

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University seeks to provide equal access for its disabled students through inclusive design where possible and, otherwise, through reasonable adjustments. This commitment builds upon the foundation of equality legislation and anti-discrimination guidance.
- 1.2 The Reasonable Adjustment Procedure provides a framework for the effective implementation of reasonable adjustments for all disabled students at Cardiff University.

Scope

- 1.3 The Equality Act (2010) provides protection against discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of disability and other protected characteristics.
- 1.4 A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This encompasses individuals with physical or sensory impairments, mental ill health, specific learning difficulties, and a range of chronic or fluctuating conditions.
- 1.5 It is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person in relation to the provision of education and related services. However, it is lawful to treat a disabled person more favourably because of their disability.
- 1.6 It is a legal duty for higher education institutions to anticipate needs and make reasonable adjustments so that disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled. The duty arises in relation to all aspects of the student experience, including:
 - .1 provisions, criteria, or practices (for example, procedures, policies, course materials, and teaching and assessment methods);
 - .2 physical features (for example, access to buildings, fixtures and fittings);
 - .3 providing auxiliary aids or services (for example, equipment or human support).
- 1.7 Inclusive design of curriculum content can ensure that accessibility is embedded in activities for all students' learning, teaching, and assessment.
- 1.8 The duty to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory: it requires the University to plan ahead and anticipate the likely needs of disabled students, rather than waiting until adjustments are proposed. The University should therefore ensure, where possible, that adjustments to policies, practices, and procedures have been made in advance to reduce or remove the barriers to disabled students.

- 1.9 The purpose of the duty is to take reasonable steps to remove or avoid disadvantage so that disabled students can effectively participate in the education and other benefits, facilities, and services provided for students. Failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments is considered discrimination.
- 1.10 The duty requires that only adjustments that are reasonable are made. What is reasonable will usually depend on the individual circumstances of the case. In assessing what is reasonable, the University should take the following into account:
- .1 the effect of the disability on the individual student;
 - .2 the effectiveness of the particular steps in removing or overcoming the relevant disadvantage;
 - .3 the relevant interests of other people, e.g. whether an adjustment would result in a significant disadvantage for other students;
 - .4 the practicality of the changes;
 - .5 any potential health and safety issues;
 - .6 the resources available (both those of the University and other financial assistance such as the Disabled Students' Allowances)
 - .7 the financial and other costs of making the adjustment;
 8. the type of education/provision or other benefit, facility, or service being provided by the University;
 9. the extent to which aids and services will otherwise be provided to disabled students (e.g. local authority support)
- 1.11 Reasonable adjustments should not compromise the academic standards of programmes or modules, as the Equality Act places no duty to make a reasonable adjustment to a competence standard.
- 1.12 A competence standard is 'an academic, medical, or other standard, applied for the purpose of determining whether a person has a particular level of competence or ability'. A competence standard must apply equally to all students, be genuinely relevant to the programme, and be a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim.
- 1.13 There is however a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the way in which a competence standard is assessed so that disabled students are not disadvantaged as a result of their disability. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of the assessment outcomes. However, they may involve, for example, changing the usual assessment arrangements or method, adapting assessment materials, providing a scribe or reader in the assessment, and re-organising the assessment environment.

2. Policy

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to:
- .1 Inform students about how to access support,
 - .2 Support the University in complying with the requirements of relevant legislation,
 - .3 Clarify where responsibility lies for the identification and implementation of reasonable adjustments,
 - .4 Outline the necessary steps for the effective implementation of reasonable adjustments,
 - .5 Inform students how to appeal a decision made in relation to a reasonable adjustment.
- 2.2 The University [Learning Hub](#) provides resources for staff in Designing Learning, Assessment for Learning, Supporting Teaching, and Supporting Students. All embed in the principles of inclusivity and accessibility for learning, teaching, assessment, and student support into day-to-day practice.
- 2.3 The University requires Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) to be carried out on all new and existing policies and practices. These are helpful in identifying whether any policies or practices would disproportionately disadvantage certain groups of users and enable Schools and Departments to consider anticipatory adjustments.
- 2.4 The University's quality assurance processes ensure that Colleges, Schools, and Departments reflect on equality and diversity of learning, teaching, and assessment.
- 2.5 As a student, you are responsible for:
- .1 disclosing a disability at the earliest opportunity;
 - .2 providing evidence to support the disability (such as a diagnostic assessment for learning impairments, medical or GP's letters/reports for physical or mental health conditions, or existing DSA needs assessment);
 - .2 attending meetings as requested to discuss your needs;
 - .3 disclosing any changes such as increased impairment (e.g. because of a deteriorating condition) requiring new adjustments or a modification of existing adjustments;
 - .4 providing documentation to support the recommended adjustments.

