

GUIDE TO STUDENT SUPPORT

The National Centre for Circus Arts is a large and lively community of staff, students, circus professionals and users from many different cultural and educational backgrounds. Adapting to university life or to a new environment can at times be challenging. There are resources available if you have questions or encounter difficulties; this guide is intended to guide you to the right people or sources of information.

Please take time to read this section of the handbook, refer to it whenever needed and make use of the support available to you. Do not hesitate to utilise these resources, even if you think it is a relatively minor issue.

Student Support on the Higher Education Course at the National Centre covers a variety of areas such as support for disabled students, academic support, student finance and health and welfare.

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SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES INCLUDING SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

The National Centre for Circus Arts welcomes disabled students. It is our aim to provide appropriate support so that all students are able to achieve their full potential. Students with a disability will be provided with advice and support from the Student Support Manager and Head of Academic Administration and Student Support. If you have a disability or specific learning difficulty we recommend you contact the Student Support Manager via Teams.

UK students with disabilities (including Specific Learning Difficulties and long-term Mental Health conditions) can apply for the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). The DSA usually provides support for students with specialist equipment necessary for your studies, including software and study skills tuition. Unlike a student loan DSA does not have to be repaid. Applications are made through your awarding body, for example Student Finance England. In order to apply for DSA the awarding body will require evidence of any impairment or disability. This may be proof from a Doctor or by an Educational Psychologist. If you require evidence from an Educational Psychologist the National Centre for Circus Arts can arrange this for you once you have begun your course.

If you wish to discuss any aspect of the kind of support we can offer, for example how the Support through Studies policy works or how to apply for the Disabled Students Allowance, please contact the Student Support Manager Antigone Exton-White via Chat in Teams or via email at antigone@nationalcircus.org.uk

PERSONAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Various staff here at the National Centre can help in different ways if you need academic support. If you need help with the content of modules or assessment work, in the first instance you can speak directly to the teacher of that module. You can also seek support from the Student Support Manager or Head of Academic Administration and Student Support. If you make an appointment, you can prepare for the meeting and discuss your concerns away from class.

If you require support for essays and academic work, please see the Student Support Manager who can arrange additional support for you.

The Head of Academic Administration and Student Support, Student Support Manager and Year Managers can all help you with understanding higher education academic learning and can also offer overall guidance or advice about the course or your marks.

GUIDANCE FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

National Centre for Circus Arts recognise the challenges faced by students entering Higher Education and that following the demanding training of a specialist training education can place great demands on a student's physical and emotional energy. With this in mind, they undertake ongoing work to promote mental health and wellbeing.

COUNSELLING

The National Centre for Circus Arts provides counselling services for students. This is done in a variety of ways but commonly through the use of the Problem Shared which students are able to register with once they have been through an initial assessment with the Student Support Manager

The National Centre can pay for some student counselling sessions (maximum of 6); after this, extra sessions can be paid for by the student.

Students can arrange counselling via the Student Support Team

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE - THE HARDSHIP FUND & PERFORMANCE BURSARY AND THE EQUIPMENT LOAN SCHEME

The Hardship Fund is provided by the Leverhulme Trust and is available to students in cases of severe financial need. Applications can be made throughout the academic year through the Hardship Fund form available on Teams. Applicants must be able to demonstrate severe financial difficulties unconnected with tuition fee requirements.

The Equipment Loan Scheme Many students wish to own the equipment for their circus discipline. The National Centre for Circus Arts recognises that this equipment can be expensive and can greatly vary in price. In order for all students to access the correct equipment we will support their purchase through a loan and repayment system.

Access to the Scheme is only available by prior approval of the Head of Academic Administration and Student Support. There are two options available:

Option 1: Following approval by the Head of Academic Administration and Student Support, the student will request an invoice addressed to the National Centre for Circus Arts and the National Centre will purchase and receive the equipment on behalf of the student. In this case the student would have to agree and sign an equipment repayment contract (this must also be agreed and signed by the Head of Finance). Whilst the student will be able to use the equipment while they are paying back the loan, the equipment will remain the property of the National Centre until the loan has been fully repaid.

