



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
NEW UNIVERSITY

EST. 1891



REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

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Note: Hyperlinks have been provided for ease of reference. For other documents (referred to in italics) please see the Policies page on the main University website (<http://bucks.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-policies/policies>).

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This document has been designed to be accessible for readers. However, should you require the document in an alternative format please contact the Academic Registry.

Introduction

- 1 At Buckinghamshire New University equality is promoted, diversity is valued and individuals are respected. The University recognises that disabled students are an integral part of the learning community and is committed to ensuring that disabled students have an excellent student experience in an inclusive learning environment.
- 2 This policy is guided by the requirement set out in the UK Quality Code to reflect student diversity:

To enable student development and achievement effectively, the needs of individual students are considered, taking into account the diversity of the student body. Provision is guided by principles of fairness, inclusion and accessibility, enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers.¹

- 3 In the [Equality Act 2010](#) disability is a 'protected characteristic' where a disabled person is entitled to 'more favourable treatment'.
- 4 Where possible, equity of access is achieved through inclusive design. Additional access for individuals may be arranged and funded by the University, e.g. the funding of pillow alarms for deaf students in University accommodation.
- 5 The Disability Service formally records the student's disability and reasonable adjustments. The Disability Service liaises with the student, internal and external staff to disclose and manage the individual disability and/or the recommended reasonable adjustments. Disabilities include mental health difficulties, chronic health conditions or specific learning difficulties (SpLD). Disability and reasonable adjustments are disclosed at any stage from application to graduation and may be short or long term.
- 6 It is the student's right not to disclose a disability or access reasonable adjustments but retrospective marking is not possible if they choose to do so at a later stage in their studies.
- 7 Where circumstances result in delays between the initial screening and formal diagnostic assessment, an interim support package will be put in place at the screening appointment in order to mitigate any disadvantage to the student. The interim support package may include appropriate reasonable adjustments and signposting of academic and pastoral support.
- 8 In Universities, reasonable adjustments are recommended by a Disability Adviser based on advice from a medical professional and/or as the result of an 'assessment of need'. The 'assessment of need' is conducted by an external assessor funded by Student Finance England (SFE) or equivalent as a result of the student's application

¹ See: "Chapter B4: Enabling student development and achievement (May 2018)," *UK Quality Code for Higher Education*, QAA, p10. Accessible online: https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/quality-code/chapter-b4_-enabling-student-development-and-achievement.

for [disabled students' allowances](#). The disabled student is actively involved in this decision making process.²

- 9 Reasonable adjustments made by university are also intended to promote the maintenance of good health. Many disabled students are subject to more stress than others as a direct result of their disability and stress itself aggravates many disabilities.
- 10 The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) defines 'reasonable adjustments' as: "Reasonable is what most people would agree is fair and sensible, when they think carefully about it. Adjustment means you are changing something". "Reasonable adjustments' are about responding sensitively to individual cases by taking account of the circumstances without necessarily setting precedents."³

Reasonable Adjustments

- 11 The following information includes most areas of University business where reasonable adjustments apply. The list is not exhaustive and the disability service should be contacted for further advice and clarification.
 - **Access:** Facilities on all campuses have been designed with accessibility carefully considered. Accessible, unisex toilets are located throughout all campuses.
 - **Accommodation:** Provision has been made with a number of accessible rooms available for disabled students. Applicants and returning students are advised to discuss their requirements with the accommodation service and where appropriate the disability service at an early stage so that the most suitable type of accommodation can be identified.
 - **Admissions and Interviews:** Admissions procedures are proactive and regularly reviewed to ensure disabled applicants including interview candidates are informed about reasonable adjustments.
 - **Audio Recording:** Disabled students are permitted to make an audio recording of lectures, seminars, workshops or tutorials for their own personal use.
 - **Examinations and Time Constrained Assessments (TCAs):** Disabled students may be entitled to a personalised examination provision (PEP). See: [Examination Handbook for Students](#).
 - **Extended time for assignments** – Disability advisers suggest course leaders look more favourably on requests from disabled students for assignment extensions. This applies to campus based and distance learning disabled students
 - **Estates and Facilities:** The Disability Service liaises concerning individual reasonable adjustments on University property.
 - A risk assessment may be advised for practical aspects of certain courses.

