



Reasonable Adjustments for Students

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1. Overview and Purpose

1.1 This policy outlines the University's key legal duties towards Reasonable Adjustments for disabled students, and the required actions from staff to meet these duties. The policy should be read in conjunction with relevant guidance notes.

1.2 The University responds to its anticipatory duty towards Reasonable Adjustments through its overarching commitment to inclusive practice, further types of support available to disabled students, the Inclusive Education Policy and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1.3 Note that this policy applies only to Reasonable Adjustments when they are provisions of the Equality Act 2010 for disabled students.

1.4 This policy reflects the University's legal duty towards the Equality Act 2010 and therefore uses concepts and definitions aligned with this legislation to be effective in its aim.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all UEA students undertaking of study including full-time, part-time, modular, distance and placement-based learning associated with courses delivered by UEA in the United Kingdom. It applies to all levels of study including Apprenticeship, Undergraduate, Postgraduate taught and Postgraduate Research.

2.2 Adherence to approved policy and regulations is fundamental to the effective operation of the university. This policy has been developed in alignment with sector best practice to promote consistency, accountability, and compliance with relevant standards. Observing the policy ensures that decisions and actions are informed, equitable, and aligned with institutional values.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Reasonable Adjustments	Under the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments are changes an employer, education provider, service provider, or public body must make to remove or reduce the disadvantage experienced by a disabled person compared with a non-disabled person.
Assessment Adjustments	Assessment adjustments are reasonable adjustments. UEA uses the term assessment adjustments in relation to adjustments made to assessments, largely in the context of timed or professional assessments such as examinations or Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs).

Competence Standards	Competence standards are academic, professional or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability. Competence standards may be learning outcomes provided they genuinely reflect the level of competence required for the course. Competence standards cannot be changed by reasonable adjustments.
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4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Student Journey and Support Services oversee the process for all students who require or request a Reasonable Adjustment. All staff making decisions relating to Reasonable Adjustments must be familiar with approaches to determining reasonableness.

4.2 It is the responsibility of academic staff in schools of study to implement the Reasonable Adjustments in line with information supplied by The Student Journey and Support Services. In some cases, it may be necessary to make urgent adjustments, for example an adjustment to an assessment for a student whose needs have changed suddenly. This can be done on a one-off basis by an academic member of staff, but advice should be sought from SJS on the permanent arrangements.

5. Policy Statement

5.1 Legal and regulatory framework

The University will have due regard to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering good relations as required by s.149 Equality Act 2010., The Public Sector Equality Duty and the Higher Education and Research Act.

5.2 The principle of Reasonable Adjustments and Timeframes

5.2.1 At UEA, the term 'Reasonable Adjustment' includes but is not limited to adjustments for teaching, learning and research, adjustments for placements and clinical exams, Assessment Adjustments, Exceptional Circumstances and concessions relating to disability, adjustments for applicant interviews, and parking permits for disabled students.

5.2.2 Timeframes for Implementation - Adjustments shall be made promptly and without unreasonable delay. Urgent adjustments should be implemented within three working days where feasible. Standard adjustments should be in place within 20 working days of agreement.

5.3 Key concepts

5.3.1 Disability

'Disabled' and 'disability' refer to the definition set by the Equality Act (2010). The University uses this definition for the purpose of assessing and implementing Reasonable Adjustments. Disability is a protected characteristic in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). Other uses of the term 'disabled' outside of Equality Act functions may have different definitions which are outlined in guidance and training for staff and students.

5.3.2 Evidence of need

In alignment with sector guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the University will consider Reasonable Adjustments based on evidence of need. Disabled students do not need diagnostic evidence or to have a named condition to have Reasonable Adjustments implemented.

5.4 Determining 'reasonableness' and implementing the policy

5.4.1 All staff making decisions relating to Reasonable Adjustments must be familiar with approaches to determining reasonableness. The Student and Academic Services - Student Journey and Support Service oversee the process for all students who require or request a Reasonable Adjustment. For standard adjustments, the SJS team will consider the following:

5.4.2 'Reasonable' or 'reasonableness' can be determined by considering:

Could the adjustment be practicable in its application?

Could the adjustment be effective in achieving its aim?

5.4.3 There is no need to prove that the adjustment is practicable and effective in advance of agreeing and implementing it, just that it might be.

