

## Reasonable Adjustments: Examinations

If a student requires adjustments to the standard exams due to a disability they must liaise with DDS. Evidence of the Disability, Specific Learning Difficulty, Mental Health Difficulty or medical condition is requested and, if appropriate, an application is made for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA). If DSA is awarded it funds an independent assessment of need and some additional support. DDS uses the information available to establish the students needs and the most appropriate adjustments. Where appropriate an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is produced.

DDS communicates all disability-related information, reasonable adjustments/ILPs for individual students through **eVision** to the appropriate **Disability Liaison Officer (DLO)**. This information can also be viewed by the student and module leaders (under Module Leader tab). All new and revised information is flagged up with the DLO by email. DLOs must act upon all disability related information sent, share with colleagues on a need to know basis and file information accordingly. Please see more information about the DLO role in the document 'The Role of Disability Liaison Officers' which can be found here <https://www.keele.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching/> The **Examinations Office** can produce a report detailing all exam arrangements entered into SCIMS so there is no requirement for DLOs to inform Exams. All centrally arranged examinations, including all adjustments are actioned by the Examinations Office.

Exam Adjustments are required for a wide variety of reasons. If they enable the student to access their exam and are deemed 'reasonable' then we do our best to facilitate this. This list is not exhaustive, as we do add additional adjustments if required. Several students may require the same adjustment but for different reasons.

Once in place the exam arrangements are not necessarily static. **DDS will review and update exam arrangements as necessary**, throughout the year, based on the students needs and the effectiveness of the adjustments in place.

This document outlines the range of adjustments that may be recommended. They have been grouped into general categories, however, some could easily fit into several categories. They are only included once for ease of navigation.

## Timing of Exams

Sometimes due to medical conditions, medications, required carer support and/or time required to recover it is reasonable to ensure exams are timetabled to allow the student to attend at a time they are best able to perform. These adjustments need to be entered early on so that examinations can build the timetable.

For example:

- Afternoon exams only
- Practical exams Afternoon only
- Not morning
  - Perhaps the student takes medication that takes time to be effective, needs to wait for a carer to support them to get up and out or has another reason why they are unable to attend or perform well in a morning.
- One exam per day
  - The student would find it difficult to maintain the concentration levels required for more than one examination in a day. Perhaps they are unable to switch between the course materials, become easily fatigued and/or need to rest
- Not consecutive days for exams
- Exams every other day
  - The student may need time to recover in between exams particularly if they have high levels of anxiety or fatigue.
- Exams morning only
  - The student may function better in the morning when they are fresher after sleep. They may find they become more fatigued or experience side effects of medication as it gets later in the day.
- Toilet Breaks with the clock stopped
  - The student may have a medical condition requiring urgent and/or frequent use of the toilet where the student should not be penalised by having less time to complete the assessment.
- Toilet breaks
  - The student may need to use the toilet but there is no justification to stop the clock.

## Method of producing exam script

There are various adjustments to enable a student to produce their exam script and many reasons why a student may be unable to produce their answer in the 'standard' format. The student may be physically unable to write or have a specific learning difficulty which impedes their ability to write. Depending on the nature of the examination requirements and the course, these adjustments may need to be flexible as one method may not work for all modules or types of assessment.

