

SPECIALIST MENTORING FOR AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITIONS (ASC)

FROM ACCESSABILITY



What is Specialist ASC mentoring?

AccessAbility's Specialist ASC Mentors provide support to students who have autism spectrum conditions including Asperger Syndrome. This support is built around your individual needs, to enable you to reach your full academic potential. Mentors can help you to explore how your condition affects your university studies, helping you to develop the most appropriate studying strategies for you as an individual. The aim is to gradually reduce your need for specialist mentoring support as you build your skills, so that you can fully engage in university life and integrate successfully into the workplace on leaving university.

Who are we?

The AccessAbility Mentors work as sessional members of staff within the University of Exeter's Wellbeing Services' Non-Medical Helper (NMH) Team. We are a friendly and flexible team of specialists who are experienced in working with students who have ASC. We provide support for students studying at all levels and in any subject within the University.

What do we do?

Our individual mentoring sessions last for 45 minutes, during which time the support provided is tailored to your individual needs. We typically assist you with such things as:

- managing change and difficult emotions
- dealing with difficult social situations
- developing your social and communication skills

- clarifying course expectations
- having a healthy work/life balance
- accessing academic support and guidance
- managing your course requirements (e.g. speaking in seminars, giving presentations)
- advising on quiet (low-sensory) study spaces on campus
- other issues that you bring to the sessions

With your agreement, Mentors will liaise in confidence with other members of staff to ensure that your academic support is well co-ordinated whilst you are at university.

What can I expect during a session?

Your allocated Mentor will work with you on a one-to-one basis in a quiet, private room. The first session will focus on getting to know you and understanding the ways in which your ASC might impact on your university studies. The following sessions will focus on helping you to develop coping strategies and transferable skills, to enable you to reach your full potential and to best access your course. Mentoring sessions typically last for 45 minutes. After your first session, following sessions are booked directly with your Mentor.



How do I receive Specialist Mentoring?

All students must meet with an AccessAbility Advisor before specialist mentoring is put in place. Most students who access specialist mentoring have their sessions paid for by Disabled Students Allowance (DSA), provided by their funding body (e.g. Student Finance England). This allowance helps to meet the additional costs that may arise from having a disability at university. Home students can apply for the DSA directly at: www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview AccessAbility can support you with your application if necessary.

International students, who are not eligible for DSA, are able to access specialist mentoring and are encouraged to speak to an AccessAbility Advisor about support available.

What do we expect from you?

We expect you to attend all agreed specialist mentoring sessions. If you cannot attend, then we ask that you give us 24 hours' notice. If you give us less than 24 hours' notice, or miss a session altogether, then that session will still count as one of your allocated sessions. If this situation happens twice in a given term, then we will review the suitability of this type of support for you at that time.

Further information:

If you require any further information please contact AccessAbility, either by phone 0300 555 0444 or email AccessAbility@exeter.ac.uk