5.4.4 An adjustment should not be considered unreasonable if it does not remove the disadvantage fully. An adjustment which partially removes or reduces substantial disadvantage is also likely to be reasonable. 5.4.5 There will be some circumstances where a request may not be deemed as Reasonable due to requirements of the programme. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and every effort will be made to accommodate the needs of a student as outlined in 4.3.4.

5.4.6 In the case of academic staff implementing urgent adjustments, support can be sought from Student Journey and Support Service.

5.2.7 The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the process are set out in guidance and training provided.

5.5 Teaching, learning, research and assessment and the anticipatory duty and inclusive practice and competence standards

5.5.1 The University's legal duty towards Reasonable Adjustments is anticipatory, meaning that the University must consider what adjustments might be reasonable whether or not an individual with those needs is known and/or has requested those adjustments.

5.5.2 In practice this duty is met primarily through a combination of inclusive design of our education and research offer, and of our ancillary services and physical and digital spaces, inclusive practice as our usual mode of delivery, and the provision of Reasonable Adjustments on an individual basis.

5.5.3 The University expects all staff in scope of this policy to embed inclusive design and inclusive practice into their work, whether or not they are in student-facing roles.

5.5.4 Competence standards apply to all programmes and must be clearly defined and communicated to students, prospective applicants, applicants and prospective students. Care should be taken in aligning these with the requirements of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory bodies where appropriate.

5.6 Work based learning, placements and study abroad

5.6.1 Reasonable Adjustments apply to all modes of placement undertaken as part of a UEA course which is based on the UEA UK campus.

5.6.2 Responsibility for assessing, formulating and implementing Reasonable Adjustments for placements vary by type as set out in the guidance and may involve consultation with occupational health specialists.

5.6.3 Institutions offering Study Abroad, work placement or volunteering opportunities abroad to UEA students are not obligated to replicate provisions of the Equality Act (2010), and legal obligations towards disabled students vary by location and/or institution. The University will take all reasonable steps, with consent of the student, to ensure the needs of individual disabled students are communicated to and considered by Study Abroad partner institutions or other host organisations.

5.6.4 Exceptional cases may arise where the University assesses that Reasonable Adjustments for a disabled student cannot be met by a non-UK based Study Abroad partner institution, workplace or volunteering host organisation and/or any disability support scheme associated with them to the extent that it is unfeasible or otherwise unsafe for the student to participate in Study Abroad at that institution. Risk Assessment process is used to identify risk factors, including personal risk factors, and how they are being mitigated in delivery of the placement.

5.7. Reasonable Adjustments recommended by third parties

5.7.1 The University does not automatically accept and/or implement recommendations of Reasonable Adjustments from third parties, except for where the third party is funding or otherwise providing the recommendation and the recommendation is feasible for the University to implement. Third parties include external Needs Assessors (including those working on behalf of external disability-related funding schemes), Occupational Health Services and diagnosing clinicians.

5.7.2 Adjustments which have previously been available to a student through an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) will not necessarily be provided.

5.7.2 Recommendations of Reasonable Adjustments from third parties without funding or provision of the adjustment will be considered in the same way as any other request for Reasonable Adjustments.

5.8. Provisions, criteria and practices

5.8.1 The University has a duty to make Reasonable Adjustments to any provision, criterion or practice which places a disabled student at a substantial disadvantage. This means that the duty extends beyond the teaching, learning, research and assessment activities detailed in section 6 of this policy.

5.8.2 A provision, criterion or practice may include, but is not limited to:

- The way that education, or access to any benefit, service or facility is offered or provided.
- Formal and informal policies.
- Processes or directions to do something a particular way.

5.9. Auxiliary aids

5.9.1 The University has a duty to provide auxiliary aids to disabled students as required. An auxiliary aid or service is anything which provides additional support or assistance to a disabled student. Examples include assistive technology software, sign language interpreter services, a Reader for exams, or specific pieces of equipment.

5.9.2 The University is prohibited from requiring students to fund or part fund any Reasonable Adjustment, including auxiliary aids. External funding schemes operate under different rules and may require a student contribution for some auxiliary aids.

5.9.3 Funding mechanisms for the provision of auxiliary aids vary by context.

5.10 Physical features

5.10.1 The University is committed to ensuring as far as possible that its physical environment does not place disabled students at a substantial disadvantage. In alignment with the Equality Act 2010, Reasonable Adjustments will be made to physical features of buildings and facilities to support equitable access.

