

# Disability Resource Centre

## Study Aids and Study Strategies Assessment (Needs Assessment): A Quick Guide

### What is a Needs Assessment?

When your funding body has confirmed your eligibility for disability-related funding, e.g. Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs), they will write to you and ask you to attend a Needs Assessment. During the assessment, you will be able to discuss your study needs and appropriate equipment will be demonstrated to you. Please be assured there are no tests during the assessment.

Your assessment will be done at a Needs Assessment Centre (also known as an Access Centre) and you will need to make an appointment with them directly. After your assessment, the Needs Assessor will write a report detailing the equipment and human support required and will send it to your funding body. Your funding body will then write to you after this process and confirm what will be funded.

More information on the Needs Assessment process is available on the DRC website at: <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/disability/students/needs.html>.

### What do I need before I can make an appointment for a Needs Assessment?

Before you make an appointment you should have:

- Sent your application to your funding body, with evidence of your disability (e.g. a diagnostic assessment report or letter from your GP).
- Received a letter from your funding body asking you to attend a Needs Assessment.

### How do I make the appointment?

You can make an appointment by phone or email directly at a Needs Assessment Centre. To find a centre near your home address, follow this link: <http://www.nnac.org/students/findcentre.php>.

Alternatively there are two centres in Cambridge. Their contact details are as follows:

Cambridge ACCESS Centre  
9 Orwell House  
Cowley Road  
Cambridge CB4 0PP  
Tel: 01223 223701  
Email: [info@cambridgeaccesscentre.com](mailto:info@cambridgeaccesscentre.com)  
[www.cambridgeaccesscentre.com](http://www.cambridgeaccesscentre.com)

Anglia Assessment Centre  
HEL333  
Anglia Ruskin University  
East Road  
Cambridge CB1 1PT  
Tel: 0845 196 2378  
[www.earac.org.uk](http://www.earac.org.uk)

**NB:** The Cambridge Access Centre reserve appointments for University of Cambridge students, so when contacting them please let them know that you are studying at Cambridge and ask for a priority appointment. They will also pay taxi fares.

### **Will the Needs Assessment cost me anything?**

No. When you go for the appointment, take the funding body letter with you. Your Needs Assessor will make a copy of it and directly charge your funding body for the appointment.

### **Do I need to take anything with me to the appointment?**

You should take the following items with you for the appointment (or you may be asked to post these items to the assessment centre in advance):

- Copies of the evidence of your disability. If you have a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia, this will probably be an Educational Psychological diagnostic assessment report. If you have a medical condition, this will be a letter from your GP.
- The letter that your funding body sent to you agreeing to your appointment.
- Any pre-assessment information forms that the Needs Assessment Centre has asked you to complete and return.
- We also recommend that you take a list of things that you wish to discuss so that all of your concerns are fully covered during the assessment.

### **What will happen in the Needs Assessment interview?**

Each assessment is individual, but broadly speaking will take about two hours. The assessor will

- Discuss your profile and the difficulties you have been experiencing in accessing your course. They will then identify a range of study strategies that can help you in your academic study.
- Discuss with you a variety of assistive technology that would assist you with your study.

### **What happens after the Needs Assessment interview?**

Your Needs Assessor will write a report, referred to as a Needs Assessment Report (NAR), to your funding body with recommendations of the support you will require in your course of study.

They will send a copy to you and a copy to the University (providing you have agreed to this).

Your funding body will then send you a letter stating what they agree to fund based on the recommendations in the report. You will then be able to order your equipment and the University will set up any human support, such as mentoring or study skills sessions.

### **Is there anything that I should do?**

- Check your report and if anything is not included which you agreed at draft stage, contact the Assessment Centre.
- Keep the Needs Assessment Report in a safe place, together with your diagnostic assessment or medical evidence, as you may need these at a later date.

### **Is there anything that I should not do?**

- Don't order any equipment or arrange your own support until your funding body has agreed to it in writing.

If you have any queries, please contact the DRC via the details below or by email to [disability@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:disability@admin.cam.ac.uk).