

University of
St Andrews

Academic adjustments for disabled students

Guidance for staff

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Purpose	This guidance provides clarification for School staff on the various reasonable adjustments that may be specified in disabled students' support plans. The guidance also provides case study examples on a case-by-case basis.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.2	Extended by 6 months pending review	Updated	Administrative Officer, Proctor's Office	July 2024

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

POLICY ON ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENTS FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

Introduction

University staff and students have contributed to the development of this guidance document. Its content will be updated periodically to reflect legal or significant sector wide changes. It is advisable to read the guidance in conjunction with the Policy on Academic Assessment for Disabled Students.

The primary purpose of the guidance is to provide clarification for School staff on the various reasonable adjustments that may be specified in disabled students' support plans. Some adjustments are self-explanatory; however, some are more complex and often involve discussion between School staff and the Disability Advisers.

Staff should consult the Guidance for Students for further information on the process through which students declare a disability and the expectations which are set by the information given to students.

Guidance on the accessibility of the facilities and buildings at the University is provided on the [AccessAble web pages](#).

Definition of Disability

A disabled person is defined as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a **substantial** and **long-term** adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This definition covers a wide range of physical, medical, cognitive, mental health and sensory impairments or conditions. The definition also gives protection for people with progressive conditions such as cancer, HIV and multiple sclerosis from the point of diagnosis.

The Equality Act 2010 qualifies the terms 'substantial' and 'long-term', where 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task, and 'long-term' means that the condition has lasted 12 months or more. A person with a disability would not normally be expected to recover, although they may become better at managing their disability. A person is also covered by the Act because of previous disability. For example, an individual who has recovered from a mental health condition that previously lasted more than 12 months is protected from discrimination under the Act.

There are exceptions and further guidance is available at [this link](#).

HESA Disability Codes

The Higher Education sector uses 10 separate codes (A-J) to categorise disability. Applicants declaring a long term condition or impairment typically select a relevant code on their University application. There is also opportunity for students to declare a disability on the University virtual learning environment (VLE; My Saint, Personal Details) during matriculation, and periodic reminders are sent out to encourage students who have declared a disability to discuss support available to them.

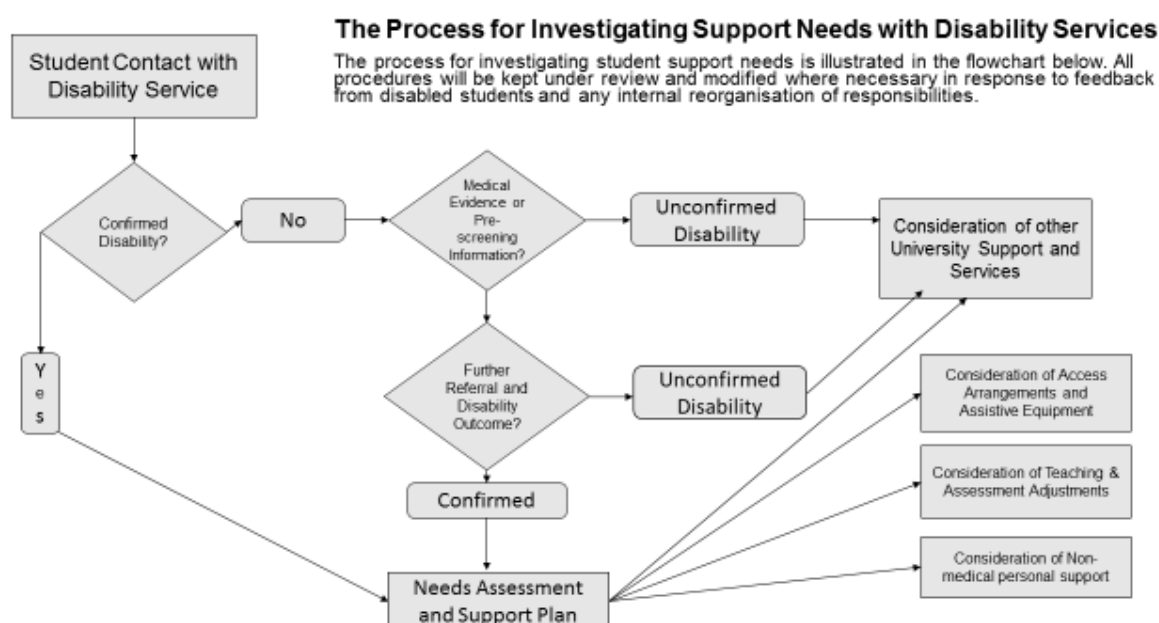
Where a student has a support plan on MMS, the disability code will be indicated. It is important to note that support plans are needs led and further information about a student is not disclosed, unless, with the student's agreement, it is necessary to do so. The disability codes are listed in the following table:

