costs of your residential school can be met by your DSA. These costs may include the following if SAAS has approved this kind of support as part of your DSA award:

- ▶ Any additional costs involved in travelling to residential school
- ▶ Accommodation, fees and travel costs of your non-medical personal assistant who accompanies you
- ▶ Any specialist technology you may need while at the school.

The contact details for enquiries about DSAs are in Appendix 2. The Learner Support team at your regional or national centre can also discuss DSA matters with you.

3 Preparing for residential school

Residential schools outside the UK

The Department of Languages, the Science Faculty (Astronomy) and the Business School also run residential schools outside the UK.

We cannot offer people at these schools who have additional requirements as much support as we can at schools in the UK. The range of equipment is limited, and we can't guarantee services that depend on the cooperation of other UK institutions (such as the Royal National Institute for the Blind). In particular, we cannot provide professional personal care (for washing, dressing and so on) at overseas sites. So if you do need this type of support overseas, you must bring your own assistant.

We're continuing to work with host sites in Ireland and continental Europe to make sure that students with disabilities have access to teaching, residential and social facilities. It's important that you talk to the Disability Resources Team about your requirements, so that wherever possible they can be met at the residential school.

Medical treatment

Students from the UK must produce a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) to get state-provided medical treatment in France, Germany, Spain, Belgium, Holland and Ireland at either a reduced cost or free of charge. You should also get the leaflet T5 'Health Advice for Travellers' from the post office. This will tell you how to get treatment if you need to.

The EHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance and we strongly advise that you also take out travel insurance that includes medical cover, in case the arrangements agreed between countries in the European Union do not meet your full medical expenses. This is particularly necessary if you're not from a country in the European Union and so are not covered by these arrangements.

Module Information Sheet

You'll also find it useful to read the Module Information Sheet that is relevant to your module. This is also available on the 'Additional support' section of the residential schools website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools.

The Module Information Sheet gives an expert view on what to expect from your module. It provides information on any fieldwork trips, additional activities, or additional equipment that may be required and any additional support that may be available. This information will help you consider what kind of support you may need.

Booking a place at your school

Once you've returned your Facility Request Form 2 (FRF2), the next stage is to book your place at a school. However, note that modules where the residential school is the major component (those with XR in the module code) arrange bookings earlier than other modules.

If you are taking a non-XR module, we will write to you three to four months before your school begins.

- ▶ You'll need to look at the website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools to find the dates and locations of schools for your module.
- ▶ It's also important to look at the residential school venue information factsheets so that if there is a choice of sites, you can decide which is most suitable for your requirements. You can access these online from the 'Additional support' section of the residential schools website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools.

Before you book your place you must be absolutely sure that the school site you choose is suitable for you. We strongly suggest that you get advice from the Disability Resources Team. If you have restricted mobility in particular, it will help us to help you if you tell us about this before you book your place.

Residential school places are available on a first come, first served basis, so please make sure you book early to try and ensure you get your first choice of site and week.

Unless we tell you otherwise, your accommodation will be a single room but you may have to share a bathroom with other students. Some of our sites also have shared kitchens. Contact the Disability Resources Team for more information.

The accommodation available changes each year and, although you may be going to a site you have been to before, you may not be able to have the same room in the same type of accommodation as last time.

You may be able to stay an extra night (or nights) if you want to and if there is a room available, but you will need to pay any extra costs yourself. If you want to stay an extra night you must discuss this with the Disability Resources Team beforehand.

Will you need an assistant?

Staff and students are always very busy at residential school, so it's best to have your own support. You can bring a friend or relative who is familiar with your requirements and has a good standard of fitness or, if necessary, we may be able to provide someone from our Student Assistant Register. If you need us to provide an assistant for you or would like to find out more about this service, please contact the Disability Resources Team at least six weeks before you start your school.

An assistant can help you in various ways, for example by:

- ▶ taking notes for you
- ▶ helping you at mealtimes
- ▶ carrying your books and opening doors
- ▶ giving you moral support and guidance
- ▶ helping you with reading
- ▶ helping you in the laboratory
- ▶ helping you to get around, both on campus and on field trips
- ▶ helping you to use the equipment you have borrowed from us.