² See: *Managing reasonable adjustments in higher education*, Equality Challenge Unit, November 2010. Accessible online: <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/external/managing-reasonable-adjustments-in-higher-education.pdf>

³ See: <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com>

- **Graduation:** Access requirements are invited from the student and/ or guests at the time of booking to enable the graduation team to provide appropriate reasonable adjustments.
- **Dissemination:** Following disability service registration, reasonable adjustments are disclosed to Academic Registry and the School via the Registry Officers and Course Leaders and placement lead. If an interim support package has been put in place this will be disclosed to Academic Registry and the School via the Registry Officers.
- **Hearing Support Systems:** Hearing support systems are installed in teaching and conference rooms and other key locations at all campuses.
- **International students:** Individual advice for reasonable adjustments is offered by the disability service.
- **Library:** Disabled students are entitled to receive double the standard loan time on 7- day loan books. For document access students enquire at the Library helpdesk. Open-source software is available on all student networked PCs, MACs and laptops at all campuses.
- **Library eBooks** are available to **all** students (campus based and distance learners) regardless as to whether they are registered with the Disability Service or not. All eBook loans are from 1 hour to 3 days depending on the publisher, if a longer loan period is required, the learner can log on and access the eBook for another session again and again until it is no longer required.
 - Students and academic teams are advised to contact the **Digital Learning Resources Officer** who will liaise with individual suppliers to request longer loan terms for specific eBooks titles as required.
 - If an eBook is not sufficiently accessible to an individual the Library will request a PDF alternative from the publishers to ensure full accessibility
- **Marking guidelines:** The guidelines apply to students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) for example dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia and AD(H)D. (See Appendix, below)
- **Parking:** Blue badge holders (or equivalent) should contact the Disability Service about application criteria for an orange parking permit.
- **Placements:** Placement reasonable adjustments are the responsibility of the student to disclose and discuss with the appropriate academic and placement staff. Where non-standard reasonable adjustments are advised the disability service may contact the Placement together with the Head of School and Course Leader.
- **Standard reasonable adjustments** anticipated to be 'live' in 10 working days e.g. reasonable adjustments for SpLDs which usually include disclosure and dissemination to pertinent academics. **Non-standard reasonable adjustments** may require separate discussion with the Programme / Course Leader, Head of School e.g. reasonable adjustments for a mental health difficulty where an individual assessment is advised instead of group work. Discussions about meeting the learning outcomes and /or professional courses requirements will be

required and may take longer than 10 working days. In rare instances, specific reasonable adjustments may not be acceptable and an alternative advised by the School.

- **Temporary disability:** The Disability Service offers individual reasonable adjustments advice for injuries such as broken arms which have an effect on the ability to study.
- **Timetable:** The Disability Service liaises with the timetabling to plan individual accessible timetables.

Appendix

Guidelines and procedures for marking the work of students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

- 1 The guidelines are intended to promote equality so that the work of students with specific learning difficulties (SpLD) can be marked appropriately and consistently without discrimination:
 - they do not aim to encourage leniency
 - they should not compromise academic standards which should be safeguarded.
 - they are not intended to replace marking criteria for individual modules
- 2 The guidelines ensure that the work of students with SpLD may be marked for ideas and content with minimum distraction from the effects of the condition.
- 3 The guidelines enable markers to give feedback in such a way that:
 - the comments can be clearly understood
 - the student will be able to learn from the comments
- 4 The guidelines apply to the work of students who have been formally identified by the disability service as having a SpLD and have attached an appropriate sticker (see below) to their work including examinations and Time Constrained Assignments (TCAs).
- 5 The SpLD DfES Guidelines (July 2005) state that SpLD should include the following:
 - Dyslexia
 - Dyspraxia / Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD)
 - Dyscalculia
 - Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder [AD(H)D]
- 6 It is recognised that there is considerable overlap between the characteristics of these four conditions. In general terms those with SpLD have particular difficulties, which may include spelling, acquiring fluent reading and writing skills and/or manipulating numbers with the effect that their performance is well below their abilities in other areas. They may also have problems with working memory, organisational skills, receptive and expressive language, oral and auditory skills, maintaining concentration and co-ordination.
- 7 It is likely that there are at least 10% of students with SpLD at Buckinghamshire New University. Some of these students have been diagnosed prior to starting their studies, while others recognise that they have difficulties once they embark on their course. Since one of the diagnostic criteria for a SpLD is a significant discrepancy between potential and performance, it is important that we recognise the support which students will require to enable them to reach their full potential. Academic staff may identify a mismatch and should advise a student to contact the disability service.