Code	Description
A	No disability
B	You have a social/communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome/other autistic spectrum condition
C	You are blind or have a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
D	You are deaf or have a serious hearing impairment
E	You have a long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
F	You have a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
G	You have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
H	You have physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
I	You have a disability, impairment or medical condition that is not listed above
J	You have two or more impairments and/or disabling medical condition

Student Services Disability Team

Student Services' Disability Advisers are responsible for assessing the support needs of disabled students. With reference to evidence from a range of sources, such as diagnostic reports or letters and discussion with the student, Advisers will identify reasonable adjustments to teaching and assessment. In order for reasonable adjustments to be made to examinations, undergraduate and taught postgraduate students are asked to declare their disability by the end of week 8. In the case of research students seeking reasonable adjustments to a viva, they are asked to declare their disability by the time they complete the process of declaring their intention to submit the thesis.

The flowchart summarises the process for determining adjustments:



Identified reasonable adjustments should be put in place by the School or Exams Office where it is their responsibility to do so. ***If there are concerns about the appropriateness of an adjustment indicated in a student's support plan or difficulties in implementation or a need for further guidance and clarification, Schools are asked to contact the Student Services Disability Team as soon as possible to discuss this*** at disability@st-andrews.ac.uk, or via the Advice and Support Centre, on 01334 462020.

Student Support Plans and the Disabilities Tab on MMS

Student Support Plans are available on MMS, Disabilities Tab. Each School decides on the level of access that its staff have to the disabilities tab in MMS. It is recommended that every disability coordinator and module coordinator will have access so that they can disseminate information about disabled student support requirements to relevant others (e.g. module tutors) as deemed appropriate.

To view the disabilities tab, staff should log into MMS, enter the module code in the search box and click to search.

Modules
Sheila Ballie (Staff ID: 35209)
Last login: 15/05 15/06/17 from sspc-05745.st-andrews.ac.uk

My Details Users Help Events Modules Logout

Show: Current Show all Get My Modules Get All Modules View School

Search: P Search MMS

Then click on the Disabilities tab and the list of students who are registered on that module (including their name, student number and disability code) who have a support plan will be presented. Staff can view teaching and examination adjustments for each individual student.

