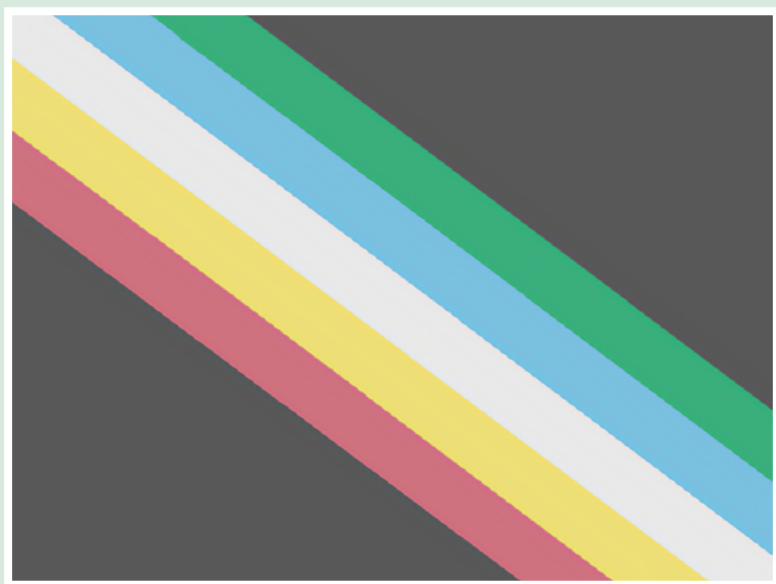


# Usyd disability information zine



by

**Usyd Disabilities Collective (DiSCo)**

**SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network**



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# Acknowledgement of Country



The SRC Disabilities Collective and SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network recognise that our activism, advocacy and work happens on stolen, unceded Gadigal Land of the people of the Eora Nations who have, for countless generations, been the custodians of this Land. Indigenous peoples have had to endure significant injustices, despite being one of the oldest living cultures in the world. In our activism and work, we will uplift the perspective, voice and experiences of First Nations peoples in order to dismantle the colonial and ableist systems of oppression that plague every aspect of this colonial state.

# Introduction

## Welcome!

This guide acts as a point of reference for disabled students, students with access needs, students who have conditions/illnesses/experiences that count as disabilities under Australian definitions but might not use that term personally, and for allies too!

## What's inside:

- Sign-up details for the SRC and SUPRA Disability Groups.
- Information about what counts as a disability in Australia.
- Information about how relevant support services, both on and off campus.
- Information about ways you can get involved in disability activism, creative works, and social events on campus.

# Who we are

## Students' Representative Council (SRC) Disabilities Collective

The SRC Disabilities Collective, otherwise affectionately known as DisCo, has been around for more than a decade and exists to wage campaigns and build community by and for students with disabilities. At our core, we are a group of student activists, meaning that we plan our work around holding institutions such as Sydney University accountable. We work at all levels of politics to enact policies that further the welfare and interests of disabled students. We work closely with the National Union of Students (NUS), other SRC collectives at Usyd, and other student unions to demand substantive change for disabled students and disabilities more broadly.



### Disability and Carers Officers:

Khanh Tran & Jack Scanlan

My name is Khanh Tran, a fourth-year Arts and Law student and I'm unilaterally deaf. My preferred pronouns are they/them. I am passionate about higher education and disabilities activism. This year will be a pivotal year for all disabled people in Australia, not

least because the final report of the years-long Disability Royal Commission will be released. However, the work and activism needed to bring students and people with disabilities to the fore cannot stop nor focus solely on a single Royal Commission. At Sydney University alone, implementation of a social model of

disability remains distant, from inaccessible quarters and a non-tactile campus, to a chronic student housing crisis that threatens to lock many disabled students out of on-campus life.

Other than that, if I'm not constantly balancing the delicate act of academics and activism, you will likely find me tucked in a corner of Fisher writing away or crocheting the latest crochet design that strikes my fancy!

## **Sydney University Postgraduate Representatives Association (SUPRA)**

SUPRA is the postgraduate student association at the University of Sydney, and is run by postgrads for postgrads. SUPRA represents all postgraduates at the University of Sydney, and all postgraduates can look to SUPRA for assistance with any issues that may confront them, both academically and personally, during the course of their candidature.



