

Supporting Students With Diabetes

There are 2 main types of diabetes

Type 1: the body produces little/ no insulin

Type 2: the insulin produced by the body is ineffective

- Diabetes requires a person to ensure that their blood sugar is balanced and within normal range.
- This can affect how a student plans their day as they need to allocate time to check their blood sugars, address any changes needed (too high or too low) and ensure that their insulin doses are correct for the food they are eating, as well as the time they will be eating.
- Certain illnesses (eg, sickness bugs) can further affect people with diabetes so it is important for students to remain as healthy as possible.
- Cognition (e.g. memory, processing, concentration) can be affected if a student's blood glucose levels are out of normal range

signs of hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar)

- dizziness
- weakness
- confusion
- hunger

signs of hyperglycaemia (high blood sugar)

- fruity smelling breath
- weakness
- confusion
- nausea

Advice to Educators

- Students with diabetes are still able to uphold professional standards and achieve their learning outcomes.
- It is important to treat the student as an individual, and not base their needs on assumptions or those of previous students.
- Often students with diabetes know the best strategies to help them, so it is important to listen to them.
- Reasonable adjustments can be made to ensure the student gets the best out of their experience.
- Carry out a risk assessment to ensure the student feels safe to carry out their tasks.
- Ensure that there is a safe and quiet place for the student to go if they are feeling unwell and give them time to help them recover.
- Be aware of the student's condition, if they look unwell ask them if they are ok and offer them the chance to test their blood sugar or go and get some food or a drink.