If you cannot go to the school

Some residential schools are an essential requirement for a particular qualification. If your module has a residential school, you must go to it because it provides learning outcomes that can't be taught at a distance.

However, we accept that for reasons beyond their control, some students may find it impossible to go to residential school. Such students may be offered an 'alternative learning experience' (ALE), which delivers the same main learning outcomes as the residential school. ALEs differ in format from module to module. You'll find details in the module description.

ALEs are not offered for those modules where the residential school forms the major part of the module. These are usually modules with an XR in the module code (for example, TXR220 and SXR103). You should not register for an XR module if you cannot go to the residential school.

If you are studying a module where you have to go to a residential school, you must take part satisfactorily in the school or the ALE (where offered). If you think that you may not be able to go to the residential school, contact Learner Support Services at your regional or national centre for advice.



4 Support at residential school



We try to make sure that all students, if at all possible, are able to go to residential school. This section looks at the support we can offer you at residential school; including the equipment you can ask for, whether or not you may need an assistant, and how residential school tutors can help you.

We may be able to loan equipment to use while you are at the school. The amount of equipment available varies considerably depending on the site.

We do have a wide range of equipment available for you to borrow during your residential school – Appendix 1 lists a very small selection. Contact the Disability Resources Team for further details.

Undergraduate residential schools

The staff you will meet at residential school include the following.

- ▶ Disability Support Coordinator – coordinates the arrangements you have requested at the residential school.
- ▶ Disability Support Assistant (School) – helps the Disability Support Assistant Coordinator to ensure that your arrangements at the residential school are in place and provides pre-booked occasional support to students.
- ▶ Assistant School Administrator – oversees the Disability Support Coordinator with your arrangements on a day-to-day basis
- ▶ Module Director – responsible for your academic needs
- ▶ Learning Adviser – offers support for study and guidance on choosing future modules

A week or so before you go to residential school, the Disability Support Coordinator or Disability Support Assistant (School) will contact you to re-confirm that the facilities or equipment you've asked for on your FRF2 form will be at the school.

When you arrive at residential school, the Disability Support Coordinator will be there to help you and will tell you anything that might be important to you, such as the wheelchair routes around the campus. The Disability Support Coordinator will also give you the equipment you've asked for, and show you to your accommodation if you request this.

At some of the larger summer schools you will be able to register at a separate registration desk. This will help speed up your registration so that you have time to find your room, relax and begin to feel familiar with your surroundings before the evening's introductory sessions.

The Module Director will arrange for someone to work out an appropriate teaching strategy with you at the school. If there is a Learning Adviser at the school, they will introduce themselves to you during the week, and tell you where and when they're available for appointments or just for a chat.



I appreciate the flexibility and sensitivity of support available at residential school. The first year I went my condition was in remission, and I only needed a chat with the Disability Support Coordinator at the start of the week. This year my condition was considerably worse but the Disability Support Coordinator and Learning Adviser reassured me by checking how I was each day.



Remember, the school office team is there to provide support and will work with you to make sure that you're comfortable throughout your residential school.

OUBS residential schools

Business School students have slightly different arrangements. Before you go to residential school, the Disability Resources Team will contact you to confirm that the facilities or equipment you've asked for on your FRF2 form will be available at the school.

At the school, the Residential School Support Manager (RSSM), the Module Director and your tutor are there to provide support, and will work with you to make sure that you're comfortable throughout your residential school.

Working with an assistant

“ The relationship with my assistant was good. We spoke twice on the telephone before I went to residential school so we both knew something about each other before we met, and set some boundaries for our relationship. At the school everything went well. We went to most tutorials and some social events together, but we also had time apart, which I felt was important. ”

To get the full benefit from the academic and social programme at residential school you may need more support than you do at home or at work. Here are a few reasons why you may need an assistant.

