

Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Students Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The University seeks to provide equal access and opportunity for students with disabilities through the implementation of the Inclusive Education Framework where possible and, otherwise, through reasonable adjustments. This commitment builds upon the foundation of equality legislation and anti-discrimination guidance.

2. Purpose

2.1. The University has a legal duty to adhere to the Equality Act (2010) (The Act), which includes the Disability Discrimination Act of 1995, the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The Act provides protection against discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of disability and other protected characteristics.

2.2. 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. Examples of these may include:

- Blind/Visual Impairment
- Deaf/Hearing Impairment
- Mobility MS, Cerebral Palsy, Motor Neurone
- Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia
- Chronic Fatigue Syndrome
- ASD or ADHD
- Depression and anxiety
- Bipolar
- Epilepsy

2.3. 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.

2.4. The Act places a legal duty on 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.

2.5. The duty arises in relation to all aspects of the student experience, including:

- provisions, criteria, or practices (for example, procedures, policies, course materials, and teaching and assessment methods);

- physical features (for example, access to buildings, fixtures and fittings);
- providing auxiliary aids or services (for example, equipment or human support).

3. Scope

3.1. The Inclusive Education Framework aims to ensure that accessibility is embedded in education activities for all students, including learning, teaching, and assessment.

3.2. 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 is therefore required to ensure, where possible, that adjustments to policies, practices, and procedures have been made in advance to reduce or remove the barriers to disabled students.

3.3. 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 by the University.

Failure to comply with the duty to make reasonable adjustments would constitute unlawful discrimination under The Act.

3.4. 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:

- i. the effect of the disability on the individual student;
- ii. the effectiveness of the particular steps in removing or overcoming the relevant disadvantage;
- iii. the relevant interests of other people, e.g. whether an adjustment would result in a significant disadvantage for other students;
- iv. the practicality of the changes;
- v. any potential health and safety issues;
- vi. the resources available (both those of the University and other financial assistance such as the Disabled Students' Allowances)
- vii. the financial and other costs of making the adjustment;
- viii. the type of education/provision or other benefit, facility, or service being provided by the University; and
- ix. the extent to which aids and services will otherwise be provided to disabled students (e.g. local authority support).

3.5. There is no duty on the University to adjust genuine 'competence standards', which are academic, medical, or other standards applied by or on behalf of the University for the purpose of determining whether a person has a particular level of competence or capability. However, the duty does apply to the way in which that standard is assessed.

3.6. Assessments must demonstrate that the learning outcomes for a module have been met, for example, when setting a presentation as the required mode of assessment, this should be clearly linked to a learning outcome (for example, communication skills demonstrated through ability to

deliver a presentation). 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.

3.7. Reasonable adjustments may also be necessary when determining the approval of an extension that goes beyond the automatic 7-day extension for which all students can apply. The Procedure document outlines the process for managing extensions for up to an additional 7 days for students with a Reasonable Adjustment.

3.8. All schools are required to have a Disability Inclusion Tutor (DIT), DITs work with Disability and Inclusion Service (DIS) to ensure that Reasonable Adjustments are implemented for students disclosing a disability. Further details on the process for this can be found in the accompanying procedure.

4. POLICY

4.1. The purpose of this policy is to:

- i. Outline the responsibilities of staff and students (section 5);
- ii. Inform and guide the University regarding compliance with the requirements of relevant legislation; and
- iii. Clarify where responsibility lies for the identification and implementation of reasonable adjustments, (section 5)

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosing a disability at the earliest opportunity; • 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); • Attending meetings as requested to discuss your needs; • Disclosing any changes such as increased impairment (e.g. because of a deteriorating condition) requiring new adjustments or a modification of existing adjustments; • Providing documentation to support the recommended adjustments where appropriate.
Disability Support and Inclusion Team (Student Services)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaising with students and their Academic School to ensure appropriate information/evidence is sought regarding a student's disability and inform the Academic school of adjustments required
Disability Inclusion Tutors (Academic School)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with the Director of Education and Head of School, ensure the Inclusive Education Framework and Reasonable Adjustments are implemented and adhered to within the Academic School
Module Managers / Leads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Inclusive Education Framework and Reasonable Adjustments are delivered within modules and for individual students.

Heads of School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that the School complies with the Reasonable Adjustments Policy and Inclusive Education Framework. To ensure the School has at least one DIT in place with a commensurate workload allocation
Keele Institute of Innovative Education (KIITE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide resources for staff in designing and delivering teaching, learning and assessment that embeds the requirements of the Inclusive Education Framework.
All other staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise the disclosure of a disability and refer this to the Disability support and Inclusion Team

6. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

6.1. This policy should work alongside all policies and procedures relating to students. Specifically working in conjunction with the Inclusive Education Framework.

7. REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

7.1. This policy should be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier if required, by the Director Student Support and Success, Head of Student Accessibility and Inclusion, and Education Committee.

7.2. The University Executive Committee will approve this policy.

7.3. This policy will be included in the policy zone area of the University Website.

8. ANNEXES

- Annex 1: DIT Role Description
- Annex 2: Reasonable Adjustments Disclosure Flowchart
- Annex 3: RA Process for Extensions

9. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

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Owner	Director of Student Services and Success, Student Services
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