3. Procedure for identifying and implementing individual reasonable adjustments

- 3.1 The Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) undertakes needs assessments to find out the support and reasonable adjustments required to enable you to engage with your programme of study and the wider University provision. The DDS will take into account supporting evidence, e.g. GP's letter, educational psychologist's report, DSA needs assessment report and your account of your needs.
- 3.2 Applicants who have disclosed a disability and have accepted an offer are asked to provide more information about their disability together with supporting evidence, and to work with Student Support to ensure that reasonable adjustments are in place as soon as possible. The DDS will contact applicants to advise on reasonable adjustments.
- 3.3 You should also disclose a disability whilst on your programme as soon as you become aware of it or its impact on your ability to access your programme or other student service. You may visit or contact the DDS and disclose directly. If you disclose to another member of staff the information will be passed to the DDS with your permission in accordance with the Student Disability Disclosure Policy and the DDS will contact you.
- 3.4 If you want your disability information to remain confidential, you will be advised if this will restrict the adjustments that can be made for you. This would be the case if circumstances are such that staff would need to know who you are in order to make the relevant adjustment.
- 3.5 You will have the opportunity to have a needs assessment to identify reasonable adjustments. In cases where you request support prior to the needs assessment, if standardised reasonable adjustments are recommended by the supporting evidence, the DDS will advise if these can be made in the interim until a needs assessment is conducted.
- 3.6 The DDS will consider whether the standardised University adjustments meet your specific needs, and will then consider whether individual adjustments are also required. In determining individual reasonable adjustments, the DDS will take into account the factors set out in paragraph 1.10 relating to reasonableness, and in particular:
 - .1 Your individual circumstances and the programme;
 - .2 The effectiveness of the adjustment;
 - .3 Your previous experience of the adjustment, and the time and resource required to implement the adjustment.
- 3.7 If you are able to access external funding for a reasonable adjustment, for example through the DSA, the University expects you to access such funding. The DDS will support you with this process. [Applying for DSA](#) will involve:

- .1 Making an application and providing medical evidence,
 - .2 Attending a DSA needs assessment appointment,
 - .3 Accepting the needs assessment recommendations.
- 3.8 The DDS will liaise with Schools and Departments where there are concerns that it may not be possible to put an adjustment in place, e.g. because it may relate to a competence standard.
- 3.9 The University is not obliged to offer the student their preferred adjustment when an alternative reasonable adjustment would be equally effective.
- 3.10 If you choose to share your DSA needs assessment report, the DDS will be able to review previous identified reasonable adjustments to assess if any additional adjustments are required.
- 3.11 Reasonable adjustments in the form of auxiliary aids may include:
- Support workers,
 - Specialist study skills tutors,
 - Mental Health Mentors.
- 3.12 Once the DDS have confirmation that you require support from these services, you will be contacted with information on how to access the support. Where those auxiliary aids are provided by someone other than Cardiff University, the DDS will work with you and your School to co-ordinate the implementation of these services.
- 3.13 Once reasonable adjustments have been agreed, the reasonable adjustments will be detailed in an Individual Support Adjustment Notification, held by the DDS. Provided you have consented to disclosure, a copy will be sent to your School and, where required, the appropriate University Professional Services Department.