- ▶ If you use a wheelchair or have restricted mobility, you may need an assistant to help you to get around a site where there are long distances between accommodation buildings and teaching rooms.
- ▶ You might need someone to help you around the site because you are blind or partially sighted.
- ▶ You may benefit from having someone to take notes for you if you are D/deaf or hard of hearing, or if your manual skills are restricted.
- ▶ You might like an assistant to remind you to take medication at the right time, or to help you at meal times.

If you think that your academic progress or residential arrangements might be difficult without help from an assistant, please fill in Facility Request Form 2 (FRF2) to tell us what kind of support you'll need from your assistant.

It's important to seriously consider whether you need support or not. Don't assume that you will be able to rely on fellow students for help, as it could interfere with their own study. We have the right not to admit you to a school without an assistant if, in our opinion, you need one. If you arrive alone at your school and an assistant can't be arranged quickly, we may ask you to leave. Equally, we have the right not to allow you to have an assistant if there seems no genuine need.

Finding a suitable assistant

You may nominate as your assistant a friend or relative who is fully aware of your requirements and is physically fit to support you.

If you can't nominate an assistant, or need a second one, we may be able to provide one from our Student Assistant Register. Many assistants on this register are – or have been – OU students themselves and have experience in supporting students with a range of requirements. All new assistants are interviewed and receive ongoing training.

If you need us to provide an assistant for you, you must contact the Disability Resources Team at least six weeks before you start school. All extra costs for an assistant will usually be met from your DSA if you have one (see page 10), or may be paid by the University if you don't.

If you do ask us to provide an assistant, we'll look at the requirements you've set out on your FRF2 and phone you before the school starts to discuss them with you, to make sure they are still correct and so that we can suggest someone from our register.



We use several conditions to match students with assistants, including gender, academic knowledge and experience. Most matches work extremely well, and the key to this is good communication. You should try to discuss your requirements fully with your assistant beforehand, so you get to know each other and understand each others' requirements and expectations before you arrive at the school.

Please note: student assistants on our register cannot help with personal care requirements such as washing, dressing or toileting. If you need this sort of support you should bring your own personal assistant wherever possible. Otherwise please contact the Disability Resources Team at least six weeks before your school starts to discuss alternative arrangements.

If you think you'll probably be able to cope on your own for most of the time but you might need support for occasional short periods, we can provide a part-time 'occasional assistant', for example to help you with your luggage, or just at meal times.

Working with residential school tutors

It is a good idea to introduce yourself to your tutors at the beginning of the school, so that you can discuss your requirements and work out a teaching strategy together. For instance, you can ask your tutor to read text from the board, the overhead projector or other written materials.

This will be important to you, and it may also be of considerable benefit to other students who can use the extra time to take in details and make notes.

If your medical condition causes fatigue (extreme tiredness) or pain, or you need medication for it, your Module Director and tutors should be able to help you find ways to cope with the amount of work. You might not have to go to all the tutorial sessions, and you may be able to have photocopies of notes or overhead projector slides. If you need this support, please contact the Disability Resources Team at least six weeks before you go to school to help us work out how best to meet your requirements.

5 Particular disabilities



All sorts of people choose to study with us, and going to residential school can pose a range of challenges. If you have a condition that is not specifically mentioned below, such as angina, asthma, cancer, diabetes, epilepsy, HIV, ME or multiple sclerosis, you may have particular requirements at residential school that we can support, so please let us know by completing FRF2.

The timetable for all schools is full. It usually starts at about 09.00 and sometimes goes on until 21.00, although some sessions are optional. It is tiring for all students, and perhaps stressful too. However, most students do come away feeling that it's been a rewarding and stimulating experience.

Equipment

If you prefer, you can bring your own equipment. We can usually provide secure storage for medication and equipment from the list in Appendix 1 of this guide.

We also have a wide range of equipment available for you to borrow during your residential school; Appendix 1 lists a small selection. For more details and to arrange to borrow a piece of equipment, please contact the Disability Resources Team at least six weeks before your school starts. You must return borrowed equipment at the end of your stay.