### **Disability Equity Officers:**

Eva & Gemma Lucy (she/they)

We're Eva and Gemma – the SUPRA Disability Equity Officers. We're both PhD researchers and here to do what we can to improve the lives of students with disabilities at Usyd. We run the SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network as a way of connecting

with other students and providing them a space for community and advocacy. We're passionate about disability inclusion, accessibility, awareness, and activism.

## **Other campus disabilities office-holders**

Other than the SRC and SUPRA, a handful of other disabilities student representatives can be contacted at the following clubs and societies, including the University of Sydney Union (USU):

### **University of Sydney Union (USU):**

Alexander Poirier (Disabilities portfolio holder)

[a.poirier@usu.edu.au](mailto:a.poirier@usu.edu.au)

### **Sydney Arts Students' Society (SASS):**

Annalise Schwarzorva (Disabilities Officer)

[disability@usydarts.com](mailto:disability@usydarts.com)

### **Sydney University Law Society (SULS):**

Andrew Shim (Disabilities Officer)

[disabilities@suls.org.au](mailto:disabilities@suls.org.au)



# What is disability?

A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions).

The definition of disability under the [\*Disability Discrimination Act 1992\*](#) is broad. It includes:

- **Physical** – affects mobility and dexterity. Includes migraines, endometriosis, EDS, PCOS.
- **Mental illness** – anxiety, depression, PTSD, bipolar and other conditions.
- **Sensory** – d/Deaf, hard of hearing, hyperacusis, blind, low vision.
- **Neurological** – MS, epilepsy, brain injury, conditions affecting brain and nervous system.
- **Learning** – cognitive and intellectual disability, memory, focus, neurodiversity (Dyslexia, Autism, ADHD etc.).
- **Immunological** – autoimmune, ME/CFS, and other chronic multisystemic conditions.

Disability can be permanent or temporary, visible or invisible. And in the context of higher education it's important to appreciate that having a disability does not mean one is less suited to be a university student, it just means that one might need accommodations and support to achieve academically.

# Student groups

## The Disability Collective – DisCo

The Disabilities Collective (or affectionately known as DisCo) is an autonomous collective for disabled undergraduate students, defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as ‘long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others’. This includes people who may not personally identify as disabled, or prefer other designators, for instance, people who are deaf or hard of hearing, mad, neurodivergent, mentally ill, otherwise ill and so on.

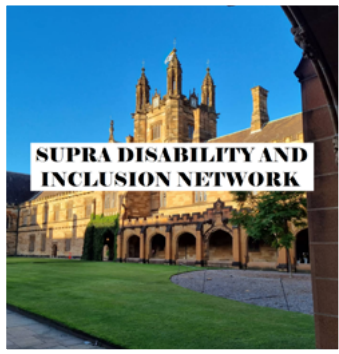
The Caregivers Network is an initiative for students who provide substantial informal caregiving support to friends or family members who are disabled.

If you’d like to get involved in activism, reading groups, picnics, social events and Disabled Honi (DisCo’s autonomous edition of Honi Soit), get in touch! You can find our public Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/USYDdis/](https://www.facebook.com/USYDdis/) and our Twitter at @USYDdis. Contact the OBs at [disabilities.officers@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:disabilities.officers@src.usyd.edu.au) to be added to either of our Facebook groups, or to be added to our mailing list. You do not have to disclose any details about your disability or caregiving responsibilities to get involved.

**To join you  
can also  
use the QR  
code here:**



# SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network



The SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network is a meeting point for postgraduate students at the University of Sydney who identify with having a disability. Coursework postgraduate students and HDRs are both welcome.

Caregivers, those working in relevant research fields, and allies are also welcome in the online network, although they are not given voting permission in the election of our Equity Officer according to the SUPRA Constitution. We welcome them as part of our community nonetheless.

As part of our network's activities we run both social and activist events, as well as keep you informed about disability-related matters on campus.