Guidance for academic staff

- 8 The descriptions below are of the common difficulties lecturers may encounter marking the work of students who have SpLD. In points below bullet points highlight good practice guidelines.

- 9 SpLD students may have a different learning style to their studies compared to those without. They may use a holistic, visual approach and/or auditory approach for example, rather than an analytical approach.
- 10 SpLD students may have difficulty differentiating ideas, understanding, knowledge, grammar, and spelling and / or punctuation errors.
 - In most formal examinations and TCAs SpLD students will have much less time for planning, no access to spellcheck or assistive software and no ability to re-order work if handwritten.
 - You may need to read through twice. Focus on the clarity of the argument rather than the details of expression. Assess ideas, understanding and knowledge rather than errors of grammar, spelling and punctuation
 - using Turnitin:
 - Highlight areas of the original script (in a choice of maybe 2 colours) and make comments that can be seen by "hovering". These comments are always in blue.
 - It is preferable to make notes directly onto the script as opposed to using numbered notes, (where the student has to flick back and forth between the note and the index number). The tutor needs to select T in order to do this. Comments are always in blue.
 - in the General Comments which can be generated at the end, it should be possible to explain the colour code used through the marking and to separate comments clearly into those associated with clerical errors (spelling, punctuation, grammar, writing structure, vocabulary) from those to do with the student's understanding, interpretation and critical comment (the academic part).
 - the student may find it helpful to discuss feedback
- 11 It can be demoralising to see numerous corrections; simply correcting spelling, grammar or punctuation will not improve understanding about how to use these.
 - If you decide to flag spelling, grammar and punctuation do not point out every error: select and state the major problem, e.g. too few sentences.
- 12 However, students should be informed if the standard of their written work needs improvement.
 - if you have not made comments on spelling, grammar and punctuation, inform the student
- 13 Students who have SpLD find it difficult to 'read between the lines'.
 - give examples to support your comments
- 14 A student who has SpLD is unlikely to know how to correct or improve an error without some guidance, model or explanation; they do not usually retain grammatical terms or rules.
 - explain what is required and what went wrong at an early stage; use clear, explicit English avoiding ambiguity and complex sentence structure; avoid using grammatical terms as these may be a barrier to understanding the advice.

- 15 A student with dyscalculia should have the marking guidelines applied only to those aspects covering use and application of number.

Training for staff

- 16 The University will support staff in the use of these guidelines through both Induction and awareness sessions. Requests for bespoke sessions are welcomed. Details from Disability.Service@bucks.ac.uk.

Administration


Eligibility

- 17 Students seeking reasonable adjustments on the grounds of SpLD shall provide the disability service with a diagnostic assessment which should indicate the ways in which, and the degree to which SpLD affect the individual's performance.
- 18 The diagnostic assessment is carried out by one of the following:
- a teacher with a qualification from a professional training course involving the assessment of dyslexia in adults such as the OCR Diploma, with a current practicing certificate in SpLD
 - a chartered psychologist
 - an educational psychologist

Identification of work through SpLD stickers

- 19 It is the student's responsibility and choice to obtain and use the stickers. Students registered with the disability service will be issued with 2 types of sticker:
- estickers to copy/paste onto assignments for Turnitin submission. The sticker is a unique 6 or 7 digit number. This is known only to the student and the disability service
 - hard copy stickers for examination papers, TCAs, placement booklets, presentations and posters

SpLD (excluding dyscalculia)
esticker will carry the rubric;



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6666667
Please mark according to guidelines
[https://bucks.ac.uk/
marking_guidelines](https://bucks.ac.uk/marking_guidelines) (hyperlink)


SpLD (excluding dyscalculia)
Hard copy sticker will carry the rubric;



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Student ID:88888888
Please mark according to guidelines
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Dyscalculia
esticker will carry the rubric;



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Please mark according to guidelines
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Dyscalculia
Please mark according to guidelines
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marking_guidelines](https://bucks.ac.uk/marking_guidelines) (hyperlink)

Summary of guidelines for marking students' work

- read the whole assignment first, looking for ideas, understanding and knowledge
- make constructive comments
- explain your comments straightforwardly
- if you have marked only the academic ideas not grammar etc., inform the student
- use highlighting and general comments on the script