If you are blind or partially sighted

If you are blind or partially sighted your needs at residential school are likely to include:

- ▶ taking notes
- ▶ dealing with text
- ▶ producing written work
- ▶ finding your way around the site.

It's important that you find out how much of your module's residential school text can be provided in a suitable form. The printed text of most modules is available either in audio or as a PDF file. The PDF files can be accessed with screen reading or magnification technology. Contact your tutor for more information.

Equipment

We may be able to provide you with a Perkins Braille so that you can take notes, a digital voice recorder to record seminars and discussions or a video magnifier (CCTV). Other equipment and services may also be available. You can find out more about what can be provided by contacting the Disability Resources Team.

If you are D/deaf or hard of hearing

If you are D/deaf or hard of hearing, your requirements at residential school will be mainly to do with effective communication between you and your tutor, other staff and students.

Hearing support weeks



The hearing support week I attended was excellent, with a wide variety of support available. Although my next module at Level 2 will not have a hearing support week, I will still be able to borrow a personal radio loop and have a note-taker while I concentrate on the tutor and fellow students.



Some of our more popular undergraduate modules offer hearing support weeks, and if you're taking one of those modules you'll be invited to one of these weeks. These take place at standard residential schools, and students receiving support are in groups with other students. Hearing support weeks offer:

- ▶ interpreters
- ▶ lip speakers
- ▶ speech-to-text operators
- ▶ note-takers
- ▶ loop systems.

Check with the Disability Resources Team that you are booked onto a hearing support week. Once your place has been confirmed, you'll receive another letter asking you which services you will need at the school.

Hearing support weeks in 2011 (expected dates)

Module code	University	Date
DD303	University of Sussex	9 to 15 July
DXR222	University of Sussex	16 to 22 July
SXR103	University of Sussex	23 to 29 July

Hearing support weeks only go ahead if enough students apply.

Other modules offer various kinds of support. If you have communication support organised by the Disability Resources Team and the RNID, for example, sign-language interpreters (British Sign Language or sign-supported English) or lip speakers for tutorials and day schools, it might be possible to provide the same service at your residential school. If you don't need professional communication support, we may still be able to help you in other ways.

Equipment

Whichever residential school you go to, you'll find that very few of the tutorial rooms have built-in induction loops. The Disability Resources Team may be able to lend you a personal radio loop, which could be useful if you have a hearing aid with a T-switch. You'll need to give the microphone and transmitter to the person who's speaking. In tutorials, that would mean passing the microphone around the group. Because they're portable, radio loops are particularly useful at residential schools. If you need to borrow a radio loop, please contact the Disability Resources Team.

If your mobility is restricted

“ I've been to two undergraduate residential schools. The first year I had a wheelchair and was supported by an assistant. I was also able to use the campus transport, a 'people carrier', for longer distances. The second year I was able to use a scooter, as the site was relatively flat and compact, and I was more independent. ”

If your mobility is restricted, your concerns at residential school will probably be to do with access to buildings and rooms around the site.

When choosing a site, make sure you know the answers to the following questions.

- ▶ What are the distances between teaching, residential and catering accommodation?
- ▶ Are there any slopes that make access difficult?
- ▶ Are there obstacles, such as split-level walkways, that are unmanageable in a wheelchair and difficult on foot?
- ▶ Do I need to bring a car?
- ▶ Do I need an assistant?
- ▶ Is there campus transport?
- ▶ Is there adapted accommodation suitable for wheelchair users?

Please note that we do not own any of the sites we use for residential schools and some are not as accessible as we would like. We do work with host sites to improve facilities, and most students with restricted mobility can go to most of the sites we use.

Most of the sites have some accommodation adapted for wheelchairs, which may include an adapted bedroom with en-suite facilities or a separate adapted bathroom. Some sites also have adapted suites with kitchen and dining areas.

All the sites we use have dining areas that are accessible to wheelchair users, although routes may not be as direct as for other students. Staff at the school will make sure, if possible, that the teaching programme takes place in tutorial rooms, laboratories and lecture theatres that have wheelchair access.