Disabilities Tutorial Groups Staff

Download as PDF

Code	Description	Exam Arrangements	Teaching Arrangements	Last Update	Primary Contact
F	I have a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	Additional writing time: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Exam in the extra time venue provided by Exams Office	Additional writing time in class tests: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Extra time in class tests provided by School Electronic presentation slides prior to lecture provided by School	07/09/2016	John James Petrie (jip71)
A	No disability	Additional writing time: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Additional notes: Student has hand ligament injury and will need access to PC as well as extra time - time Exam in Computer Lab, Computer, No Spell provided by Exams Office		29/11/2016	Sarah Kate Whittle (skw20)
A	No disability	Additional writing time in class tests: No extra time Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Additional notes: 00:15 mins per hour writing time for PY1012 only Unique exam arrangements (see notes) provided by Exams Office Exam in the extra time venue provided by Exams Office		20/04/2017	Sheila Ballie (sb283)
G	I have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(HD)	Additional writing time: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Additional notes: May need to use a scribe for tests primarily involving numerical/symbolic content Unique exam arrangements (see notes) provided by Exams Office Exam in Computer Lab, Computer, Spell provided by Exams Office	Additional writing time in class tests: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Additional notes: may need to use a PC for essay style class tests (where applicable). May need to use a scribe for tests primarily involving numerical/symbolic content Extra time in class tests provided by School Electronic presentation slides prior to lecture provided by School	27/02/2017	Sheila Ballie (sb283)
G	I have a specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(HD)	Additional writing time: 00:30 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Loose paper provided by Exams Office Exam in Computer Lab, Computer, Spell provided by Exams Office	Additional writing time in class tests: 00:30 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Additional notes: Laptop/pc use for written test papers Extended library loan provided by SSS Voice recorder (lectures only) provided by Student Extra time in class tests provided by School Electronic presentation slides prior to lecture provided by School	26/09/2016	Sheila Ballie (sb283)
F	I have a mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	Additional writing time: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Exam in Computer Lab, Computer, No Spell provided by Exams Office	Additional writing time in class tests: No extra time Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour May be absent from class from time to time provided by School Flexible deadlines (requested before deadline date provided by School)	23/11/2016	Sheila Ballie (sb283)
J	I have two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions	Additional writing time: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Exam in Computer Lab, Computer, No Spell provided by Exams Office	Additional writing time in class tests: 00:15 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Extra time in class tests provided by School	24/02/2017	John James Petrie (jip71)
J	I have two or more impairments and/or disabling medical conditions	Additional writing time: 00:30 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Food & drink allowed during exam provided by Exams Office To be seated in the front row of the hall provided by Exams Office Loose paper provided by Exams Office	Additional writing time in class tests: 00:30 mins per hour Maximum rest break time: 00:00 mins per hour Voice recorder (lectures only) provided by Student Extra time in class tests provided by School Flexible deadlines (requested before deadline date provided by School)	14/05/2016	Sheila Ballie (sb283)

Please note that your view may look different to that displayed.

Competence Standards and Reasonable Adjustments

Competence standards are defined by intended learning outcomes which are normally detailed in module information and School programme specifications.

The implementation of a reasonable adjustment is intended to prevent a disabled student from experiencing substantial disadvantage as a result of their disability. In defining what adjustment is reasonable, the University is not required to adjust competence standards though it can adjust the arrangements through which a competence is assessed.

To be lawful, the skills and knowledge which constitute the competence standards must be proportionate means of achieving the programme aims. This means they must be objectively justifiable in the sense of being genuinely relevant and essential to the purpose of the programme.

Competence standards must also be non-discriminatory without adverse impact on disabled students unless this can be objectively justified.

The following lengthy extract from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, *Equality Act 2010 Technical Guidance on Further and Higher Education* published in 2014 (paragraphs 7.33 to 7.38), provides a legal definition of a competence standard and examples of what constitutes a reasonable adjustment to the process of assessing a competence standard such that disabled students are not disadvantaged in demonstrating their attainment. Some of the examples are drawn from subjects which are not taught at St Andrews. However, the principles apply and can be appropriately translated to other disciplines.

What is a competence standard?

7.33 The Act defines a 'competence standard' as an academic, medical, or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability.

7.34 Education providers are likely to impose various requirements and conditions in respect of courses. However, any such requirement or condition only amounts to a competence standard if its purpose is to demonstrate a particular level of a relevant competence or ability such as a requirement that a person has a particular level of relevant knowledge of a subject.

Example: The admissions criteria for a course in choreography include a requirement to demonstrate 'a high level of physical fitness'. The course itself, however, is predominately theory-based and does not involve any strenuous physical activity. This is unlikely to be a competence standard.

Example: The requirement for students studying for a law degree to demonstrate a particular standard of knowledge of certain areas of law in order to obtain the degree is a competence standard.

7.35 On the other hand, a condition that a person can, for example, do something within a certain period of time will not be a competence standard if it does not determine a particular level of competence or ability.

Example: A requirement that a person completes a test in a certain time period is not a competence standard unless the competence being tested is the ability to do something within a limited time period.

