



*Tap into the insights of your disabled students*

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The last five years have seen a sharp [increase in the number of disabled students](#) in Higher Education (HE) in the UK, with 20% of home students now declaring a disability. The same period has also seen an increase in [reports of HE inaccessibility](#) in the UK. As a result institutions are increasingly faced with questions of how to meet their students' needs and reduce the legal and reputational risk associated with inaccessibility. Unfortunately, progress is held back by a lack of data on how to improve disabled students' experience, as highlighted by a [2023 TASO report](#).

## The solution

Disabled Students UK's Access Insights project will close the information gap regarding accessibility in HE to enable evidence-based improvements. For 10 years DSUK will run the [Annual Disabled Student Survey](#), gathering disabled students' experience of accessibility in Higher Education.

In its first two years, the survey has gathered the experiences of more than 1200 disabled students per year, from over 100 UK universities, allowing us to paint a comprehensive picture of accessibility in the sector.

The results from the Annual Disabled Student Survey are made publicly available on our [Access Insights website](#) and in the annual [Access Insights Report](#).

## Membership

To enable HE Providers to gain insight into accessibility at their institution and effectively implement solutions, DSUK offers Access Insights Membership. The Disabled Students' Commission has called upon HEPs "*to pursue opportunities that provide insight into the experience of their disabled students, such as of membership of Disabled Students UK's Access Insights Project.*"

Access Insights Members make a financial contribution to the project to receive the following assets:

## Membership offers

### Gold (£3,500):

- Quarterly deep dive briefs with news from the sector and blogs (or) videos from lived experience experts
- Membership badge
- 10% discount on consulting
- 15% discount on training and speaker events
- 15% discount on events that we run regularly throughout the year

### Platinum (£6,500):

- Quarterly deep dive briefs with news from the sector and blogs (or) videos from lived experience experts
- Membership badge
- 10% discount on consulting beyond what's included in the membership tier
- 20% discount on training and speaker events
- 20% discount on events that we run regularly throughout the year
- Annual institutional access insights report with university-specific statistics from the Annual Disabled Student Survey
- Half-day of bespoke consulting delivered by senior staff or consultants

### Diamond (£9,500):

- Quarterly deep dive briefs with news from the sector and blogs (or) videos from lived experience experts
- Membership badge
- 25% discount on consulting beyond what's included in the membership tier
- 50% discount on training and speaker events
- Free attendance to events we run regularly throughout the year
- Premium annual institutional access insights report into the disabled student experience at the university from the Annual Disabled Student Survey, including student quotes and DSUK policy recommendations.
- Two days of bespoke consulting delivered by senior staff or consultants
- Priority access to our support and services
- Advanced sight into major findings from our Annual Disabled Student Survey

- Co-created written or video case study on university's work to support disabled students

\*Memberships are billed annually. Renewing members receive a 10% discount, and consultancy hours can be rolled over. Institutions with fewer than 15,000 students are entitled to a 10% discount.

*(Please note that the renewal discount and the small institution discount cannot be used in conjunction with one another.)*

## Advantages of membership

Access Insights uses an evidence-based approach to evaluate disabled students' experiences within their institution, providing valuable information about each institution's strengths and challenges. By comparing the accessibility approach of different institutions, Access Insights helps institutions understand which accessibility policies are associated with successful outcomes. Having information about structural accessibility issues and solutions allows universities to address accessibility proactively and strategically rather than as an add-on.

Prioritising accessibility in HE is crucial to challenge the status quo of disabled students not having the same educational, self-development, and career opportunities. Better accessibility also benefits HEPs in many ways. It allows the institution to gain academic contributions from an underutilised population, avoid reputational and financial damages from complaints, and rise on university rankings as the experience and performance of nearly one in five students improve.

DSUK embodies a new model of disabled students as experts and creators of change rather than recipients of charity. Disabled students have invaluable knowledge about what works and does not work when it comes to accessibility. We see this every day in our work, and we want the whole HE sector to benefit from this insight through the Access Insights Project.

DSUK's 2022 [report](#) found that the second most common lesson disabled students want universities to learn from the pandemic was to consult them more. Students who had been proactively consulted about accessibility during the pandemic were 3 times more likely to have the support they needed and more than 3 times less likely to consider leaving.

Access Insight membership allows the HEP to address inaccessibility more effectively. The authentic advice and evidence-based recommendations we offer lead to more cost-effective interventions. This will also improve staff morale and productivity, as they can be more confident and proactive in their accessibility measures rather than having to rectify issues in an ad-hoc manner. Members can proudly display the Access Insights membership logo on their website, sending a clear message to current and prospective disabled students that they value their voice and are investing in their access.

To learn more and sign up, contact us at [accessinsights@disabledstudents.co.uk](mailto:accessinsights@disabledstudents.co.uk)



*Sharing students' insights to inform policy*

DSUK has quickly become the largest disabled student-led organisation in the UK, with contributors from over 70 universities. DSUK empowers students to share their invaluable insight into accessibility to inform policy.

DSUK has thrice been recognised in [Disability Power 100](#) as one the most influential disabled-led organisations in Britain, winning the category in 2023. Their work has been repeatedly mentioned in parliament, they have spoken at the All-party Parliamentary Group for Disability and are frequently invited as expert speakers.

DSUK has built a reputation with their evidence-based approach:

- [The Impact of the Pandemic on Disabled Students and Recommended Measures \(2020 report\)](#) was mentioned in parliament
- [Going Back is Not a Choice \(2022 report\)](#) was featured in The Independent, and hailed as “a potential game changer in its review of UK HE inclusive provision”
- [The Annual Disabled Student Survey \(2023 report\)](#) was the largest survey into university accessibility to date, with more than 1300 respondents

DSUK has a collaborative approach to change and regularly provides consulting, training and expert speaker services to decision makers, researchers, access consultants and institutions such as UCL, UKRI and OfS. By becoming [members of their Access Insights Project](#) institutions gain access to the invaluable insights of disabled students.

**Read more about DSUK and their work here:** [disabledstudents.co.uk](https://disabledstudents.co.uk)

**Find DSUK across the web:** [linktr.ee/DisabledStudentsUK](https://linktr.ee/DisabledStudentsUK)