Additional support weeks

Some science modules offer weeks when an extra tutor is provided to support a slightly modified programme for students who would find certain parts of the module difficult.

Additional support weeks in 2011

Module code	University	Date
SXR216	Preston Montford	8 to 15 July 15 to 22 July 22 to 29 July
SXR260	Durham	16 to 22 July 30 July to 5 August
SXR369	Kindrogan	9 to 15 July 23 to 29 July

If you are studying SXR216 or SXR369, you may find the additional support week helpful if your mobility is very restricted or if you have a severe medical condition. However, it is important for you to be aware that even the additional support week involves being outside in all kinds of weather for long periods of time. We advise you to ask for more advice by contacting the Disability Resources Team or by phoning Dr Kevin Church, the Curriculum Manager for SXR216 (phone +44 (0)1908 655027) or Dr Glynda Easterbrook, Curriculum Manager for SXR260 (phone +44 (0)1908 654809) and Dr Jessica Bartlett, Curriculum Manager for SXR369 (phone +44 (0)1908 653576). Adapted minibuses are available during the additional support week for SXR260 in Durham.

It may be possible to arrange a parking space near the rooms you'll be using to keep your journeys as short as possible.

Some undergraduate school sites provide campus transport between teaching and catering facilities. Electric scooters can usually be arranged, but not all sites are suitable for them. If you need campus transport, please contact the Disability Resources Team at least six weeks before your school starts.

If your manual skills are restricted

If your manual skills are restricted your requirements at residential school will probably be mainly to do with:

- ▶ written work
- ▶ handling equipment
- ▶ practical work, such as in a laboratory.

Equipment

You may use a typewriter or laptop at home for taking notes and writing essays. If you cannot bring this to residential school with you, we may be able to provide you with an electronic notetaker (a simplified laptop) or a digital voice recorder, so that you can type or write up your notes later.

If you have a specific learning difficulty

If you have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, your requirements at residential school will probably be to do with processing information, which you'll often need to do fairly quickly.

You'll be reading new material without the flexibility of taking all the time you need that you have at home. Residential school programmes tend to be very full and take advantage of the limited time that you're there. So, any preparation that you can do beforehand will be very useful.

Equipment

A digital voice recorder to record notes or parts of tutorials or lectures might be useful. You'll need to be selective about what you record, as you won't have time to listen to everything again. You're unlikely to need to produce written work yourself, as most of the activities are in groups, so if you usually need a word processor for written work you'll probably find that it isn't necessary at the school.

If you find colour coding helpful, remember to take coloured highlighter pens and stickers with you. If you are likely to find it difficult to take notes, you could bring carbon paper so that you can have copies of notes made by other students. If you use coloured acetates for studying at home, you will probably find it useful to bring some to the school.

If you usually use recorded module materials, you're likely to find them helpful for residential school too. Please make sure you ask for this on your FRF2 at least six weeks before your school starts.

If you have mental health difficulties

Many people succeed in studying with us while managing mental health difficulties. We offer appropriate support whenever we can, so the sooner you contact us the better we will be able to support you.

You'll need to take some time to think about the strategies you could use and the support you might need at residential school. You will be in unfamiliar surroundings, with a new timetable and meeting different people. These have an effect on all students. We recommend that you talk it over with Learner Support Services at your regional or national centre and discuss the possibilities available to you.

Residential schools are intensive and can be particularly demanding both academically and socially, especially if you're not used to being away from home. There may be up to 200 other students involved (70 to 110 for business schools), although you'll be working in much smaller groups of, say, about 10 to 12 people.

Students and staff at undergraduate schools eat together in a dining area. You'll have a small bedroom to yourself, usually close to a bath/shower room or with en-suite facilities and sometimes a small kitchen. Business school sites are usually in hotel or conference-type facilities, offering dining facilities and en-suite bathrooms.

Students sometimes find the school more stressful than they expected. If you feel that way, please speak to the Learning Adviser or RSSM at the school, who will be able to offer advice about the options available to you.