You can also contact our Disability Equity Officers confidentially via: [disability@supra.usyd.edu.au](mailto:disability@supra.usyd.edu.au)

Join SUPRA free here: <https://supra.net.au/join-us/>

Join the SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network:  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/325553689148108>

**To join you  
can also  
use the QR  
code here:**



# Navigating support at Usyd

## Inclusion and Disability Services

Sydney University runs an Inclusion and Disability Services office in accordance with its obligation to students with disabilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 and the University's own Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

You can contact Disability Services either through phone, an in-person appointment or a Zoom virtual appointment. They are located on Level 5, Jane Foss Russell Building (next to City Road on the Camperdown/Darlington campus).

Usyd Disability Services' email address is: [disability.services@sydney.edu.au](mailto:disability.services@sydney.edu.au)

Disability Services provides a number of services. Most importantly, they work with you to develop an individualised academic plan and arrange academic adjustments for your studies, including extra time, specialist equipment, colour-coded materials, and more as determined by the service.

In order to access services provided by Disability Services, you must register with Disability Services. The University requires students with disabilities to provide documentation in order to access Disability Services. Follow the following steps to register with Disability Services:

1. Create a profile on Inclusion and Disability Services at: <https://disabilityassist.sydney.edu.au/registrations/new>

2. Obtain and provide supporting documentation. Supporting documentation must be completed by a medical professional or other accredited health professionals. Separate forms are filled should you have more than one disability.

The form can be accessed at: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/content/dam/students/documents/support-resources/disability-support/support-documentation-disability-services.pdf>

These documents must be uploaded either to your online profile or emailed to Inclusion and Disability Services.

3. Contact Inclusion and Disability Services to book a registration consultation with a Disability Officer. The consultation takes approximately one (1) hour. They can be reached via email at: [disability.services@sydney.edu.au](mailto:disability.services@sydney.edu.au).
4. Contact [ICT Helpdesk](#) if you cannot log in or encounter an issue with your online profile: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/student-it.html>

## **Navigating support at the SRC and SUPRA**

Both the SRC and SUPRA operate free caseworker and legal services to assist with your degree and issues that may overlap with disability needs and accommodations.

### **Students' Representative Council (SRC)**

The Students' Representative Council, or the SRC, is the peak student representative body for undergraduate students at the University of Sydney. As of 2023, the SRC represents over 41,000 students.

It also operates the SRC Legal Service and SRC Caseworkers. The SRC Legal Service provides free legal advice, representation for students on certain court matters, and, where relevant, a referral service.

Find out more about the SRC Legal Service here:  
<https://srcusyd.net.au/src-help/src-legal-service/>

Should you wish to access an SRC Solicitor, call them on:  
02 9660 5222.

The SRC Caseworkers assists students on academic and welfare issues. They provide free and confidential advice on a range of matters such as: academic rights and appeals; special considerations and special arrangements; HECs and fee refunds; academic misconduct and dishonesty allegations; show cause and expulsion; Centrelink; financial issues; tenancy and accommodation; harassment and discrimination.

Find out more about the SRC Caseworkers here:  
<https://srcusyd.net.au/src-help/caseworker-help/>

Contact the SRC Caseworkers through the Caseworker Contact Form here: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfUHB4o\\_1ozL\\_krqUkNFCuuSdCS\\_JwxJZoKxoSY2nZICKc-HQ/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfUHB4o_1ozL_krqUkNFCuuSdCS_JwxJZoKxoSY2nZICKc-HQ/viewform)

## **Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA)**

SUPRA is the representative body for postgrads (for example, Masters and PhD candidates) at Usyd, and has been run by postgrads, for postgrads since 1970. SUPRA operates the Postgraduate Advocacy Service and SUPRA Legal Service, whose caseworkers and solicitors provide free, confidential, professional independent advice and advocacy on a wide range of academic, legal and personal issues.