Competence standards and assessment process

7.36 Sometimes the process of assessing whether a competence standard has been achieved is inextricably linked to the standard itself. The passing of an assessment may be conditional upon having a practical skill or ability which must be demonstrated by completing a practical test. Therefore, in relatively rare circumstances, the ability to take the test may itself amount to a competence standard.

Example: An assessment for a practical course in car maintenance cannot be done solely as a written test, because the purpose of the test is to ascertain whether someone can complete car repairs.

What is the significance of this distinction?

7.37 A provision, criterion or practice does not include the application of a competence standard. Therefore, the duty to make reasonable adjustments does not include a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the application of a competence standard.

7.38 Although there is no duty to make reasonable adjustments to the application of a competence standard, such a duty does apply to the process by which competence is assessed. So although an education provider has no duty to alter a competence standard, it needs to consider whether or not a reasonable adjustment could be made to some aspect of the process by which it assesses a competence standard.

Example: When assessing the competence standard of a person's ability to read French it would be a reasonable adjustment to provide a visually impaired student with text in large font (if that was the adjustment the student required).

Example: A law student has severe arthritis in her hands. When assessing her level of knowledge, it might be a reasonable adjustment to provide an oral exam or viva instead of a timed handwritten exam. However, there may be an overlap between a competence standard and any process by which an individual is assessed against that standard.

Example: A woman taking a written test for a qualification in office administration asks the education provider for extra time for the test because she has dyslexia. This is likely to be a reasonable adjustment for the education provider to make. She also asks if she can leave out the questions asking her to write a business letter and to précis a document, because she feels that these questions would substantially disadvantage her because of her dyslexia. The education provider would not have to make this adjustment because these questions are there to determine her competence at writing and précising, so are part of the competence standard being tested.

Individual Reasonable Adjustments

There is a wide range of potential individual reasonable adjustments. These are not relevant for all disabled students but are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Any adjustments recommended in support plans on MMS are generally based on diagnostic information, discussion with the student and the professional judgement of the Disability Adviser carried out through the needs assessment process.

Common Adjustments in Support Plans

Some adjustments indicated in support plans are straightforward and do not usually require further explanation or discussion with the Disability Team. The following list gives more detail to remove ambiguity about who has responsibility for providing the adjustment. Please also check the notes field on MMS for additional information:

Reasonable Adjustment	Guidance Note
<i>Extended library loan</i>	The Library is responsible for making this arrangement
<i>Voice recorder</i>	The student is permitted to use a personal device to audio record as per the <u>Policy on the Use of Recording Devices by Students in Lectures and other Learning and Teaching Activities</u>

<i>Extra time in class tests*</i>	The School arranges extra time and test venue. This may be extra writing time and/or rest breaks.
<i>Electronic presentation slides prior to lecture</i>	The School provides student with electronic version of slides/notes in good time to give students necessary time to read and print off in their preferred format.
<i>Use of an adjustable chair during classes</i>	The Disability Team will liaise with the School and Estates to make arrangements for ergonomic furniture.
<i>Personal Assistant</i>	The Disability Team will make necessary personal helper arrangements.
<i>Access to AT Classroom</i>	The Disability Team will arrange access to the assistive technology room located in the Library.
<i>Coloured Overlays</i>	Students who experience visual stress may use their own personal colour filters, lenses or overlays, to view information on a white board, book or screen.
<i>Laptop</i>	Students may have a requirement to use a laptop to input information, and this will either be provided by the Disability Team or will belong to the student.
<i>Lecturer to wear microphone</i>	Teaching staff will be notified by the Disability Team if a microphone has to be worn but good inclusive practice would be for lecturers to wear microphones in all lectures.
<i>Note Taker</i>	The Disability Team will make necessary note taker arrangements and will liaise with the School regarding notes.
<i>Sign language interpreter</i>	The Disability Team will make necessary interpreter arrangements and will liaise with School regarding notes.

