



## Policy on reasonable adjustments for students

### 1. Introduction

**1.1** The University values the diversity of its student population and its Research-inspired Education Strategy aims to create a welcoming, inclusive and enriching learning environment where all students can develop a sense of belonging and achieve success.

**1.2** Under the Equality Act (2010), universities are required to make reasonable adjustments in anticipation of, and in response to, the needs of disabled students to ensure that a disabled student is not treated less favourably than other students for reasons relating to their disability. This applies to all services and facilities universities provide including all aspects of learning and teaching. If necessary, the Act allows disabled students to be treated more favourably than other students.

**1.3** The term 'disabled' throughout this policy is as defined under the Equality Act (2010) in that you are disabled if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a "substantial" and "long-term" negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. All disabled students will be required to provide evidence from a medical professional or specialist assessor or be in the process of obtaining this evidence.

**1.4** The term 'reasonable adjustment' throughout this policy describes provision deemed reasonable under the Equality Act (2010) to meet the needs of disabled students.

### 2. Purpose and Scope

**2.1** This policy sets out how the University meets its responsibilities to students under the Equality Act (2010), specifically the approach to supporting disabled students through the provision of reasonable adjustments.

**2.2** This policy applies to all disabled students at the University who have, or may develop, a condition covered by the Act during their studies. Although the procedures that underpin it may vary where students are studying with a partner institution, including those based overseas.

**2.3** This policy does not apply to students who have short term conditions such as broken limbs or coughs and colds. Students should use the Mitigating Circumstances process if they cannot meet their assessment deadlines and contact relevant Student Support Services if they need support. See: [Mitigating circumstances | Policies | University of Leicester](#)

**2.4** Although the policy relates to University compliance with the Equality Act (2010), Schools and the Accessibility Centre will work together to ensure any student is assessed for Reasonable Adjustment where a relevant need is identified

### 3. The University's Approach

**3.1** The University is committed to providing an inclusive and equitable learning experience to enable all students, ensuring they access the same opportunities and achieve success in their studies.

**3.2** This commitment includes digital accessibility to ensure all students can use online content. The University statement on digital accessibility is published at [Accessibility statement | Policies | University of Leicester](#)

**3.3** The University publishes guidance on creating accessible learning materials at [Digital accessibility \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

**3.4** The University aims to develop inclusive curricula and anticipate the requirements of disabled students, identifying anticipatory reasonable adjustments to meet their needs through a range of activities. Examples include:

- Raising awareness of the support and provision offered to disabled students through Student Support Services and its legal obligations under the Equality Act (2010);
- Providing a supportive environment and multiple opportunities to encourage applicants and students to disclose their disability to the University;
- Promoting Universal Design for Learning through the establishment of inclusive learning, teaching and assessment on all programmes and providing support in the learning environment;
- Ensuring the design and delivery of programmes and modules are as inclusive as possible and that this is tested through approval and review processes;
- Providing appropriate training to staff;
- Mandatory monitoring and review of the effectiveness of reasonable adjustments for individual students.

**3.5** Further advice and guidance on inclusive learning, teaching and assessment is published on the [Education Hub](#)

**3.6** Although the University aims to identify the most common barriers experienced by disabled students and, wherever possible, to identify appropriate anticipatory adjustments to overcome these barriers, this may not be possible in all cases, so where needed, individual reasonable adjustments will be agreed with the student, School, Accessibility Centre and other services and implemented.

**3.7** The University can make reasonable adjustments (individual and anticipatory) to academic provision or practices but it cannot alter or adjust the competence standards that the student has to meet in order to pass their course and meet its learning outcomes. Competency standards are academic, medical or other standards required under the University's Senate Regulations, or for a particular programme of study. These must relate directly to its learning outcomes.

