**Students with Disabilities**

The Student Finance & Welfare Advisory Service has produced some basic guidance below on your eligibility for benefits if you are a disabled student. However, the benefit system is very complex so if you would like further information or if you have any specific questions or worries, you may want to book an appointment to see a Student Finance & Welfare Adviser to discuss your specific circumstances.

**You have a duty to inform the Benefits Agency of any relevant changes in your circumstances, such as becoming a full-time student and becoming eligible for student support.**

Some sick or disabled full-time students will still be able to claim certain benefits or tax credits. If you have a disability or are sick and have been assessed as having a reduced capacity for work, and you are in receipt of state benefits, it is very important to check your eligibility. Full-time student status and entitlement to certain elements of student support funding, such as the student loan, may affect your benefits.

If you are a full-time student and receive benefits specifically related to your disability or reduced capacity to work, the benefit authorities may feel there has been a relevant change in your circumstances and may reassess your claim for benefits.

Changes to the benefits system in relation to benefits awarded to people assessed as having a reduced capacity for work took place in September 2008. These changes further restrict the categories of full-time students that can claim benefits on this basis.

Even if you are a full-time student who remains eligible for certain income-based benefits, such as Income Support, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit because of your reduced capacity for work, entitlement to certain elements of student funding will reduce the amount of benefit you can receive.

Please note that the law states that where a person is a full-time student, the Benefits Agency must assume that they are in receipt of a student loan **even if they are not** and the loan must be assessed as income. However, you may be entitled to Income Support or income related Employment and Support Allowance and increased Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit, over the summer period.

**Useful contacts:**

**Jobcentre Plus 0800 055 6688**

**Disability Benefits Helpline 08457 123 456**

**Student Finance & Welfare Advisory Service 029 2041 6170 or 6333**