***Additional note on class tests**

Class tests are a common mode of assessment in some Schools. These are not formal exams but they are assignments that have to be completed under test conditions during class time and usually the same adjustments that apply to exams also apply to tests. We have previously asked students who have non-standard requirements (such as a reader, scribe, ergonomic furniture) to inform the Disability Team that they have a class test who in turn liaise with the School to make necessary arrangements; however, this has proven an unreliable communication method. A two strand process has, therefore, been introduced:

Students who require personal support or particular facilities that the Disability Team put in place are now being contacted to request the date, venue and time of their class tests for modules that they are taking in a given semester.

Module Coordinators/School Administrators are being asked to look at MMS teaching and exam arrangements and where students have non-standard requirements for support, the School is asked to provide details of any class tests for the module by contacting disability@st-andrews.ac.uk

Other Adjustments

Some students need adjustments which may require further explanation or discussion with a Disability Adviser. Additional information is usually included about such requirements in the notes field on MMS. However, the following list, whilst not exhaustive, provides further guidance.

<i>May be absent from class from time to time</i>	All students are advised by the Disability Team of the Policy on Student Absence. However, there are some students whose medical or health condition may mean that they will be absent at times, particularly for students who have a fluctuating condition.
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	This is a valid reason for absence and alternative support arrangements may have to be considered. If you have concerns about this and are considering issuing an academic alert for reasons of absence then please contact the Disability Team prior to doing so for relevant information.
<i>Flexible Deadlines</i>	All students are advised to plan their workload so that assignments can be submitted by the recommended deadline as this will avoid overload of submission dates later in the semester. Workload planning and time management support is available and can be arranged through Disability Advisers) and CAPOD. Students who find themselves having difficulty meeting their deadlines because of personal mitigating circumstances or disability related reasons can apply for an extension. In such circumstances, the School procedure for requesting an extension should be followed. The relevant member of teaching staff will consider the request accordingly and refer to the student's support plan for more information. The length of extension granted should be given in relation to the weighting and complexity of the submission for the module. As an example, for an assignment with a one week submission date, a one day extension might be considered appropriate.
<i>Fieldwork</i>	If you have any planned fieldwork or external visits then please check MMS to determine if there are any students who may require additional support or indeed alternative modes of assessment. It may not be apparent to an individual that they will need additional support when they first meet with a Disability Adviser or until they have difficulty with a task. Please get in touch with a Disability Adviser in advance of any field trips so that we can check and update student support plans where appropriate.
<i>Group work and Presentations</i>	Some students may have social communication difficulties which impact on their ability to participate in group work and/or presentations. If the Disability Team are aware of this then they will add this in as a note in the teaching field on the disability tab on MMS. Students will be given support by the Disability Team to ensure that they can, where possible, participate but if you wish to discuss options then please contact the Disability Team. Where there are more significant problems the Disability Team will contact the School to discuss.
<i>Alternative Modes of Assessment</i>	In exceptional cases, a student may be unable to complete the type of assignment issued to assess a course competency. The Disability Team will discuss such a requirement with School staff and provide advice. Please see the explanation below describing the process for requesting alternative modes of assessment.

Process for Requesting an Alternative Mode of Assessment

In exceptional cases, where reasonable adjustments to a given type of assessment are unable to alleviate a substantial disadvantage, a disabled student may submit a request for an alternative mode of assessment. The procedure outlined below is followed:

1. The student should submit a request to the Disability Team as early as possible. It may not be feasible to accommodate a change in the mode of assessment within the semester in which a request is made.

2. The student must ensure that all supporting evidence is submitted to the Disability Team, if not already available.
3. The request will be considered by the Disability Team in consultation with School staff including the Director of Teaching, module coordinator(s) and the School Disability Coordinator. If necessary, the Head of School and Pro Dean (Advising) may also be consulted.
4. For an alternative method of assessment to be adopted, it must: (i) be able to alleviate the disability related disadvantage for a student; (ii) permit the student to demonstrate the competency evaluated by the standard assessment and; (iii) be more effective than any other mode of assessment at alleviating the disadvantage and demonstrating the competency.
5. A request for an alternative mode of assessment will be declined if any of the following conditions apply: (i) reasonable adjustments to the standard mode of assessment are sufficient to alleviate the disadvantage for a student in demonstrating their learning; (ii) the alternative mode of assessment is ineffective in overcoming the disadvantage; (iii) alternative assessment modes do not demonstrate the required competencies or; (iv) it is not reasonable to implement an alternative assessment mode within the time available.
6. Following the consultation, the School and the student will be informed of the recommendation by the Disability Team.
7. If an alternative mode of assessment is agreed, the Disability Team will amend the student's support plan and notify the Examination Office.