Whether you have support needs or not, if you have any concerns before you attend the school, contact Learner Support Services at your regional or national centre and talk to an adviser.

It might also be helpful to talk to a friend, relative, doctor or community worker who knows how unfamiliar situations might affect your mental health and help you to get the best out of the support we offer.

If you have other requirements

A residential school may create situations that don't pose any problem at home or at work. For example, you may have:

- ▶ religious beliefs that make it difficult for you to attend on certain days
- ▶ dietary requirements
- ▶ a temporary requirement because of an injury or because you are pregnant.

Let us know about your requirements and we should be able to meet them. We may be able to arrange for you to:

- ▶ arrive late or leave early
- ▶ have a specially prepared diet
- ▶ borrow equipment
- ▶ use the campus transport that some sites offer.

The important thing is to tell the Disability Resources Team in good time – at least six weeks before your school starts.



6 Residential school sites

Your module may offer a choice of residential school sites and it's important that you look at the information about them in good time so that, if there is a choice, you can decide which is most suitable for your requirements. You can access the online versions of the residential school venue information factsheets from the 'Additional support' section of the residential schools website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools or contact the Disability Resources Team if you need us to send you a printed copy.

- ▶ Each site is managed by a regional or national centre or by the Residential Schools Team (RST). See Appendix 2 for all contact details.
- ▶ The Disability Resources Team is responsible for arranging support for students with a disability or additional requirements.

The availability of special diets varies from site to site. A vegetarian option is offered as standard at all venues. The Disability Resources Team can make arrangements for most special diets, or we may need to discuss an alternative with you. Please contact the Disability Resources Team to discuss this at least six weeks before the start of your school. In some instances we may ask you to supply us with a diet sheet or a list of foods you cannot eat.



The venues for some modules may change during the year. If you have any questions about the venues available for the module you are studying, or you need information about a venue not listed below, please contact the Disability Resources Team.

The table below lists the residential school sites we plan to use for our modules in 2011. If the venue for your module changes after this booklet has gone to print (December 2010), we will let you know.

Site	Modules using this site
Accenture Training and Conference Centre, Milton Keynes	T885
Alexandra House, Swindon	B820
Barnfield Technology College, Luton	T216
Birmingham City University, Technology Innovation Centre	T216
City of Sunderland College, Sunderland	T216
Cornwall College, Camborne	T216
Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dublin	B777
Friedrich Schiller University, Jena, Germany	L203
Glasgow Caledonian University	T216
Holiday Inn, Brussels Airport	B690, B716, B820, B830, B777
Harben House	BS811
Heathrow/Windsor Marriott Hotel	B690
Lane End, High Wycombe	B690, B716, B830, B777
Malham Tarn Field Centre, North Yorkshire	SXR216

Site	Modules using this site
Manchester Conference Centre,	B690, B820
Marriott Hotel, Peterborough	B820
Milton Hill House, Milton Hill, Abingdon	B820, B822, B777
NH Leeuwenhorst Hotel, Leeuwenhorst, the Netherlands	B822
Observatori Astronomic de Mallorca	SXR208
Preston Montford Field Centre, Shrewsbury	SXR216
Queen Mary, University of London	AXR272, AXR312
Staverton Park, Daventry, Northants	B822, B820
Stirling Management Centre, Stirling	B830
Sunningdale Park, Ascot	B777
University of Bath	AXR271, DD303, DXR222, MEXR624, TXR120, TXR220
University of Caen, Normandy, France	L211, LXR122
University of Durham	DXR222, SXR207, SXR260, SXR369
University of Nottingham	DD303, MSXR209, SXR205, SXR270, SXR375, SXR376

Site	Modules using this site
University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain	L204
University of Sussex	DD303, DXR222, SMXR358, SXR103
University of York	SXR342, SXR343
Warwick (Scarman) Conference Centre	B777, B830, B856
Whittlebury Hall, Northamptonshire	B820, B830, B777
Wychwood Park, Cheshire	B690, B820, B830, B822

