

# Guidance on Personal Care Support in England

## What is personal care support?

Personal care support refers to any practical help or assistance you require for daily life, regardless of student status – in other words, non-study related activities or tasks such as:

- getting up, going to bed, or adjusting position overnight (and during the day)
- washing/bathing and getting dressed
- help with eating or medication
- using the toilet
- domestic activities – cleaning your living area, shopping, preparing meals
- leisure or extra-curricular activities
- driving or helping you to get around outside study hours

## Funding and arranging personal care support

### UK students

The local authority in your home town where you are 'ordinarily resident' remains responsible for assessing and paying for any social or personal care support whilst you are living away from home at university. They can assist with completing applications for financial support through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) or for Personal Independence Payments (PIP), which can help with some of the extra (non-study related) costs caused by a disability. Further information about state benefits assistance is available from [www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/BeginnersGuideToBenefits/index.htm](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/BeginnersGuideToBenefits/index.htm), and from Disability Rights UK [www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/benefits-information-disabled-people-and-advice-workers](http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/how-we-can-help/benefits-information-disabled-people-and-advice-workers).

### International students

International students are not eligible for financial assistance with care costs from the British government, and the University is unable to fund personal care support. Therefore it is essential that you have included these additional costs in your budget, and that you have sufficient funding in place for the duration of your course before you come to the UK.

You will need to organise an individual assessment of your care needs in the UK prior to getting a full quote as costs can vary considerably, ranging from £40,000 to more than £100,000 over a 10 month period, depending on what type and level of support you require. You should also check that appropriate provision within your budget is available locally in Oxford as costs will vary depending on need and location. Variables include the need for: 24-hour care or more intermittent support at particular times of the day; waking or sleeping support overnight; one or two carers for manual lifting/hoist operation\*; accommodation for overnight carer(s); any mobility equipment you are able to bring from home; the duration over which support is needed (ie the length of the course); whether you will be travelling home or to other destinations during vacations; and whether local agencies have appropriately trained carers.

*\*UK care costs and regulations might be different from what you are used to at home, and can mean that more than one carer is needed for manual lifting or the operation of a hoist.*

Some students might want to bring their own carer with them from their home country. The Student Immigration Team can guide you to information and offer general advice about any relevant immigration routes: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa). The Home Office have information on their website for domestic workers which includes carers: [www.gov.uk/domestic-workers-in-a-private-household-visa/overview](http://www.gov.uk/domestic-workers-in-a-private-household-visa/overview).

International students should establish whether any prescription medication they need is licensed for use in the UK, and if not, how they will get it sent to them. Similarly, they should consider whether it is more cost effective to ship specialist medical equipment rather than purchase it in the UK.

There are also specific things to consider if you want to bring a guide/assistance dog with you:

<https://www.guidedogs.org.uk/services/guide-dog-services/assistance-dog-travel-guide/advice-on-entering-the-uk-for-international-visitors#.WSfzjUOUXoo>.

Because it might be difficult for you to visit Oxford before your course starts, it is important that you contact the Disability Advisory Service as soon as possible so we can find out more about what you might need, and so we can help you think about what arrangements you will need to make.

## Other information

The Disability Advisory Service can advise on funds available to help students access specific disability-related study support, such as: specialist study equipment and assistive software; orientation support, a practical study/library assistant; a notetaker for lectures; or a specialist mentor for students with mental health difficulties or Autism Spectrum Conditions.

The University does not provide support or funding for personal care or medical treatment (including medication, medical supplies or mobility equipment) because these things would be required even if you were not a student so they are not related to your studies. Travel costs to receive medical treatment are also your responsibility. There is information about registering with a local doctor and about National Health Services (NHS) on the University website: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/health](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/health).

The University offers a range of support, information and advice to help you manage your finances during your studies at Oxford: [www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding](http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding).

For graduate students, there are over 1,000 full scholarships available which cover course and college fees and provide a contribution towards living costs (set at the UK research council stipend level of £14,533 for 2017-18 entry). More information is available from [www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/graduate-scholarships/introducing-oxford-scholarships](http://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/fees-and-funding/graduate-scholarships/introducing-oxford-scholarships). For undergraduate students, there are generous annual bursaries of up to £3,700 in 2017-18, which are available to Home/EU students from lower-income households to help with living costs. More information including eligibility criteria are available from <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/fees-and-funding/oxford-support?wssl=1>.

It can take a long time (up to twelve months) to make arrangements for personal care so it is important that you start to make plans as soon as you have received your offer (even if it is conditional). If your personal carer will require their own accommodation, you should also explore whether your college can provide this and what the associated costs might be.

## Contact the Disability Advisory Service

Let the Disability Advisory Service know as soon as possible if you will need personal care support at the University. We will involve your college and department in any discussions with you about the nature of the course and the environment in which you will be studying and living so that any external agency you engage to deliver your care can accurately assess your requirements. We cannot recommend or engage a provider on your behalf, but we can make suggestions about how you could go about finding an external agency to deliver this support.