Examination Specific Adjustments

Additional Time

The amount of time to be added will be specified on MMS. A student's entitlement to rest breaks will also be specified in the notes field on MMS. The UK standard allowance is 25% extra time, up to a maximum of 50% with appropriate evidence.

Exam Venue facilities (arranged by the exam office)

Exam in Computer Lab, Computer, No Spell Check
Exam in Computer Lab, Computer, Spell Check
Exam in the extra time venue
Exam in Individual Room, Computer, Assistive Tech
Exam in Individual Room, Computer, No Spell
Exam in individual room, Computer, Spell
Exam in Individual Room only

Other Exam Adjustments

Reasonable Adjustment	Guidance Note
Food & drink allowed during exam	This may be recommended for students who have certain conditions such as diabetes.

Exams not on consecutive days, where possible	Organised by the Exams Office but liaison between the School and Disability Team is usually required.
Only one exam per day, where possible	Organised by the Exams Office but liaison between the School and Disability Team is usually required.
Use of a reader	The Disability Team arrange and provide personal exam support.
Use of a scribe	The Disability Team arrange and provide personal exam support.
To be seated in a certain location in the hall	The Exams Office arrange this and provide instructions for invigilators.
Exam printed on coloured paper	The School has responsibility for providing this. The MMS notes field will specify the colour.
Coloured script book	The School has responsibility for notifying the Exams Office about script book requirements. The MMS notes field will specify the colour.
Enlarged font	Size of font will be specified on MMS. The School is responsible for provision of alternative format papers but can request assistance from the Alternative Format Suite.
Double spaced print on examination papers	The School is responsible for provision of alternative format papers but can request assistance from the Alternative Format Suite.
Exam printed on one side only	The School is responsible for provision of alternative format papers but can request assistance from the Alternative Format Suite.
Loose paper	The Exams Office arrange this and provides instructions for invigilators.
Use of a secretarial chair during exams	The Disability Team will make arrangements for ergonomic furniture to be in place for individuals who have this requirement.
Non-standard software	The Disability Team will liaise with the Exams Office and the School about particular software required.
Toilet breaks	The Exams Office arrange this and provides instructions for invigilators.

Reasonable Adjustments for a Viva Voce Examination

Individual reasonable adjustments for an oral examination such as a PhD viva will vary case-by-case according to the nature of the disability. Following disclosure of the disability, the Disability Team will identify the adjustments required for the viva in the student's Support Plan. The student will also have agreed with the Disability Adviser the details of the disability to be passed to the examiners. If appropriate, the examiners should be provided with training or awareness resources by the Disability Team and have an opportunity to raise any concerns. The convenor of the PhD thesis Examining Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the individual reasonable adjustments. This information will be passed to the convenor by the Disability Team through MMS. If a student considers the proposed reasonable adjustments to the viva are insufficient to overcome substantial disadvantage, then the student will need to follow the process for requesting an alternative mode of assessment.

Differential Marking

The University wishes to assess all students as fairly as possible and therefore, does not employ a 'two tier' or differential marking system for students with dyslexia. Written work should be marked as anonymously as possible and against the same academic standards for all students. There are several reasons for not using differential marking systems: a) differential marking can become inconsistent and arbitrary and; b) reasonable adjustments can be put in place for those who require writing support including access to study skills and assistive technology such as advance spell and grammar check tools.

It is acknowledged that students will make errors in timed assessments such as examinations and tests where there is limited opportunity to proofread content. To this end, minor errors in spelling and grammar where meaning is not altered and content can be understood should not be penalised in test or examination conditions. The exception to this is where spelling and grammar is a core competency that has to be demonstrated e.g. spelling of distinct technical/subject specific terms, language courses or in relation to professional and/or work based assessments.

