

Handbook for Students Availing of Supports

*Transitioning from
School to College*





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Introduction

Congratulations on being accepted onto your chosen course at Ballyfermot College of Further Education.

At this stage, you have:

- ✓ Successfully linked in with Áine Nally, the Student Support Officer at your College, or completed initial registration with the Student Support Service (SSS).
- ✓ Completed a Needs Assessment (NA) with the Student Support Officer (SSO).
- ✓ Agreed on specific supports you require for the upcoming academic year.

If you are going to have a support person working with you in college this year, the first part of this leaflet will be particularly useful for you. It contains an explanation on what supports are like in college, in comparison to when you were in school, descriptions on the types of support staff working in the college and guidelines to help you manage this new working relationship.

If you are not going to have a support person with you this year, skip to page 7 – here you will find information on learning support, exam accommodations and technology.

Supports in School & College - *Differences?*

It may seem like supports in school and college are similar, however, there are differences. Most of the support staff have different titles and their roles can vary also.


You are also different now - you are not a school pupil anymore, you are a college student, and with this comes certain freedoms and responsibilities. Your support needs, and how you wish to be supported, may have changed.





***Remember! - Be proactive in how you engage with your supports while in college.**



School

Support Staff in school:

-  Special Need Assistant (SNA)

-  Nurse
-  Resource Teacher
-  Attended Special School (e.g. School for the Deaf)
-  Taxi Driver






SNA working in a school:


SNAs are used to working with school-age children.

You may have had the same SNA for one or many years. Your SNA would have become very familiar with you and your needs over the years.

College

Support Staff in College:

-  Educational Support Worker (ESW)
-  Note taker (NT)
-  Personal Assistant (PA)
-  Learning Support Tutor
-  Sign Language Interpreter (SLI)

-  Taxi Driver

ESW working in a college:

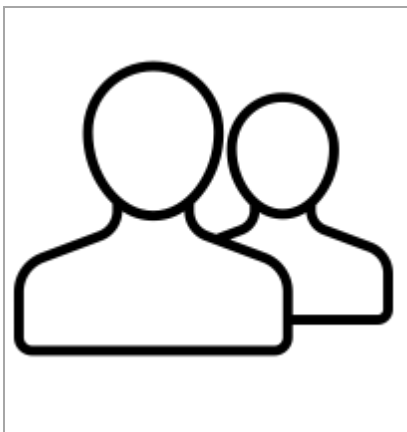
ESWs work with students that are usually 18+.

You may be working with different ESW's during your college week. While we try to ensure that you are dealing with as few support staff as possible, we cannot always guarantee this or your request to work with certain support staff. You may not spend as much time with your ESW as you did with an SNA in school and therefore, the relationship may be different.

Support Staff in College – *Types and Roles*

Support Staff are employed to assist you in whatever specific way you need support. You should be proactive and discuss with your support person how you would like and not like to be supported in college.

Educational Support Worker (ESW)



ESWs provides individual assistance to students to help them fulfil their academic potential. This can involve notetaking, help with technology and learning assistance. ESWs can also provide assistance around the college and other learning setting with e.g. mobility, orientation, carrying personal belongings and at meal times.

Note taker (NT)



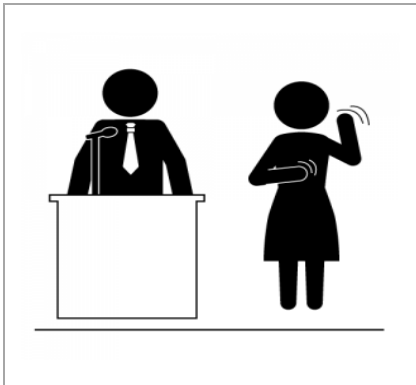
The role of a Note Taker is to take notes for the students in a classroom or other learning setting. Students will be provided with notes after the class in a format that has been agreed e.g. via email.

Personal Assistant (PA)



The role of a Personal Assistant (PA) is to assist with a variety of tasks such as personal care needs or using technology, as directed by the student. A PA may also carry out the tasks of a Note Taker or ESW.

Sign Language Interpreter (SLI)



The SLI is in the classroom to ensure equal access to information for the Deaf student. The SLI facilitates communication between Irish Sign Language (ISL) and English. This enables the Deaf student to participate equally in all learning settings.

Taxi



The role of a taxi driver is to bring the student from home to college and back. Any changes to this arrangement must be agreed by the SSO beforehand.

Working with your Support Person - *Guidelines*



Making Contact with your Support Person:

Have a chat with your support person, and come to an agreement on the best way to make contact with them. If your support person gives you their email address or mobile phone number, only contact them during college hours (unless otherwise agreed). NOTE - It is always the students' responsibility to let their support person know, in advance, if they won't be in class. Continuing failure to do so may result in supports being withdrawn.



