Tips for UCD Students- Dyspraxia/DCD

Managing third level effectively with any disability involves the use of a number of available services and tools. It is also vital that each individual student **takes responsibility for their own academic career at UCD**.

The aim of the UCD Access & Lifelong Learning (ALL) is to allow all students receiving Disability Support to **become independent learners** so they can develop the skills expected of successful graduates to bring into the workplace. The following guidelines are designed to help you to reach that goal.

Communication

- UCD encourages any student with dyspraxia/DCD to **communicate with UCD ALL** in order to receive the necessary supports to manage your student role.
- You will be required to provide appropriate [Evidence of Disability](#) and **attend a Needs Assessment**, where the appropriate classroom and exam accommodations will be discussed.
- After completing the Needs Assessment, you will be provided with a **Certificate of Disability Support** which outlines the supports you are availing of in UCD. You are encouraged to **send this Certificate to your Module Coordinators/lecturers/tutors** to inform them about necessary classroom supports and to request exam accommodation for in-trimester exams, in-class tests or locally arranged exams.
- You have the option to put '**Dyspraxia/DCD Awareness'** on your certificate as a means of disclosing to module coordinators/lecturers if you would find this helpful.

Exam Accommodations

- The **exam supports available for end-of-trimester exams** will be discussed within the Needs Assessment (you may still use exam supports for **in-trimester exams but must request them from Module Coordinators directly**).
- These supports are based on **national guidelines**. Hence, certain supports may not be appropriate for everyone with dyspraxia/DCD. Examples of exam supports include:

10 minutes extra time per hour	Alternative exam venue	Use of a computer

Assistive Technology

- Assistive Technology is **software and/or devices that can help students manage their day-to-day tasks** in UCD. Assistive Technology is usually discussed at the Needs Assessment.

Example Assistive Technology:

Technology	Description
Recording Tools	**Audio Notetaker** – computer software which allows you to take notes and record audio in the same place. You can colour code material and upload PowerPoint slides.
Mind Mapping software	A mind map is a visual representation of ideas. This software can help you to organise ideas in a useful way and to create notes following lectures or readings. It can also be used when planning essays. The **Coggle** software is a good example.
Voice Recognition / Dictation Software	Software which can be used to dictate essays or assignments. As you speak, text appears on the screen. This can also be used with a handheld Dictaphone. Dictation features can be found in both **Google Docs** and **Microsoft Word**.
Learn to Type Software	A programme to help improve your typing skills. This software helps to improve speed and keyboard positioning.
Download Notes in an Alternative Format	You may wish to study your notes using an alternative format (e.g. PDF, audio file, HTML etc). You can download files from BrightSpace in an alternative format using **BrightSpace Ally**. You can also convert files into an alternative format using **SensusAccess**.

'ALL Student Supports' Brightspace Module

- UCD ALL hosts a range of resources on the Brightspace module called **'ALL Student Supports'**. This module is available to all UCD Students. Resources include **interactive academic skills & wellbeing workshops** as well as **resources for managing online learning.**
- UCD ALL hosts **live free Academic Skills & Wellbeing workshops** each trimester to help students learn the necessary skills to succeed in UCD. More information can be found on our website.
- Examples of workshop topics include note-taking, stress management, avoiding procrastination, time management, digital skills, group work, mind mapping, writing & researching and self-care.

Transition to College

- Studying at third-level is less structured and more self-directed, which may be different from what you are used to. Managing assignment deadlines or working in groups might be new to you.
- **Communicating with your lecturers/tutors** to gather all details about trimester assignments and exams and **using a diary/calendar** can help you to stay on top of your work.

Managing Group Work & Presentations

- Group work is an unfamiliar way of learning for many students. **Agreeing on tasks and open communication** promotes successful group projects. See UCD's tips for Surviving Group Work.
- **Practicing presentations for friends and family**, as well as **in the room you will be presenting** in can help to feel less nervous.

Doing Assignments

- Check out the UCD Writing Centre's resources for planning and writing essays.
- Ask your Module Coordinators for **feedback** or **example essays/reports/projects**.

Studying for Exams

- Experiment with **alternative ways** to remember material (e.g. the use of mnemonics, flow charts and handouts).

Tips for Organisation & Concentration

- Being in third level education demands you to stay on top of many tasks and deadlines. These tools can help you find ways to organise your time and demands so you have space to unwind and enjoy college life too! Examples include:
    - **Google Keep**- Free App and online tool to organise the small things.
    - **Pomodoro Technique**- Setting time in a structured way to keep you focussed.
    - **Online Calendars**- Free online calendars as a great way to keep organised.
- **Develop a trimester plan**: write down all of the academic tasks you have to complete for the entire trimester. Break them into smaller steps whenever possible.
- **Develop a weekly plan**: Every weekend make a realistic plan for the week ahead.

- **Develop a daily plan:** Every night make a plan for the following day. Make your plan realistic - you are more likely to get through your list which will boost your confidence and motivation.
- **Set realistic goals:** Set realistic and specific study goals before you begin each period of study e.g., number of pages, number of problems you will complete.
- **Use a reminder list:** To avoid the worry about the possibility of missing appointments, write them down on your daily calendar/academic planner/online calendar, or set a reminder/alarm in your phone. By having made a reminder, you will no longer clutter your mind with those details.

Finding your way around UCD

- Use the UCD Interactive Map to find your way around campus.

Support Services available to all UCD Students.

Service	Purpose
Writing Centre	Free 1:1 support and workshops for academic writing.
Maths Support Centre	Free 1:1 and small group support in Level 0, 1, and 2 Maths modules in any programme.
Student Counselling Service	Free and confidential service staffed by professionally qualified psychologists and counsellors to help students deal with personal issues affecting happiness, well-being, relationships, capacity to cope or learning.
Programme Office	Support for queries relating to your programme.
Student Adviser	Support for academic, social, personal or financial issues you may have during your course.

Useful Online Resources

- Managing College and Life video
- Managing Procrastination video
- Dyspraxia DCD Ireland
- Dyspraxia Foundation
- AHEAD

Please contact disability@ucd.ie at any time if you have questions!