

# Handbook for Students

## Availing of Supports





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# Introduction

Congratulations on being accepted onto your chosen course.

At this stage, you have:

- ✓ Successfully linked in with Angela Flynn, 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.

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


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## 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/Assistant  
Psychologist (AP)

 Sign Language Interpreter (SLI)

 Taxi Driver

### ESW working in a college:

ESWs work with students that are usually 18+.

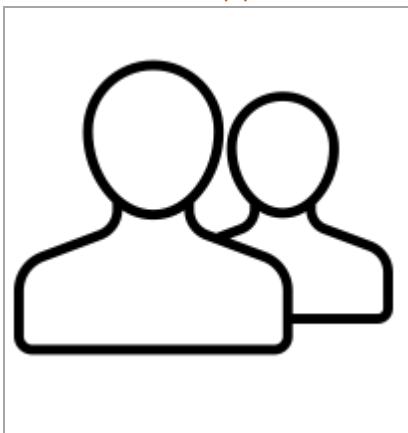
You may be working with different ESW's during your college week. While we try to ensure that you are dealing with as few support staff as possible, we cannot always guarantee this or your request to work with certain support staff. You may not spend as much time with your ESW as you did with an SNA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

### Note taker (NT)



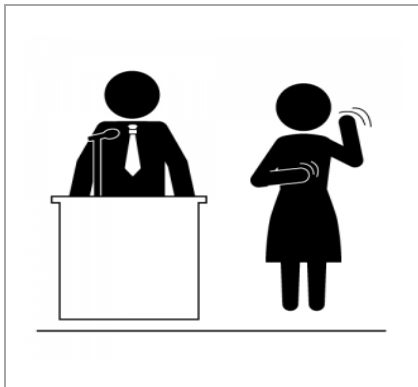
The role of a Note Taker is to take notes for the students in a classroom or other learning setting. Students will be provided with notes after the class in a format that has been agreed e.g. via email.

### 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 equal participation in all learning settings.

### Taxi



The role of the 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.





# Assistant Psychologist Support

Assistant Psychologist (AP) provide 1:1 skills-based learning support sessions.

These sessions will support student's overall college journey.

Sessions will focus on:

- **Study Skills:** Essay Writing - Memory Techniques - Note-Taking - Presenting
- **Organisational Skills:** Setting Goals - Timetabling - Meeting Deadlines
- **Social Skills:** Transition to 3rd Level – Communication - Understanding Social Cue
- **Wellbeing Skills:** Self-Care - Positive Mindset - Stress Management

Initial commencement of sessions is subject to student eligibility, availability of staff and demand on the service.

AP Learning Support Sessions are generally:

- Up to 1 hour in duration
- 1 session per week (speak to SSO if additional time is required)
- Facilitated during a free period in your weekly schedule

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**\*Remember! - If you secure a weekly AP support session, it is important that you attend, if you are unable to attend please let the AP know.**

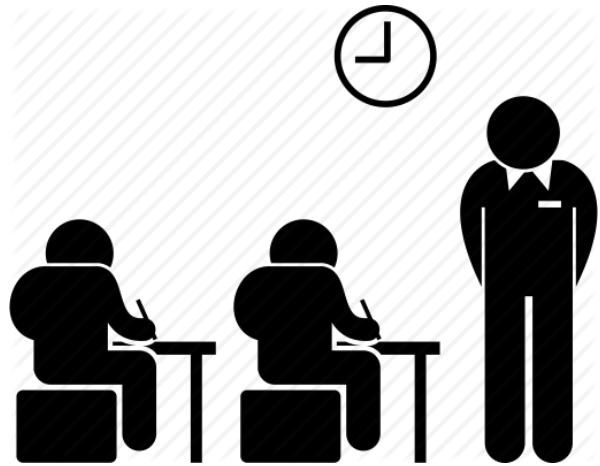
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# Exam Accommodations

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 types 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



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

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# 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

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

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## 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:** Angela Flynn

 086 022 9342

**Email:** [angela.flynn@nln.ie](mailto:angela.flynn@nln.ie)

## List of Acronyms

ESW	Educational Support Worker
ISL	Irish Sign Language
SLI	Sign Language Interpreter
LS	Learning Support
AP	Assistant Psychologist
NA	Needs Assessment
NT	Note Taker
PA	Personal Assistant
SSO	Student Support Officer
SSS	Student Support Service