4. Reasonable adjustments: Schools/Professional Services Departments

- 4.1 All reasonable adjustments are recorded on your student record and made available to only to relevant staff in Schools/Departments as is necessary to put in place reasonable adjustments. If you are on a joint honours programme access will be provided to both Schools/Departments. The named Disability Contact(s) will coordinate local implementation of reasonable adjustments.
- 4.2 Reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis, which means that a broad and diverse range of adjustments may be recommended. However, there are a number of standardised reasonable adjustments that are put in place to help to overcome common barriers. In the case of standardised reasonable adjustments, it is the expectation that

the School or Department will implement these when requested by DDS without the need for further consultation. Standardised adjustments include:

Learning and teaching

- Providing electronic copies of lecture material in advance electronically (e.g. lecture slides, handouts, or lecture notes provided in advance via Learning Central);
- Providing a recording of lectures or, where this is not possible, an equally effective reasonable alternative, in accordance with the [Policy for Recording Educational Activities](#);
- Provide directed reading lists which differentiate between essential or core texts and desirable texts.

Library Services

- Extended library loans,
- Book fetching service,
- Use of assistive equipment in libraries.

Reasonable Adjustments in Assessments

- Reasonable adjustments in respect of marking and the identification of work from students with disabilities affecting written expression.
- Alternative forms of assessments and standardised adjustments in written examinations.
- A number of reasonable adjustments to examinations are already permitted as standard on the basis of a needs assessment being carried out by the DDS and supporting evidence being provided. These are:
 - Extra time (up to 30 minutes per hour)
 - Rest breaks (up to 10 minutes per hour)
 - Use of a scribe and/or reader
 - Use of a computer
 - Exam scripts to be flagged to marker
 - Alternative format for exam papers
 - Use of own equipment
 - Provision of an adjustable chair and/or desk/footrest/writing slope.

4.3 Where the mode of assessment puts a disabled student at a substantial disadvantage when compared with students who do not have that disability and the standardised adjustments to examinations are not effective in preventing the disadvantage, the University will consider other alternative modes of assessment, where it does not impact on the competency standards.

- 4.4 Requests for consideration of an alternative mode of assessment will be for exceptional cases and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the DDS who will liaise with your School to assess what is possible and does not compromise competency standards.
- 4.5 In deciding on the appropriateness of an alternative mode of assessment the School will need to be guided by the competence standards for the programme. The programme specification should provide the basis for determining them.
- 4.6 It may not always be possible to provide an alternative mode of assessment, for example, where the mode of examination and the competence standard are inextricably linked. However, where a request is declined, the reasons for this decision will be stated with reference to the key competencies of the programme.

5. Consultation process

- 5.1 As a student you will be able to discuss your recommended adjustments and agree them with a Disability Advisor. If you have any issues with the implementation of your support adjustments, you should arrange to discuss this with a Disability Advisor.
- 5.2 The Disability Advisor will liaise with the member of staff responsible for implementing reasonable adjustments for your programme and make recommendations on what you require. The School representative will consider the requested adjustments and determine if adjustments can be put in place and discuss any concerns about recommended adjustments with a Disability Adviser. Adjustments which impact on competency standards may not be permitted.
- 5.3 The University recognises that your ability to access learning and teaching may be hampered without your support adjustments in place, and will work with all parties to ensure adjustments can be made in a timely way.
- 5.4 In cases where discussion between the School and the Disability Advisor cannot resolve a concern, or where you feel the adjustments are not effective or believe they are unreasonable, the DDS will convene a review panel within 14 days of the concern being raised to seek a resolution. The panel members will include relevant parties from the following list:
- Head of Disability and Access Support (or nominee);
 - Director of Learning and Teaching (or nominee);
 - Disability Contact;
 - Programme leader (or nominee);
 - Module leader
 - Assessment and feedback lead (if alternative form of assessment).
- 5.5 If the reasonable adjustments change as a result of this consultation, the DDS will note changes on your record and inform you of the School or Department's decision.

- 5.6 You will be notified in writing of the outcome of the panel meeting and the decision regarding adjustments. The letter will include details of how you may challenge this decision under the University Review Procedure.

6. Request for review

- 6.1 If you believe the decision on your reasonable adjustments is incorrect, unfair, or unreasonable, and that it has not been resolved by the review panel, you have the right to challenge the decision under the [University Review Procedure](#). You will be asked to provide evidence to [support](#) your reasons for challenging the decision.

7. Useful links

[Disability & Dyslexia Service](#)

DSA Guidance

Assessment Policy

[Disclosure Policy](#)