



## **New Students Managing a Long-Term Health Condition**

For students with a long-term health condition, starting university can be both an exciting and daunting prospect. Living away from home may affect the ways you manage your condition, even if you have had it for a long time. We advise discussing support with the AccessAbility Team before your arrival to make sure that appropriate support is in place for you, and to give you the opportunity to explore some of the ways that being at university may differ from your experiences at sixth-form or college.

If you have declared your health condition on your UCAS form, Wellbeing Services will write to you and request that you fill in an online form and provide some supporting evidence. You can find further details of this here:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/prospectivestudents/>

Once we have received your form and medical evidence, we will email you to discuss next steps such as inviting you to book an AccessAbility appointment.

Here are some areas you may wish to consider before you have an AccessAbility appointment, and which we may discuss with you:

### **Preparing for University**

Although your school or sixth form may have been aware of your health condition and helped you to manage it, university life can be quite different. There is more emphasis on you to manage your condition and you may be taught by a large team of academic staff that will not all get to know you as well as your teachers did at school. Being further away from your family home may create some anxiety about what to do in an emergency. Talking to the AccessAbility Team will help you to plan for this.

#### Planning with your Current Team

We also recommend that you discuss your move to university with your current medical team. They may have useful advice and can help you to plan for changes to your routine and lifestyle.

#### Personal Care

The University of Exeter do not provide personal care support nor facilitate the monitoring of medical conditions. We therefore advise that you contact your doctor or care coordinator in the first instance for further information. The University cannot be responsible for any medical equipment or the maintenance of such equipment used on University premises.

#### MedicAlert Jewellery

We recommend that you consider wearing MedicAlert jewellery if there is a possibility of you becoming seriously unwell and needing medical assistance. This would alert the emergency services to crucial information about your condition. You can find more information about this system here:

<https://www.medicalert.org.uk/>

#### Consent to liaise

In some circumstances, students wish us to liaise directly with family members or services external to the University. AccessAbility will only discuss your support directly with you unless we receive your written consent to liaise. To find our consent form, and for more information on our



confidentiality policy and the exceptions to this, please visit our website:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/about/policies/>

## **Accommodation**

### Adjustments

AccessAbility can liaise with the Accommodation Team to support any specific accommodation requirements that you have because of your health condition. For example, you may need an en-suite room because of your health condition, or the location of your accommodation may be important due to fatigue or mobility considerations. Sometimes we can request a private fridge for your room if you need to keep medication cold or experience food allergies. Please be aware that we may ask you for medical evidence to support your requests. We will ask you for details of any accommodation adjustments you require on our prospective student online form. It is important to let us know of any adaptations to accommodation that you may require as early as possible.

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/residences/accessiblerooms/>

### Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

Having a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan means that in the unlikely event of an emergency, such as a fire, at your accommodation, your room would be checked by staff to ensure that you have been able to leave the building. This may be relevant if your health condition can, for example, affect your mobility or is unpredictable and may cause you to become unwell without warning.

## **Living with others**

### Talking to Flatmates about your Condition

It may be helpful to talk to your new flatmates about a health condition, but this is your choice. Although flatmates can be supportive, the University cannot ask students to play a role in managing another student's care. This can be tricky in situations where your health may be affected by others, for example, students with food allergies may find the prospect of sharing a kitchen alarming. We recommend raising any concerns with AccessAbility so that we can talk through options that are appropriate for you, this might include any known triggers that can cause you to become unwell.

### Residence Life

Our Residence Life Teams provide support to students living in University accommodation. This can involve welfare visits to students, a friendly chat or helping to resolve any issues between flatmates or neighbours.

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/accommodation/residences/rlt/>

## **Support in an emergency**

### Relying on flatmates for support

The University cannot ask students to play a role in managing another student's care and does not recommend relying on other students or flatmates for medical assistance, though they may wish to be supportive. Therefore, we recommend that you discuss planning for a medical emergency with your current medical team, and where appropriate, consider equipment such as safety alarms or monitors which would alert a nominated person, such as a parent, that you need assistance. Your medical team may be able to recommend suitable equipment.



## Estate Patrol

Estate Patrol are the University's security team and are on duty 24 hours a day and 365 days a year. Although we would always recommend calling the emergency services in a medical emergency, Estate Patrol will respond to calls when a student feels unsafe or at risk.

<https://www.exeter.ac.uk/campusservices/facilitiesoperations/estatepatrol/>

## **Accessing medical services in Exeter**

### Registering with a Medical Practice

When you arrive at University, we would encourage you to register with a medical practice. Many students choose to register with the Student Health Centre on campus. Please see their website for further information and details of how to register: <https://www.exeterstudenthealthcentre.co.uk/>

### Prescriptions

The Student Health Centre offers an online prescription service and are linked with a local pharmacy which means that medication can be delivered to the practice for collection.

## **Setting up Support at University**

### Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

During an appointment with an AccessAbility Advisor, we may set up an ILP for you, with your permission. This is a document that is shared with key members of staff within the University such as academic staff who are teaching you. We can include any teaching or exam adjustments such as rest breaks or extra time, and convey information about how your condition affects you, if wish us to.

### Wellbeing Services

Wellbeing Services includes AccessAbility, the Mental Health Team and Psychological Therapies. For more information about the different services available, please visit our website:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/>

## **Pastoral Support**

### Personal Tutors

Your tutor is your key academic point of contact at the university who you can talk to about your academic, personal and professional development. They will contact you at the beginning of your studies to introduce themselves and make an appointment to meet you. For more about the role of the personal tutor, please visit the website:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/students/personaltutoring/>

### The Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy are here to listen to students of all faiths and none. The Chaplains provide a safe space to talk, and offer discreet and confidential listening:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/chaplaincy/about/>



## **Peer Support**

### Fatigue Group

AccessAbility run a group for students who experience fatigue that is attended by students who have a broad range of conditions. The aims of the group are to give students opportunities to meet other people who have similar conditions, to overcome the isolation that living with a long-term health condition can cause, and for students to be able to share tips and advice. For more information about the group please visit our website:

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/support/groupsandcourses/>

### Epilepsy Coffee and Chat Group

This is a coffee and chat group for students and staff of Exeter University providing a caring, supportive and educational environment for people to share stories, coping mechanisms and maybe even research proposals.

<https://www.epilepsy.org.uk/near-me/exeter-exeter-university-coffee-and-chat>

### Mind Over Natter Talks

'Mind Over Natter' wellbeing talks, organised by Student Communications, with help from the Wellbeing Team and Students' Guild and Students' Union. Each short talk aims to provide quick tips and pointers which we hope all students and staff can take away and use in their own life to help them with their wellbeing.

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/natter/>

## **Other Support**

### Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA)

If you are a 'home' student, we recommend that you consider applying for DSA which is funding provided by the government for students with disabilities, including long-term health conditions and specific learning difficulties. You can find more information here: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas>

### Advice Unit

The University of Exeter's Students' Guild run an Advice Unit which offers impartial advice on a wide range of topics including welfare, accommodation, finance and academic. For more information, please visit their website:

<https://www.exeterguild.org/advice/>

### Local and National Support Services

<http://www.exeter.ac.uk/wellbeing/support/localandnationalservices/#a0>

## **Contacting AccessAbility**

- email [accessability@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:accessability@exeter.ac.uk)
- Alternatively, phone our Admin Team on 01392 723880