Student Handbook

Important Information

Please read the following information regarding your support and your personal data.

This student handbook is intended as a guide to help you navigate accessing and receiving your support.

Welcome to Onyx Support

We aim to provide you with tailored, individualised support to ensure your educational achievements and experiences are optimised. Your educational journey is a transformational process that can bring new meaning to your life. Depending on your allocated type of support, Onyx provides you with all the tools you need to succeed in your studies and to enjoy student life.

Your Support – Getting Started

You are entitled to receive the academic support outlined in your DSA2 letter (proof of funding letter). We will need a copy of this letter before your support can begin. The letter confirms the type of support you have been awarded, the agreed number of hours, and the academic year dates.

As a recipient of student support services, it is important to be aware of your funding limitations. If your allocated funding is capped and you access sessions beyond this cap or after your funding deadline, you will be liable for any additional costs incurred. Where funding is capped, we may need to contact your university to explore additional funding options on your behalf. Your consent will be required before we initiate this contact.

If you disagree with any information on your DSA2 letter, please contact your Disability Advisor or Needs Assessor as soon as possible.

Once we have received your DSA2 letter, we will allocate you a specialised support worker. Your support worker will then contact you to arrange a convenient time for your sessions to take place.

In addition to your DSA2 letter, you may choose to provide us with your Needs Assessment Report (NAR). Your Needs Assessment is a document produced by you and your Needs Assessor. It lists your support recommendations; however, it also contains sensitive personal data. For this reason, it is entirely your decision whether you provide us with this report.

If you choose not to send your Needs Assessment Report, your support will not be affected and we will still aim to provide you with the best service. However, we will need to request additional information in order to allocate a suitable support worker. This information includes your university contact details, course details, course start and end dates, current year of study, study level, full-time or part-time status, Needs Assessment centre contact details, session mode, date of birth, recommendations, and your diagnosis.

If you do choose to provide us with your Needs Assessment Report, your support will be delivered in line with the recommendations outlined in the report. Please email a copy of your Needs Assessment Report to admin@onyxstudents.com.

We aim to provide high-quality support. However, if you have any concerns regarding your allocated support worker or the service they provide, please contact us using one of the following methods:

- admin@onyxstudents.com
- 01604 713103

Your Support – Your Personal Data

We are responsible for any personal data we hold about you. During your time with Onyx Support, we will hold the following information to enable us to provide a service and meet funding body requirements:

- Name
- Address
- Contact number
- Email address
- Customer Reference Number (CRN)
- Date of birth
- Higher education institution and course information
- DSA2 proof of funding letter, including your awarded support type

Sensitive Data

Your Needs Assessment Report (should you consent to provide it) contains recommendations for your support, course details, higher education provider information, course start and end dates, and your Needs Assessor's contact details. Your Needs Assessment Report will be securely stored on your file and deleted when your support ceases, or earlier if you request its deletion. You may withdraw your consent at any time by emailing admin@onyxstudents.com.

In addition, and in line with audit requirements, you and your allocated support worker will jointly create a work plan. These work plans outline your support and are reviewed quarterly. The Department for Education requires completion of these work plans, which are used as part of the audit process. Work plans will be stored on your file and deleted after six years.

Please refer to our full Privacy Notice for further information:
https://www.onyxstudents.com/privacy-notice

Additional Information About Your Support, Queries, and Changes

Your support will not be subject-specific unless otherwise recommended and agreed in advance by your Needs Assessor and funding body.

Please let us know if there are any changes you would like to make to your support. We cannot change your academic support type or the number of hours awarded, as this must be recommended by the assessor who carried out your assessment. However, we will endeavor to tailor your support as much as possible to meet your needs.

If you feel the recommended hours outlined in your DSA2 letter are insufficient, please contact your Needs Assessor directly.

For queries about booking, cancelling, or rescheduling sessions, please contact your allocated support worker in the first instance. If your support worker is unavailable, you can contact the office team on 01604 713103 or email admin@onyxstudents.com.

For all other queries, please contact the office using the details above.

Audit and Quality Assurance

At Onyx Support, audits are carried out both internally and externally to ensure we maintain high standards. During audits, the Department for Education may request information about you and the support provided. Your personal data will only be shared with the Department for Education with your consent.

You may choose whether or not to consent to data sharing for audit purposes. Your decision will not affect your support. Consent for audit purposes allows us to share your data with auditors only and does not permit sharing with any other parties.

Timesheets

You must sign a timesheet after each session to confirm that the session took place. If support has been provided and you fail to sign the timesheet, your support may be placed on hold.

If you do not agree with the information recorded on a timesheet, please contact the office to discuss your concerns on 01604 713103 or by emailing admin@onyxstudents.com.

If you experience barriers to signing your timesheet, please discuss this with your support worker or a member of the office team.

If we do not receive a signed timesheet for more than two sessions, your support will be suspended until the sessions are signed or confirmed via email.

Cancellation Policy

If you cancel with less than 24 hours' notice, or fail to attend a session without informing your support worker, the session will be recorded as a missed session and the hours will be deducted from your allocated support hours.

If you miss two sessions within one academic term without providing a valid reason, we may temporarily suspend your support and inform your funding body.

Please provide at least 24 hours' notice when cancelling a session to avoid suspension of your support.

Feedback

The office team will regularly request feedback from you. Please support us in delivering high-quality services by sharing your views. Your feedback is valuable and supports the ongoing development of our services.

We also have an anonymous feedback portal on our website: www.onyxstudents.com. Please select "Students" from the main menu and then "Feedback Form" from the drop-down menu.

Onyx Support has a complaints policy. If you have any concerns, please download the "Compliments and Complaints" form from our website.

Alternatively, you may contact the office to request a copy. If appropriate, you may also discuss concerns directly with your support worker.

Mode and Location of Your Support

In some cases, you may choose the mode of your support sessions. Sessions may be delivered remotely or face-to-face. For face-to-face sessions, you may choose to meet at your higher education institution or at your home.

If sessions are to take place at your home or halls of residence, a risk assessment must be completed before sessions can begin. If sessions are held at your university, you will need to arrange a room booking with your institution. Please contact your university's student support team or library for room booking procedures.

If you experience difficulty booking a room, please contact Onyx on 01604 713103 or email admin@onyxstudents.com.

Social Media

If you would like to access support tips, academic advice, and updates, you can follow us on social media:

- **Instagram:** @onyxsupport
- **Facebook:** facebook.com/onyxsupport
- **TikTok:** @onyxsupport

Thank you for choosing Onyx to support you throughout your higher education journey.