## 4. Roles and Responsibilities

**4.1** As the University's disability support service, the AccessAbility Centre (AAC) within Student Support Services provides support for applicants and students throughout the student lifecycle. However, all staff should be aware of their responsibility under the Equality Act (2010) to support disabled students and make reasonable adjustments as required. See the UoL Strategy 'No Citizen is left behind. We promote equality and embrace diversity to create opportunities for all, ensuring our staff and students are treated with dignity and respect'.. ([Our guiding principles \(sharepoint.com\)](#))

**4.2** The AAC undertakes a range of duties that include:

- undertaking pre-entry work with prospective students;
- providing individualised, student-centred disability support and advising on reasonable adjustments for students wherever their activity is based, eg on campus, on field trips or on study abroad
- liaising with academic Schools including via the network of AccessAbility Tutors Personal Tutors and Mitigating Circumstances Experts;
- advising and training staff;
- liaising with external agencies;
- recruiting disability support workers to provide,, for example, note taking, and specialist mentoring;
- organising screening and assessment, e.g. for dyslexia;
- advising on alternative assessment arrangements and provision of Assessed Work Cover Sheets (AWCS);
- ensuring University compliance with the Equality Act (2010) with regard to disabled students;
- identifying DSA funded students and ensuring compliance with DSA requirement;
- advising on the Flexible Study Policy and other related policies.

**4.3** Heads of School are responsible for appointing an AccessAbility Tutor for their School and for ensuring that staff are aware of relevant student policies and implement requirements on reasonable adjustments.

**4.4** AccessAbility Tutors in each academic School provide advice to students on specific queries about their programme of study and signpost students to support from the AAC and other relevant services. (See [AccessAbility Tutors | AccessAbility Centre | University of Leicester and Appendix 1](#))

**4.5** All staff are responsible for ensuring that they implement reasonable adjustments in accordance with guidance from the AAC.

**4.6** The Examinations Office in collaboration with the AAC is responsible for making Alternative Examination Arrangements for disabled students for on-campus examinations and in other examinations centres, if required where these examinations take place during University governed exam periods.

**4.7** The Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Sub-Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy. The policy will be reviewed annually. The Committee will receive termly progress reports on the implementation of the policy, including data on the volume of study support plans in place and an assessment of associated risks.

## 5. Disclosing a Disability

**5.1** Applicants are encouraged to disclose any disability, specific learning difficulty, long-term physical or mental health condition as early as possible including at the point of application via their UCAS or application form.

**5.2** Students may disclose information on registration or at any point during their studies through their School or the AccessAbility Centre or by updating their status on MSR. Information on disclosing a disability is published at: [Disclosing your disability | AccessAbility Centre | University of Leicester](#)

**5.3** All information provided by applicants and students will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998) and General Data Protection Regulation (2018).

**5.4** Students can request that information disclosed to the AccessAbility Centre is not shared with their School or other services but the implications of this should be discussed in full as, if information is not shared, this may impact the support that can be provided and the implementation of any reasonable adjustments.

**5.5** Students should be aware that Reasonable Adjustments can be arranged from the point at which information about their disability is shared with the University. It is not possible to reconsider marks or other awards which have been completed before the student shared information about their disability.

## 6. Identifying and Implementing Reasonable Adjustments in learning, teaching and assessment

**6.1** Although the University has processes in place to encourage the development of inclusive programmes with anticipatory adjustments in place, there will be instances where these are not sufficient to meet the needs of individual students and reasonable adjustments will be required.

**6.2** The AAC will work with students to develop a support plan and with the relevant academic School and other university departments to agree the nature and implementation of reasonable adjustments.

**6.3** The AAC considers reasonable adjustments on a case-by-case basis by meeting with the student and taking into account whether a student is disadvantaged by existing modes of teaching and assessment and how effective proposed adjustments will be in overcoming that disadvantage.

Reasonable adjustments are decided in collaboration with relevant staff in Schools who are included in discussions.

**6.4** The AAC will consider whether the proposed adjustments are reasonable in terms of practicality for students and staff, although it may not be possible to agree students' preferred adjustments in all cases.

**6.5** Schools may make reasonable adjustments and adjust assessment patterns and deadlines where this is possible in response to a student's disability and where the AAC has implemented a support plan.

**6.6** Support Plans are focussed on supporting the students' needs and will be reviewed as often as required by the AAC with the student and relevant staff to ensure currency and make any necessary amendments.

**6.7** The AAC will consider reasonable adjustments for assessment where these do not compromise competency standards and support the academic school as it ensures that students are able to meet the ILOs for the module.

**6.8** The AAC and academic school may implement the Policy on Flexible Study on a Full-time Programme where circumstances have an impact on a student's ability to continue their studies on a full-time programme but where there is evidence to suggest that they would be able to engage effectively with a reduced study load for a defined period.