Option 2: Following approval by the Head of Academic Administration and Student Support, the student will order and pay for the piece of equipment themselves. Provided the student can produce a receipt of purchase, the National Centre for Circus Arts will reimburse the student for the cost of the equipment and the student can then pay the National Centre back in a more convenient way with an equipment reimbursement contract (this must also be agreed and signed by the Head of Finance). The equipment will remain the property of the National Centre until the loan has been fully repaid.

Please Note:

Students should never purchase a piece of equipment in the hope of having access to the scheme without having received confirmation to proceed from the Head of Academic Administration and Student Support.

LEARNER SUPPORT

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE IS NOT ENGLISH

The Higher Education Administration Team organises support for those for whom English is not their first language. Any new student for who English is a second language and who has not had previous experience of academic writing at degree level will be considered for English Language Support sessions. In some cases students may be required to join English Language Support classes at the discretion of the Higher Education team if it is evident from written work that a student is struggling.

LEARNING SUPPORT AGREEMENTS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES/SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES (E.G. DYSLEXIA)

All students who are identified as having a disability will be invited to meet with the Head of Academic Administration and Student Support and to confirm a Learning Support Agreement (LSA) the Support Through Studies Procedure. This is a written agreement between the student and the school which describes the type of support which is required and the way in which it will be provided. It is a practical and positive way of informing those teaching and working with students of these decisions. With the student's permission copies are circulated to the members of staff named on the agreement. There will be termly appointments to review this plan and make adjustments if needed, but students can also request an appointment to review the plan if they do not feel the support needed is being carried out, or is not enough for their needs.

OTHER INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

Occasionally the School may suggest a specific learning arrangement for an individual student; in this circumstance it is likely the student will be offered a Support through Study Plan It would set out a series of arrangements developed to ensure that the student's particular needs are supported in his or her circumstances. In may be used in cases of injury, illness, or at times of personal difficulty.

In all cases, the Head of Academic Administration and Student Support, the Student Support Manager and relevant Year Manager will meet with the student to draw up the Support Through Study Plan. With the student's permission, relevant members of staff will be informed of the decisions made at this meeting, so that the relevant adjustments may be made.

INJURY MANAGEMENT

The Higher Education team will support you through any injury which affects you during your enrolment period. At the National Centre for Circus Arts we aim to prioritise injury prevention and education over a clinical treatment service for injuries.

PHYSIOTHERAPY

As physio treatment is at times required in order to allow a student to progress with their training, the National Centre has established a relationship with an external Physiotherapist, we can access treatment and diagnostic services for cases that need/would benefit from specialised treatment. The collaboration is designed to support and compliment the work the degree team is doing with the students and teachers.

If staff think that an injury needs immediate attention the student must go to A&E.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they attend any physio appointments booked for them – if they miss an appointment without evidence of significant circumstances which prevented them from attending, a student will need to pay for any alternative appointment.

HEALTH INSURANCE

Due to the nature of the timescale involved in obtaining treatments and further investigation (x-rays, scans etc) on the National Health Service (NHS), the National Centre highly recommends that all students take out private medical insurance. The referral period under the NHS can be an extremely slow process, which ultimately hinders recovery and the return to full fitness/ training. The procurement of Health Insurance is the responsibility of the student.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

Should your injury be a result of an accident at the National Centre, you must inform a member of staff who will take the appropriate action, including contacting the duty First Aider to attend.

PREVENTING INJURY AND MAINTAINING FITNESS

It is vital that you do what you can to maintain fitness and prevent injury. Some elements of modules in your course of study are designed to help with this and to develop your understanding of the links between nutrition, lifestyle and physical health. Students receive specific classes on injury prevention relevant to their chosen discipline and as the course progresses you will increase your understanding of what best suits you personally and you will be encouraged to develop your own Conditioning Plan.

WARMING UP AND COOLING DOWN

Warming up and cooling down (also called warming down) for all practical activities is an essential part of the course, and students receive specific guidance on this during their first year on the course. New students sometimes experience some physical discomfort because

they are not used to the intensity and amount of training. It is important that you try to maintain your fitness during vacation periods to minimise this type of physical discomfort upon your return after a break. Correct warming up and cooling down will help to prevent problems.