5.10.2 Reasonable Adjustments will be made to physical features to support disabled students in teaching and learning spaces. This may include accessible seating, hearing/audio enhancement systems, visual display aids and assistive technologies.

5.10.3 Teaching and research spaces will be designed and maintained with inclusive principles in mind. Individual requirements will be assessed on a case-by-case basis to ensure equitable access to learning.

5.11 Accommodation

5.11.1 The University is committed to providing accessible and inclusive accommodation for disabled students within its accommodation offering.

5.11.2 Reasonable Adjustments will be made to UEA accommodation to ensure that living arrangements do not place disabled students at a substantial disadvantage. This may include adapted rooms, accessible facilities, proximity to campus and teaching spaces.

5.11.3 Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with adjustments implemented in consultation with the student and relevant services.

5.11.4 The University is legally prohibited from charging additional costs to disabled students for accessible accommodation. However, the University is also unable to reduce costs to disabled students for accessible accommodation. This means that the standard rate for the room category will be charged.

5.12 Digital environment

5.12.1 The University is committed to ensuring as far as possible that its digital environment does not place disabled students at a substantial disadvantage.

5.12.2 In alignment with digital accessibility legislation, the vast majority of content hosted on the University's webpages and virtual learning environments must meet the AA accessibility standard of the current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). These requirements can usually be met through inclusive design principles.

5.12.2 Students who require further accessibility arrangements to access digital environments and resources can request these as Reasonable Adjustments, subject to the principles of evidence of need and of reasonableness.

5.13 Funding Reasonable Adjustments

5.13.1 Where the provision of Reasonable Adjustments required by students incur a direct cost to the University, this is factored into operational models and budgets on an anticipatory basis.

5.13.2 Disabled students are encouraged at the earliest opportunity to review the eligibility criteria for Higher Education disability funding schemes, such as Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), Research Council funding from UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), NHS funding and Apprenticeships funding, and make an application as appropriate.

5.13.3 Where a student is not eligible for a disability-related funding scheme, or their requirements are only partially met by a disability-related funding scheme, the University will fund the cost of adjustments it deems reasonable. This includes auxiliary aids such as assistive technology and assistive technology training where required.

5.13.4 The University will not fund or provide any disability-related auxiliary aids, services or features which are the legal responsibility of the Local Authority or provided by NHS personal health budgets, disability-related benefits/payments, or similar schemes. This includes, but is not limited to, personal care services, mobility equipment and assistance animals.

5.14 Data protection and confidentiality

5.14.1 Data about student, applicant and pre-applicant disability, including Reasonable Adjustments, is subject to the relevant UEA privacy notice and the UEA Data Protection Policy.

5.14.2 The Privacy Notice for Students and Applicants removes the need for additional consent mechanisms for the routine assessment, formulation and communication of Reasonable Adjustments by/for appropriate staff through appropriate mechanisms.

5.14.3 Explicit consent should be sought from a student before sharing their disability or Reasonable Adjustments information with any third party outside of the University.

5.14.4 Information about a student's disability or Reasonable Adjustments should not be shared with other students without the student's explicit consent. However, the implementation of some adjustments may be inherently apparent to other students, in which case care must be taken not to share any further information.

5.14.5 Systems and processes for managing student disability and Reasonable Adjustments data must be aligned with the UEA Data Protection Policy, the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act (2018) and UEA guidance on data protection.

5.14.6 Disability-related data will be retained for 6 years from end of study in compliance with UK GDPR principles and UEA's Records Retention Scheme.

5.15 Student appeals and complaints

5.15.11 If a student has an appeal or complaint relating to their Reasonable Adjustments, including the way they have been decided, implemented or denied, they should first raise this issue with the team or area that decided or is responsible for the adjustment.

5.15.2 Where it is not possible to resolve an appeal or complaint at a local level, students may submit a formal appeal or complaint through the University's usual appeals and complaints procedures, including, if necessary, escalation to the OIA. At least one member of the decision-making panel should have competent knowledge of the legal context of Reasonable Adjustments in Higher Education.

6. Compliance and Monitoring

The implementation and effectiveness of this policy will be overseen by the Learning and Teaching Committee.

7. Related Documents

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8. Revision History

Version number	Approval date	Approval mechanism	Details of change
1.0	04/03/26	Senate	Initial version
1.1	17/06/26	Senate	Minor amendments to ensure alignment with other reviewed academic regulations.