**6.9** Examples of reasonable adjustments in learning and teaching might include:

- providing alternative formats for teaching and learning materials;
- providing additional 1:1 support;
- providing assistance in the form of a British Sign Language interpreter or lip speaker, reader or note-taker;
- allowing a student to study remotely where this is possible for their programme of study;
- agreeing an alternative pattern of registration e.g. through the Policy on Flexible Study on a Full-time Programme to reduce student workload.

**6.10** Examples of reasonable adjustments in assessment might include:

- allowing additional time to complete an assessment whether an examination or a coursework assessment;
- an alternative method of assessment that tests the achievement of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for a module or programme, but through different means to the standard assessment for a module e.g., a written assessment in place of a presentation, allowing a presentation to be recorded, an oral assessment in place of a written assessment, etc.;
- providing Assessed Work Cover Sheets as appropriate for particular students including those with dyslexia, disabilities such as mental health conditions, AD(H)D and autism;
- providing examination papers in alternative formats;
- providing assistive technology such as a computer with screen reading software or other IT solutions for in-person examinations;
- alternative arrangements for in-person exams, for example using different venues, allowing breaks and additional time and other reasonable adjustments as required;

- The AAC will also provide advice and guidance on a case by a case basis to colleagues working with disabled students in situations which may well fall outside teaching, learning and assessment.

**6.11** For the avoidance of doubt, in cases where there is a variance of opinion on how best to meet the needs of an individual student, the University will take a compassionate approach in the best interests of the student in question, and the final decision will be the Academic Registrar or nominee.

## 7. Related Policies

**7.1** The University has a range of policies designed to support all students, some of which may have particular relevance to disabled students including:

- Support to Study Policy, supports students and staff in managing complex needs in relation to students' ability to engage with their studies;
- Policy on Flexible Study on a Full-time Programme, applies to students with a disability, long-term condition or exceptional circumstances that impact their ability to continue their studies on a full-time programme;
- Senate Regulation 8.47 and -8.48, articulates policy on Alternative Examination Arrangements;
- Mitigating Circumstances Policy;
- Senate Regulation 7, articulates the University's principles and procedures for assessment;
- Senate Regulations 5 and 6 outline assessment requirements for undergraduate and PGT students respectively;
- Fitness to Practice Regulations for programmes in Medicine, Allied Health and Education.
- Maternity Policy
- Accommodation Policy
- Disability Policy (in progress)

## Appendix 1

### Role of the AccessAbility Tutor (AA Tutor)

This information is sent to new AA Tutors.

### Background

The AccessAbility Centre (AAC) is part of Student Support Services and provides support to disabled students at the University.

The list of AA Tutors can be found at this web link: [AccessAbility Tutors | AccessAbility Centre | University of Leicester](#)

There are usually about 40 AA Tutors who are drawn from both academic and professional services. Some AA Tutors represent whole Schools or Colleges and others represent just one department or course. There are also AA Tutors from the Careers and Employability Service and the Centre for Academic Achievement. There has been a network of AA Tutors at Leicester since the mid 1990's

There are three meetings each academic year in November, January and April which last for an hour or less. These meetings move across different days of the week and are also attended by some members of the AccessAbility Centre team; the meeting is usually chaired by the Head of the AccessAbility Centre. Agendas are set for each meeting and notes of the previous meeting are circulated.

Each AccessAbility Tutor has three main responsibilities:

- 1) to be an extra contact for disabled students in their department or School in case there are issues that they do not want to discuss with their teaching staff or their personal tutor;
- 2) to be there as a contact on disability related matters for staff in their department;
- 3) to be a sounding board and channel of communication to students and staff on behalf of the AccessAbility Centre on:
  - new university processes, strategies or initiatives and their impact on disabled students;
  - new software,
  - new relevant legislation
  - reporting any issue back to the AccessAbility Centre to enable it to improve its service to students and staff;
  - to help with the implementation of support funded by DSA;
  - to help with the implementation of support and reasonable adjustments provided by the University;
  - to receive information about the latest developments from the DfE, Research Councils and so on.
  - to attend relevant training or advice and guidance sessions.