

Note-taking Support – An Introduction

Your 'Needs Assessment' recommends that you can receive the support of a note-taker (NT). This document describes the purpose of the support and outlines how it is delivered.

What is Note-taking?

Note-taking support aims to provide you with a set of summative notes for each of your taught sessions (lectures, seminars etc) according to your note-taking request. Depending on your recommendations from your Needs Assessment Report this may be handwritten notes, electronic notes or live typed notes.

You can expect your note-taker to:

- Attend lectures, seminars, labs and other taught sessions as needed/requested
- Take accurate and appropriate notes for you to use as a reference or as reliable record to support your learning
- Be friendly and approachable to discuss your note-taking needs
- Liaise with you on priorities, format preferences and issues
- Transcribe the notes into appropriate format for individual students according to recommendations in your Needs Assessment (e.g. electronic, large print, summary notes, while meeting style or content preferences)
- Have been scheduled, this schedule will be sent to you prior to the start of teaching (provided your timetable is supplied by you in sufficient time to carry out scheduling) so you will know in advance who will be taking notes for you.

Only with prior agreement with the Support Worker Officer will they:

- Attend a lecture to take notes when you are absent
- Not make contact with you in your lectures/classes
- Take notes straight onto a laptop, or word process notes afterwards
- Wait longer than 10 minutes if you are late

To arrange note-taking support, please contact the Support Worker Team. Note-taking support is usually arranged before the start of each semester.

Key Points to Consider

- Note-takers are allocated based on availability and subject knowledge/interests.
- You must inform the support worker team with at least 4 weeks' notice (where possible) if you need to make changes to your note-taking schedule/cancel a session. You must also provide a reason. Repeated failure to attend booked sessions without sufficient notice or reason will result in suspension of support. More details regarding this can be found in the Absence Policy.
- You will be required to sign a timesheet for every support session provided, or any session cancelled with less than 4 weeks' notice. An accumulation of unsigned timesheets will result in suspension of support.
- Your note-taker may consider your note-taking session to be cancelled if you have not attended your class within 10 minutes of the beginning of your session. Please notify the Support Worker Team if you are going to be late or absent from a session.
- In normal circumstances support is only available during your University term times.
- You do not have to use all of the hours which you have been recommended in your assessment. If additional sessions are required we will, where appropriate, support requests for extra hours.
- Provided there are no funding issues, you should be able to begin accessing note-taking support at any point of an academic term. Simply contact the Support Worker Team (details below) and they will set up support with you. (Please be aware that during busy periods there may be a delay in starting your support while the support worker team look for available staff).
- If you begin note-taking support, but decide it is not helpful to you, you can withdraw from the support at any time. You can always resume note-taking support at a later point if you wish.
- If you do not want to take up note-taking support, you are not obligated to do so. You can start support now or, if you prefer, you can contact us to set up support at a later point. If you wish to do this, please do let us know.
- If you feel you are experiencing difficulties with your note-taking support, please contact the Support Worker Officer in the first instance to discuss this in order to resolve any issues and move forward with your support.
- Although you have been recommended support from the University of Leeds you can choose to use a different provider if you would prefer. If you would like to look in to

this option then please contact your assessor directly (their details should be given on your assessment of need report).

- If you have any comments or complaints regarding your support, please contact the Support Worker Team, at supportworkerteam@adm.leeds.ac.uk or 0113 343 4672. Should you wish to make a more formal complaint you could follow the University complaints procedure http://www.leeds.ac.uk/secretariat/student_complaints.html

Frequently asked questions

Will I have to pay for the note-takers myself?

Note-taking is nearly always funded by Disabled Students Allowance from Student Finance England or another funding body, such as the NHS etc. However, if you use the Note-taking Scheme and do not attend a number of lectures without good reason, we may suspend your support. This is following funding body guidelines which state that they will not fund support provided when students fail to attend sessions. It is important that you contact the support worker team as soon as possible if you know in advance that you will be unable to attend a session or as soon as possible following the session to discuss your absence.

Do I have to sit with the note-taker?

No. But it is often a good idea so you can let them know how you would like your notes to be taken.

I don't want to meet or talk with the note-taker in class

That's OK, but you do need to discuss with us how you will give feedback to the note-taker about the notes, how the notes will be passed to you, when you will sign their timesheets and so on. Please contact a member of the support worker team to discuss this.

Can I not go to my lecture and the note-taker take notes in my absence?

This will only happen when there is prior agreement with the support worker office team and they are aware that you are absent due to a disability related reason. Note-takers may leave after 10 minutes if you have not arrived and they are required to report student absences to the office. If you are absent without letting the Support Worker Team know then we may contact you to discuss it. Having a note-taker in your session does not replace the need for you to attend your sessions, or paying attention in class, if the note-taker has concerns regarding these issues they or the office team may contact you to discuss it and review your support.

I didn't have a note-taker for a session, or, why do I have a note-taker - I don't need one?

We schedule according to information from your timetables which you provide. If you have not given us clear information, then we make our best judgement. Similarly if you change

modules, or your lecture times change then you must notify the Support Worker Team as soon as possible.

The note-taker went to a different room – do I need to sign their timesheet?

We are directing note-takers using the best information available. If it is a genuine mistake, it would be great if you are prepared to sign the timesheet. This is really you accepting that the note-taker was booked on your behalf. If the note-taker made a mistake and went to a different lecture, or you told us the correct venue in good time, but we sent the note-taker to another room, then you may feel it is not appropriate. Generally things work well; occasionally either we or the student make mistakes. Please talk to us if you have concerns about signing a support workers timesheet.

I do not need a note-taker now, why do I need to sign their timesheet?

We have booked note-takers on the basis of information from you, or using our best judgment. The note-taker must be paid as they have been booked. Please sign their timesheet to say you accept they have been booked on your behalf so we can pay them and recoup the money. Please let us know of changes as soon as possible. We need to give note-takers a month's notice of cancellations once they are booked, so if work is cancelled you may be asked to sign for these sessions. However, we try to allocate new work to replace cancelled sessions, in which case the cost will not be charged to your funding body.

I have a note-taker booked for the rest of term, but I want to go on holiday.

Please give us one month's notice if possible. In any case, tell us as soon as you can, as we may be able to offer note-taking to another student instead.

I need the note-taker to help carry my bag, to return books to the library, to remind me of deadlines, to explain part of the lecture I didn't understand...

You may need support from our other staff – we employ personal assistants, specialist mentors, and disability strategy tutors. Book an appointment to see a Disability Co-ordinator to discuss your support needs. Please contact DSAS reception to arrange a meeting with a Disability Co-ordinator by phone 0113 34 33927 or by email disability@leeds.ac.uk Do not be offended if the note-taker refuses these requests.

I want my notes done differently

Tell the note-taker – they will be really pleased to have feedback and know more about your preferences.

The notes are a great help

Do tell the note-taker. Often they get no feedback - good or bad. They would like to know if they are getting it right for you.



I'm sick and will not go to my lecture today

If you will be able to attend a session or definitely do not want a note-taker, please let us know as soon as you can, so we can tell the note-taker. Your note-taker will not take notes if you do not attend (except in specific circumstances when this has been agreed with the Support Worker Team in advance). If you tell us you will be late, we aim to inform the note-taker so that they will wait for you.

If you have any further questions regarding note-taking support, please do get in touch with the Support Worker Team, at supportworkerteam@adm.leeds.ac.uk or 0113 3434672.