Disabilities in the UK
Laws and requirements on organisations will vary from those in the US, and those with disabilities - both visible and hidden - may face some additional frustrations when navigating life in a new country. While not perfect, the UK is much better than it used to be in terms of accessibility. Below are just a few tips and resources that may help you.

Transportation and getting around
Depending on your needs, getting around can sometimes be tricky, as not all underground stations have step free access.

Using the tube
Transport for London has produced a guide for those seeking step-free route on the tube. Many stations are step-free, and others have fewer steps or escalators. However, others - particularly older stations - are less accessible and have a lot of stairs.

You can also request a special badge indicating that you need a seat on the tube. A limited number of seats are set aside for those who need them, and you do not have to give a specific reason to obtain a badge. There have been campaigns in recent years reminding people that not all disabilities are visible.

Buses
Buses in London are fully accessible to wheelchair users, and also have seats set aside for passengers who may need them (again, it's worth having a blue badge), and are also a lot cheaper than the tube! However, they can take much longer than the tube if you are travelling a long distance, especially at rush hour.

Taxis
While Lyft is yet to make it to the UK, we have Uber, FreeNow and various other services which will allow you to state your needs when you book. However, this can of course get expensive.

Access to toilets
London is not the greatest city in the world when it comes to the availability of toilets! There is a useful map here which lists all public toilets close by, and it is also possible to buy a RADAR key which enables you to access toilets even when they are locked. Most venues will have a disabled toilet that allows customers to avoid stairs.

Accessing venues
Many venues are far more sensitive to different needs than they used to be. For example, cinemas will often offer screenings with signers (be aware that in the UK BSL is different from ASL!) or audio-description, and theatres and other venues will usually have hearing loops available - The Barbican,
for example, offers a wide range of accessible events.

There is a wonderful website called AccessAble that allows you to check how accessible a venue (be it a bar, restaurant, museum, theatre, to name a few) is before you visit - this can be useful when planning a trip or a night out. Sometimes venues may not be fully accessible, especially to wheelchair users. This is often due to the age of the buildings and associated difficulties in adapting them to make them accessible.

Arcadia excursions
We do our best to make excursions as accessible as possible - we will state on the event information any potential accessibility issue, for example if a lot of walking is involved. If you have any concerns about an excursion you can let us know by emailing london@arcadia.edu - it might be possible to make special provisions for you to attend an excursion. If you have any special requirements or require accommodations you must let us know ahead of an event.

UCL Union Sports
Center-based students will have access to UCL Union while they are studying here. They have introduced a range of initiatives to make sport more accessible, including quiet hours in the gym and sports aimed at wheelchair users.

The Sunflower Lanyard Scheme
It's estimated around 80% of disabilities are not visible. The sunflower lanyard was introduced in the UK to indicate a hidden disability where the wearer may need additional assistance. Wearers often attach a card detailing these additional needs. For example, someone with selective mutism may wear one explaining why they may not be communicating as someone would expect. Heathrow Airport encourages passengers to wear these (you can collect one from the airport if you are travelling from there), and trains staff in supporting customers with additional needs.

Support from your university
If you have any questions or concerns you can contact your Arcadia PC. If you are studying at a Direct Enroll institution they should have a Disability department that can advise you on support for your disability.

Useful resources
Accessible screenings - you can use this site to search for a film screening near you that meets your needs

AccessAble - lists venues across the UK and can be searched by location and need (e.g. whether a venue is wheelchair accessible or has a hearing loop).