

What is a Disability Liaison Officer and how can they help me?

All unis have staff who are especially there to help students with disability. These uni staff are known by a few different titles like Disability Advisers, Disability Consultants, Disability Coordinators, Equity Officers or Case Managers. At 'Get Ready for Uni' we call them 'Disability Liaison Officers' or DLOs.

The DLO is one of the most important contacts you can make at any of the unis you are considering before you make your uni decisions and definitely before you start your classes!

We answer your questions about DLOs like what is a DLO? why do I need to get in touch with a DLO? what can a DLO do for me? when should I call a DLO? what questions could I ask a DLO?

You can ask DLOs about:

- DLOs are uni staff dedicated to arranging practical assistance that students with disability need to complete their uni course.
- DLOs work with students with disability all day everyday and know a lot about life at uni with a disability.
- The information you tell a DLO is confidential unless you give them permission to pass on the information to other uni staff or other relevant people.

What can a DLO do for me?

- A DLO is the main person who can tell you about the services and facilities helpful to students with disability at that uni. They can also put you in touch with other staff at the uni who can help answer your questions about courses and life at uni.
- A DLO can help you work out what practical arrangements you may need and what is available at the uni of your choice.
- A DLO can give you information about the steps to take and the documentation you will need to get help from that unis disability services.

Other things that a DLO might be able to help with

A DLO may be able to help with these types of things:

- What documentation will be required for alternative assessments, including exam provisions

- Any issues you should consider before you nominate your course preferences
- Academic/teaching staff who may be able to assist you
- Assistance during enrolment (if you need it)
- A personal orientation to help you to get to know the campus before you start
- General orientation programs available, e.g. academic study skills, social clubs, campus tours, and opportunities to meet other students and
- Annual Tertiary Taste programs (where prospective students get to try a day at uni) for students with disability.

What questions could I ask a DLO?

- What facilities are available to support students with my type of disability and where are they on-campus (e.g.: a Chill-out Room; Computer Lab with Assistive Technology available; hearing loops in all lecture theatres, lifts, etc)
- What documentation will be required for alternative assessments, including exam provisions?
- What issues should I consider before I nominate my course preferences?
- Which Academic/teaching staff would be available to help me with information about the course/s I am considering?
- What assistance can I get during enrolment (if you need it)?
- Is there any opportunity to get a personal orientation to help me get to know the campus before I make my uni decisions/start classes?
- Is there a general orientation program available, e.g. academic study skills, social clubs, campus tours, and opportunities to meet other students?
- Are there any Taste-test programs (where prospective students get to try a day at university) for students with disability?

More Tips for Talking with a DLO

- Get in contact with the DLOs early. Early means during the year before you start uni and definitely before you start your course!
- The earlier you disclose to the DLO the better your chances of making the best possible support arrangements. DLOs are happy to meet with prospective students before their acceptance into their university.
- When you find out who the DLO is, make a note of their name; phone number and email address. Keep a record of the DLOs you have had contact with because you may need to follow up with them later on.
- Don't wait until you have struck problems at university to contact the DLO! This only makes it more difficult to get the right arrangements in place.
- If you plan to meet the DLO, ring ahead. Some universities require you to make an appointment if you want to meet the DLO in person.