All Usyd postgrads can join SUPRA for free. To get help from a SUPRA caseworker or solicitor, use the contact form on the SUPRA website: <https://supra.net.au/contact/>

## Health and wellbeing services

Student wellbeing offers a range of confidential and free health, wellbeing, and personal support at the University of Sydney. You'll have to fill out a registration form to access them. You can find that here: <https://www.sydney.edu.au/students/health-wellbeing.html>

## External support

### Australian Centre for Disability Law

The Australian Centre for Disability Law provides a free toolkit for students with disability in all levels of university, TAFE, vocational education, certificate courses and other types of training: <https://disabilitylaw.org.au/projects/education/#furtheredu>

If you are within New South Wales and want advice outside of University services, you can get free legal advice on disability discrimination by calling the Australian Centre for Disability Law on (02) 9370 3135 or 1800 800 708 between 9.30am and 12.30pm on Mondays and Wednesdays, and between 1.30pm and 4.30pm on Thursdays. You can also contact their referral service via their website: <https://disabilitylaw.org.au/resources/referrals/>

### National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme, otherwise referred to as the NDIS, is a federal and state government program that provides support for people with disabilities who 'have a permanent and significant disability' that affects one's 'ability to take part in everyday activities'. Its scope is wide and funding is provided directly to individuals. There are a variety of funded supports offered through the NDIS such as:

- daily personal activities
- transport to enable participation in community, social and economic activities
- workplace support to enable an NDIS participant to successfully gain or maintain employment
- home modifications
- vehicle modifications.

This list of NDIS-funded supports is not exhaustive and further information on the range of NDIS supports are available here through NDIS plans and budgets: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/participants/creating-your-plan/plan-budget-and-rules>

Find out more about the NDIS here:

- <https://www.ndis.gov.au/understanding/what-ndis>
- <https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/for-people-with-disability/national-disability-insurance-scheme>

Find out more about the NDIS' Access Request Form in order to register to the program here: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/how-apply>

The Access Request form can be filled either online as a written form or as a verbal application. Access the two forms here: <https://www.ndis.gov.au/applying-access-ndis/how-apply#make-a-verbal-application>

## **Disability Support Pension**

A Disability Pension provides income support for people who are unable to work due to a physical, intellectual, or psychiatric impairment. To find out if this is the right payment for you, you can visit the Government website via: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/disability-support-pension>



# Activism

Unlike some other student societies, DiSCo (the Disabilities Collective) is actively political. We wage campaigns and organise action within a space in which everyone can grow both politically and personally. The SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network is an active participant and ally in many of these actions.

Some of the campaigns that we are running this year include:

- Fight the mandatory requirement for in-person classes, and demand that remote learning remain an option for disabled students and carers.
- Continuing our work with student organisations at Usyd and across Australia to promote the aims of the Disability & Higher Education in Australia Report. The aim of the document is to demand the higher education sector to take strong measures to address discrimination experienced by people with disability in Australia. You can find out more about the report via the SUPRA website here: <https://supra.net.au/disability-and-higher-education-report/>
- Recognition of Sunflower Lanyards at Usyd. You can find out about Sunflower lanyards here: <https://hiddendisabilitiesshop.com.au/au/supporting-you>
- Continued work with representatives on the Disability Inclusion Action Plan Implementation Working Group, to improve disability visibility, inclusion, and accessibility at Usyd.

*Continues on next page ...*

## **Autonomous Disability Space**

The SUPRA, SRC and USU Autonomous Disabilities Space is due to be launched in 2023/24.

This room will be located in the Manning Building. We will provide updates as to the University of Sydney's progress on this important project.

# Writing and creating

Since 2018, the SRC Disabilities Collective has been producing an autonomous edition of Honi Soit every year called Disabled Honi. Honi Soit is the student newspaper of the University of Sydney, published by the Students' Representative Council. However, you do not have to be an undergraduate student in order to write or contribute to Disabled Honi or Honi Soit.

Disabled Honi is a fantastic opportunity to get involved in our collective. If you would like to edit Disabled Honi in 2023, join either the Disability Collective (DiSCo) or the SUPRA Disability and Inclusion Network for updates throughout the year. Details for how to join these groups can be found in the Student groups section of this guide.

If you would like to contribute to regular editions of Honi Soit, please contact the editors of Honi Soit separately either via email: [editors@honisoit.com](mailto:editors@honisoit.com) or through their website: <http://honisoit.com/contact/>



UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY  
DISABILITIES COLLECTIVE



Sydney  
University Postgraduate  
Representative Association