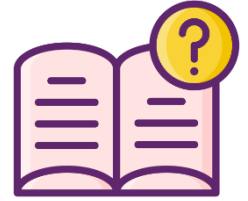
Boundaries - Respect & Consideration for your Support Person:

Support Staff are employed to fulfil a certain professional role in the college. It is important to remember this, and to treat your support person with respect and consideration, as you would a college staff member.



Communicating your Queries or Concerns:

It is good practice to communicate directly with your support person for general everyday matters relating to the student/support working relationship. Contact the Student Support Officer if you have a query or concern that cannot be dealt with directly with your support person.



Learning Support

Learning Support tutors provide you with additional help throughout the academic year. Learning Support sessions are conducted as one-to-one or group classes, depending on your need and availability of resources. Initial commencement of sessions is subject to student eligibility, funding approval, availability of teachers and demand on the service.

Learning Support Sessions are generally:

- Up to 1 hour in duration
- 1 session per week (speak to SSO if additional time is required)
- Not subject specific – focus more on skills such as time management, prioritising workload, reading and breaking down assignment briefs for understanding, general assignment layout guidelines, referencing, spelling and grammar etc.
- Facilitated during a free period in your weekly schedule

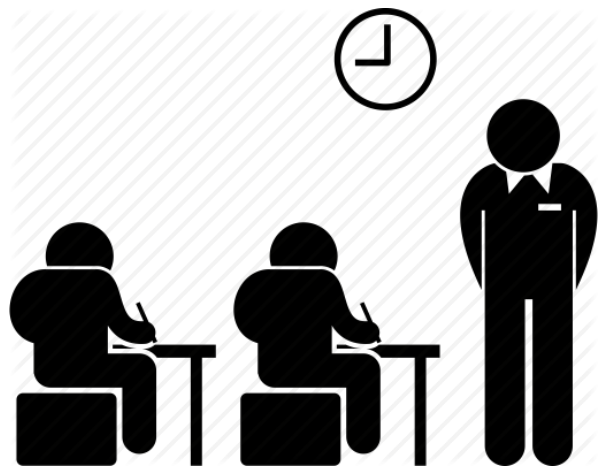
***Remember! - If you secure a weekly Learning Support slot, it is important that you attend. If your circumstances change, and you do not need the support anymore, please let your Learning Support Tutor know so that the slot can be given to another student. If you miss classes regularly, without making your Learning Support Tutor aware in advance, your slot may be given to another student.**

Exam Accommodations

Exam accommodations are intended to remove the impact of your specific difficulty. This ensures you can perform to your full potential and are not given any advantage. During your Needs Assessment (NA) with the SSO, exam accommodations will be discussed. You must apply for and qualify for exam accommodations.

The type of exam accommodations are:

- Alternative Format
- Assistive Technology
- Extra Time
- ISL Interpreter
- Use of a Laptop/PC
- Rest Breaks
- Reader
- Scribe
- Separate Centre
- Spelling & Grammar Wavier
- Other



***Remember! - The NA will be at the start of the year. If your exam accommodation needs change before end of year exams, contact the SSO with your changed request.**

Technology



During the Needs Assessment, the SSO will assess if you qualify for and need any technologies to assist you with your studies. The technologies we provide are to help, support and enhance education.

The types of technologies we can supply are:

- Laptops
- Assistive Technology
- Software
- Accessories

It is important that you accept full responsibility for any technologies that are provided to you while at college

***Remember! - Any technologies provided are the property of the CDETBCollege and must be returned at the end of the academic year.**




Summary

- ✦ You are a **college student** now, not a school pupil.
- ✦ **Support** in college may **differ** to support in school.
- ✦ It is **your responsibility** to link in with the Support Service, and avail of supports offered. **Be proactive!**
- ✦ Higher supports in college include: **ESW, NT, PA, SLI, and Taxi.**
- ✦ Only **contact** your **support person** during **college hours.**
- ✦ **Be respectful** to your support person, and **maintain appropriate working relationship** at all times.
- ✦ **Contact the SSO** if you have any **queries or concerns** relating to support.
- ✦ Be sure to **attend all support classes** assigned to you. **If your needs change** and you no longer want to avail of this support, please **let the SSO know.**
- ✦ Don't forget to **apply for exam accommodations through the SSO.**
- ✦ **Highlight** any **technology requirements** you have **with the SSO during** your initial **Needs Assessment**

Contact Us

If you have any queries or concerns relating to any information contained in this booklet, please contact the Student Support Officer in your college:

SSO: Áine Nally

 087 4067762

@ aine.nally@nln.ie

List of Acronyms

ESW Educational Support Worker

ISL Irish Sign Language

LS Learning Support

NA Needs Assessment

NT Note Taker

PA Personal Assistant

SLI Sign Language Interpreter

SSO Student Support Officer

SSS Student Support Service