It is legitimate to provide students with constructive feedback on spelling and grammar in order to help improve writing quality.

Anticipatory Adjustments to Teaching and Assessment

Anticipatory adjustments are those which anticipate the requirements of students with a wide variety of needs, including disabled students. Such anticipatory adjustments to existing teaching and assessment practices are a legal requirement under the Equality Act with benefits for all students, disabled and non-disabled alike. Anticipatory adjustments require proactive consideration of common barriers which students may face and the implementation of measures to reduce or eliminate them. Given the wide range of disabilities, in practice not every reasonable adjustment can be anticipated and especially those which are less common

Inclusive Practice in Teaching

Inclusive design and delivery of teaching is an anticipatory adjustment insofar as it obviates or minimises the need for individual reasonable adjustments. By anticipating the diverse needs of students, inclusive teaching removes barriers to participation and avoids the stigmatisation of disabled students who no longer need to request such adjustments.

While not mandatory or comprehensive, listed below are examples of inclusive practice in teaching:

- Face students when speaking
- Use a microphone where available
- Repeat students' questions clearly for other students to hear
- Provide advance guidance on required reading
- Provide class materials in advance of the class and in a visually clear and customisable format
- Provide instructions or information in an accessible electronic format
- Arrange classes in accessible locations
- Use lecture capture technology
- Enable students to meet with staff in an accessible location
- Minimise the use of unnecessary cultural references
- Use a mix of teaching strategies and activities
- Providing reading lists which distinguish between essential and desirable items

- Providing instructions in written form for practical tasks such as experiments or classroom activities

Inclusive Practice in Assessment

While not mandatory or comprehensive, the list below provides illustrative examples of inclusive practice in assessment:

- Offer the opportunity to receive feedback orally as well as in writing
- Use a variety of assessment methods
- Use accessible assessment venues
- Provide clear guidance on assessments and marking schemes and criteria
- Provide opportunities to prepare for assessments (e.g. model answers, formative practice, class work)
- Where technology is used in assessment, ensure that appropriate induction and training is provided
- Adopting a dyslexia friendly font in printed assessments e.g. sans serif fonts
- Avoiding last minute changes to examination arrangements
- The use of clear formatting
- The use of plain English as far as possible

Inclusive Practice in a viva voce examination

The following examples of inclusive practices apply to oral examinations. In the case of a PhD viva voce examination, the convenor is responsible for attending to these recommended guidelines:

- Locate the examination in an accessible room, with accessible toilet facilities nearby
- Choose an uncluttered room with minimal noise distractions, comfortable heating and adequate lighting
- Provide drinking water
- Provide advance notification of the timetable and venue and prior access to allow the student to familiarise themselves with the environment beforehand
- Clearly explain the procedure and structure of the examination at the beginning of the viva
- Provide boards or flipcharts to enable a student to explain ideas in writing or with diagrams
- Use succinct questions and avoid multipart questions
- Use unambiguous and clear language, avoiding colloquialisms and metaphorical expressions
- Be prepared to re-phrase questions if a student has misunderstood
- Allow the student to pause to think before answering a question
- Monitor fatigue and provide reasonable breaks as required

In many cases, it may be helpful for a supervisor of a PhD student to organise a mock viva for a student to simulate examination conditions. This practice session will help to identify whether inclusive practices are sufficient to address disability related concerns or whether individual reasonable adjustments will be required to alleviate the substantial disadvantage which a disabled student would otherwise experience.

An example of an inclusive approach to assessment

Student A has a condition that affects her ability to deliver oral presentations. She approached the module coordinator with concerns that the solutions offered, such as presenting to the academic staff only or completing an alternative assignment, would expose her as being 'different' as she would be absent from the class presentation schedule. The School decided to take a more inclusive approach by offering everyone in the class the choice between a traditional format presentation or a virtual presentation using Panopto. Student A chose the virtual option along with one other student. By offering the choice, Student A was given the same learning and assessment opportunities as her peers.

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