Appendix 1: Equipment available at UK sites

Equipment	Description
Manual wheelchair with safety strap	Standard light weight chair with solid tyres
Wheelchair tray	Clips on to wheelchair arms
Wheelchair Cushion	For extra comfort and support – various types available
Waterproof cape and cosy toes	Cape used to keep you dry. Padded cosy toes offers extra warmth to the legs and back area
Wheelchair holdall	A bag for storing books which attaches easily to a wheelchair
V-shaped pillow	Provides support when sitting on a chair or bed
Orthopaedic Pillow	Gives extra support to neck and shoulder area
Sheepskin squares and rugs	Light weight covers to keep you warm when sitting in a chair or wheelchair
Electric scooter	A mobility aid to use around campus
Rampllette (a small ramp)	Small ramp for wheelchair use
Personal ramp in a holdall	A lightweight ramp. Folds into a holdall that attaches easily to the back of a wheelchair
Non-slip bath or shower mats	Rubber mat with suction pads
Bath seats	To help when getting in and out of a bath. Fits inside bath and held in place by suction pads

Equipment	Description
Bath boards	Fits across the top of the bath, so you are not fully submerged in the water
Bath grab rail	Clamps to side of a bath to help getting in and out of the water
Shower chair	Available with or without arms, some with height-adjustable legs
Shower stool	Available with or without back support, some with height-adjustable legs
Raised toilet seat	Fits over the toilet to provide a higher sitting position
Toilet surround	To provide extra height and support
Hand-held shower spray	Fits over bath or sink taps and is operated by pressing a button to control the flow of water
Flashing alarm clock	Alarm clock flashes when the alarm goes off (helpful if you are deaf or hard of hearing)
Vibrating pillow alarm clock	Works by sending vibrations through the pillow when the alarm goes off (has different settings)
Non-slip mats	For slippery floors
Bedboard	Provides a firmer support for a standard mattress
Sliding board	To help you transfer between your wheelchair and the bed or bath
Bed blocks	For raising the bed height
Orthopaedic chair	Available with or without arms

Appendix 1: Equipment available at UK sites

Equipment	Description
Upright chair	With high back support – available with or without arms
Camping chair	Portable seat useful for field trips (some have a built-in back pocket)
Small or large Variette table	Height-adjustable table (for working while in a wheelchair, chair or bed of non-standard height)
Height-adjustable lab table	Large table with crank handle to adjust to required height.
Walking frame	To provide support for walking
Walking sticks	To provide support for walking (various lengths available)
Folding tri-wheeled walker	Height adjustable and suitable for indoor and outdoor use. It includes a bag or basket for carrying things
Crutches (various types available)	Adjustable varieties available. Mainly for mobility support with leg injuries, sprains and so on
Digital voice recorder	For recording seminars and discussions. Has clear recording and playback function
Perkins Braille and paper	For taking notes in Braille
AlphaSmart keyboard	Keyboard with display panel which allows you to type and edit text in the classroom. Attaches to a computer or printer for editing and printing
Reading pens	A helpful aid for dyslexic students. Has a speech-to-text function, and includes the <i>Concise Oxford English dictionary</i>

Equipment	Description
Rope bed-hoist	Attaches to the foot end of the bed frame. Helps you to sit up in bed more easily. Suitable at some sites only
Hoist (manual and electric)	Lifting system for moving people quickly and safely using a sling. Various sling sizes available
Patient helper	Free-standing pole with strap and handle for pulling yourself up in bed
Walkie-talkie	Set of two handsets to help communication between yourself and your assistant
Binoculars	Ideal for using on field trips. Varying zoom ranges available
Door beacons	Unit hangs over the bedroom door and flashes when someone knocks
Magnifier and clamp	For magnifying documents. Clamps to the side of a desk or table
'Big-keys' keyboard	Keyboard with over-sized keys. May be helpful if you are partially sighted or if you have difficulty using a standard keyboard

Please discuss your requirements with the Disability Resources Team at least six weeks before your school starts. We can usually offer advice to help you make the best choices for your school.

