

ASSESSMENT, PROGRESSION AND AWARDED: TAUGHT PROGRAMMES HANDBOOK

4. Assessing students with disabilities

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 This Chapter is intended to support the application of consistent, equitable arrangements for the assessment of disabled students (and those with a temporary physical injury). In this context, a disabled student is defined as someone with a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial effect their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

4.1.2 It is the responsibility of students to inform the University if they have a disability, either during application, registration or following the subsequent onset of a disabling condition.

4.1.3 Students experiencing physical or mental impairment need to be assessed by AccessAbility or the Wellbeing Service. At this assessment the students' needs will be considered in relation to their courses and assessments, and individual learning plans (ILPs) and/or specific assessment arrangements will be put in place. ILPs will also detail the recommendations for reasonable adjustments detailed in the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) study needs assessment for particular students.

4.2 General Arrangements for University Examinations

4.2.1 Faculties (or delegated Schools), in consultation with AccessAbility or the Wellbeing Service where necessary, **should** comply with the ILP put in place for each individual student by the Wellbeing Service/AccessAbility. The Examinations Office will set a deadline for requests for specific arrangements and publish that deadline to the Wellbeing Service/AccessAbility, Faculties (or delegated Schools) and individual students. Requests received after this deadline cannot be guaranteed to be met.

4.2.2 Students with short-term injuries/health issues, which are supported by medical evidence, **may** be able to have specific examination arrangements if their injury or health issues have occurred for the first time since the request deadline date. They would need to be assessed by or be in contact with AccessAbility or the Wellbeing Service. However, these students **may** need to be deferred in their examinations if it is not possible for examination arrangements to be put in place.

- 4.2.3 Where arrangements cannot be carried out centrally, Faculties (or delegated Schools) and other units within the University **may** be required to ensure that appropriate provision is offered, under guidance from the Examinations Office and/or Wellbeing Service AccessAbility as appropriate.
- 4.2.4 Where there is some dispute as to the recommended specific assessment arrangement, the case **should** be referred to the Dean of the relevant Faculty. Liaison should then take place with Wellbeing Services/AccessAbility to ensure all issues are given due consideration.
- 4.2.5 Where the assessment is an examination administered by the Examinations Office, the Examinations Office **should** issue details to each candidate of the arrangements approved by the Examinations Office, together with any additional instructions, at least 15 working days before the relevant examinations commence.
- 4.2.6 Where the assessment is administered within a Faculty (or delegated School), the Wellbeing Service/AccessAbility/and the Examinations Office (where necessary) **should**, be consulted in determining the specific assessment arrangement.
- 4.2.7 A disability that has not been declared prior to an assessment cannot be taken into account retrospectively, unless the student can provide a reasonable explanation and properly documented evidence for not having previously declared it (see also the University's procedures for Student Academic Appeals).

4.3 Specific Arrangements

- 4.3.1 Additional time allowance **may** be made for all methods of assessment. This will be written on the students' ILPs following assessments by Wellbeing Services/AccessAbility. The standard additional time allowance for timed assessments is 15 minutes per hour unless evidence received states otherwise (from Wellbeing Service/AccessAbility).
- 4.3.2 Where an examination lasts for more than four hours, an appropriate supervised rest period **should** be allowed. For shorter examinations, students **should** only be eligible for rest breaks if specified in their ILPs.
- 4.3.3 Where an examination lasts for more than three hours, the students involved **should not** be required to take more than one examination in a single day. Where this is not possible, every effort **should** be made to ensure an adequate rest period between examinations, in agreement with Wellbeing Services/AccessAbility, the Examinations Office and the Faculty(s) (or delegated Schools) involved.

4.4 Alternative Examination Locations

4.4.1 If required as part of a student's ILP, a location suited to the student's needs, and meeting appropriate examination conditions **should** be made available.

4.4.2 Exceptionally, a student **may** be allowed to take an examination in their place of residence, provided that an invigilator approved by the Examinations Office is present.

4.5 Use of a Scribe

4.5.1 In exceptional circumstances the use of a scribe **may** be permitted. In such circumstances, students **should** be given 10 minutes extra time per hour in addition to their agreed extended time allowance. Guidelines for use of scribes are available from AccessAbility or the Examinations Office.

4.5.2 The appointment of a scribe for the duration of an examination is subject to approval by the University's Examinations Office.

4.5.3 The cost for provision of a scribe for the duration of the examination only will be met by AccessAbility.

4.6 Use of Information Technology

4.6.1 In exceptional circumstances the use of IT **may** be permissible, offering a flexible approach to students with disabilities or injuries. The specific requirements will be written on the ILP following assessment by Wellbeing Services/AccessAbility. Additional time allowance **may** be applied.

4.7 Assessment Format

4.7.1 In exceptional circumstances, the method of an assessment **may** be changed. This will be requested on the ILP following an assessment by Wellbeing Services/AccessAbility. The ILP will detail which time period and which modules require consideration for alternative assessment methods. Implementation will occur in consultation with the External Examiner, the Dean of the relevant Faculty, and the Examinations Office where appropriate.

4.8 Hearing Impaired Students

4.8.1 For hearing impaired students, arrangements for the use of an interpreter or lip speaker **may** be made. Alternatively, there **may** be support for pre-lingually deaf students upon arrangement and/or an additional time allowance **may** be granted.

4.9 Visually Impaired Students

4.9.1 Scripts **may** be made available in Braille or large print, or questions and candidate answers supplied via audiotape if practicable. Arrangements to use a reader **may** also be made.

4.10 Monitoring of Specific Assessment Arrangements

4.10.1 The Examinations Office will monitor specific assessment arrangements and ensure that the implementation of these procedures fits within the requirements of the law and the Equality Act 2010.

4.10.2 Any grievance or complaint regarding specific assessment arrangements **should** be made through the University's Student Complaints Procedure.

4.11 Group Work Assignments

4.11.1 In cases where a member of a group has a disability (as noted in an Individual Learning Plan) Module Leads should ensure reasonable adjustments are made to ensure that the student can actively participate in the group activity.

4.11.2 Module Leads should consider if there is a process in place to ensure that for group work assignments, where necessary, other group members have an awareness of the needs of the disabled student. Please note that this must be checked with the student with disabilities first. For example, it may be more appropriate to support the student to discuss their support needs with their peers.

4.11.3 Further information on group work assignments and strategies for Learning and Teaching which provide an inclusive experience for all students is provided in the Education Toolkit. This includes strategies for assessment and feedback and examples of reasonable adjustments that may assist group work. 'Guidance for Assessed Group Work' can be found within the University's SharePoint EduExe Toolkit.