Appendix 2: Contact details

Residential Schools Team

To book your place at any residential school, contact our Residential Schools Team:

The Open University
Hammerwood Gate
Kents Hill
Milton Keynes
MK7 6BY

Phone: +44 (0)1908 653 235
Fax: +44 (0)1908 659 044
Email: residential-schools@open.ac.uk
Website: www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools

DSA enquiries for students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

Disabled Student Allowance Office (DSA0)

The Open University
Hammerwood Gate
Kents Hill
Milton Keynes
MK7 6BR

Phone: +44 (0)1908 654 136
Textphone: +44 (0)1908 659 955
Fax: +44 (0)1908 659 956
Email: dsa-queries@open.ac.uk

Disability Resources Team

For more information and to arrange the support you need, contact the Disability Resources Team:

The Open University
Hammerwood Gate
Kents Hill
Milton Keynes
MK7 6BY

Phone: +44 (0)1908 653 745
Textphone: +44 (0)1908 655 978
Fax: +44 (0)1908 655 547
Email: disabled-student-resources@open.ac.uk
Website: www.open.ac.uk/disability

DSA enquiries for students in Scotland:

The Open University in Scotland
10 Drumsheugh Gardens
Edinburgh
EH3 7QJ

Phone: +44 (0)131 226 3851
Fax: +44 (0)131 220 6730
Email: scotland@open.ac.uk

Learner support team – regional/national centres

The Open University in London

Phone: +44(0)20 7485 6596 Email: london@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the South

Phone: +44(0)1865 736 032 Email: south@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the South West

Phone: +44(0)117 929 9641 Email: south-west@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the West Midlands

Phone: +44(0)121 426 3539 Email: west-midlands@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the East Midlands

Phone: +44(0)115 962 5451 Email: east-midlands@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the East of England

Phone: +44(0)1223 361 851 Email: east-of-england@open.ac.uk

The Open University in Yorkshire

Phone: +44(0)113 234 1225 Email: yorkshire@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the North West

Phone: +44(0)161 998 7007 Email: north-west@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the North

Phone: +44(0)191 477 6104 Email: north@open.ac.uk

The Open University in Wales

Phone: +44(0)29 2047 1170 Email: wales@open.ac.uk

The Open University in Scotland

Phone: +44(0)131 226 3851 Email: scotland@open.ac.uk

The Open University in Ireland

Phone: +44(0)28 9032 3718 Email: ireland@open.ac.uk

The Open University in the South East

Phone: +44(0)1342 322 642 Email: south-east@open.ac.uk

Continental Europe

Phone: +44(0)191 477 6100 Email: europe@open.ac.uk

If you would prefer to discuss your study needs in Welsh, you are welcome to contact The Open University in Wales in Cardiff.








Os yw hi'n well gennych drafod eich anghenion astudio yn Gymraeg mae croesco I chi gysylltu â'r Brifysgol Agored yng Nghymru yng Nghaerdydd.

Appendix 3: Residential school venue information

We have prepared a venue information factsheet for each of our residential school sites to give you some information about such things as access to buildings, catering options, en-suite facilities, as well as highlighting aspects of the site that may be challenging (or particularly suitable) for students with certain disabilities or requirements.

You can access these online from the 'Additional support' section of the residential schools website www.open.ac.uk/residential-schools

Below is a key to the symbols we use on the factsheets.

Symbol	Facility
	lifts
	disabled parking
	wheelchair access
	en-suite facilities
	vegetarian options
	medical centre on campus
	motorised scooter available

If you have any queries about these factsheets, please contact the Disability Resources Team (see page 37 for contact details).

Finally, just a reminder of these four important steps ...

- Step 1** Fill in FRF2 and send it to us
- Step 2** Book your place at a school
- Step 3** Check whether you can get funds to help you study
- Step 4** Check in advance that everything is ready for you

This document has been produced by the Student Services Communications Team of The Open University, on behalf of the Disability Resources Team.

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