- Amanuensis Required
- Scribe
  - Student is unable to write their answer due to slow/ poor handwriting, difficulty processing their ideas and write them down. Alternatively, this could be because of physical difficulties with handwriting. An amanuensis/scribe is recommended when a student is not able to use/ is not competent using a computer or their preferred method of working is with voice input software which is currently unavailable for exams.
- Assist Amanuensis
- Reader/Scribe/Support Worker ASSIST
  - Provided through Staffordshire ASSIST
- ASSIST Typing Amanuensis
  - an amanuensis provided through Staffordshire ASSIST with access to a computer to type response
- Same Scribe for all exams
  - The student may need consistency of support for a variety of reasons. Where the scribe is the same it alleviates anxiety and allows the student to feel more comfortable that the scribe understands their way of working.
- Amanuensis written exams only.
- Scribe not required for MCQ exams
  - The student may be able to complete multiple choice or practical examinations but is unable to produce lengthy written work without the use of an amanuensis.
- Cannot use a PC for exams
  - The student is unable to use a PC in examinations. For example where multiple choice papers are conducted online but looking at a screen may bring on a seizure.
- Standby Scribe
  - The student may prefer to write their own exam script, however, on some days their pain levels may necessitate the use of a scribe.
  - The student may write their own script but it is illegible and the scribe will rewrite illegible sections.
- Use of PC
  - Student needs to type their answer, often due to slow/ poor handwriting, difficulty organising their thoughts and a need to be able to move their ideas around. Alternatively, this could be because of physical difficulties with handwriting.
- PC not required for Maths exams
- Reader/Scribe/Support Worker ASSIST not for Maths
  - Student would usually use a PC/ Reader/ Scribe. Support worker but finds this unhelpful when using mathematical language which is more difficult to explain or type.
- Amanuensis required for multiple choice

\*Scribe and Amanuensis are the same role. They take down dictation from the student.

### **Accessibility of Room**

Many students need the examination room to be accessible to allow them to physically access the room, to facilitate the implementation of other required adjustments, or, to

alleviate anxiety. This may include a student being seated out of order to allow them to be positioned in the room to meet their needs.

- Wheelchair accessible
  - The student is a wheelchair user. They may not need a wheelchair all of the time but on a 'bad day' may need to attend in a wheelchair and the room needs to be accessible.
- Room close to toilet
  - Student may need to use the toilet during the exam and it is better if there is one located nearby.
- Invigilator and carer in exam room
- Guide dog in exam
  - The room needs to be big enough to facilitate an extra person/ guide dog
- Adjustable chair
- Student requires comfortable seating for exams
- Student requires Sit to Stand desk for exams
  - Student may experience pain and discomfort that can be eased with appropriate desk/ seating
- Seated at Front
- Seated at the back of exam room
- Student needs to be seated at the back near exit
- Student should be seated close to examiner
  - Student may find it easier to manage their needs by being seated in a certain place. For example they find it easier to manage anxiety knowing they have no one sitting behind them/ cant see people writing in front of them/ can easily leave the room if required
- A small room
  - Student may find a large exam venue overwhelming and need a smaller room with fewer people.
- Individual room
  - There are many reasons why some students may find they are unable to take their exams in a room with other people. Perhaps they need to move around without fear of distracting others, perhaps they need a reader or to read aloud to process their thoughts, perhaps they need to lie on the floor or do stretches to alleviate pain. This adjustment is only offered if deemed absolutely necessary as resources are finite.

### **Duration of Examination**

Students may require additional time in which to complete their examinations. This may include additional time to work on the exam paper or time with the clock stopped. The amount of additional time allocated depends on the individual needs of the student. The most common adjustment is 25% additional time, this is relatively easy to timetable and supports students who may require a bit more time to read, process, their thoughts, plan, write and/or proofread their work. In some cases 25 % is not sufficient time, for example a student who needs to take longer to read a Braille script then dictate their answer to an amanuensis and listen to it read back to them as required.

In some circumstances the exam is assessing a student's ability to perform in a specific time frame. This may mean a request for additional time is unreasonable. Then it is important to explore which elements are time specific. For example a practical exam where an activity needs to be completed in a set time should be completed within that time, however, it may be reasonable to provide additional time to read and understand the instructions.

Where a student needs to use the toilet, move around to stretch/exercise, administer medication or take in food/ drink, rest breaks with the clock stopped may be appropriate. This may be at agreed intervals or as and when the student needs to take a break.

- 25% additional time
- 10 minute break in exam
- 3hr Exam split in 2 with 30 min break
- 50% multiple choice exams
- Up to 5 x 15 min rest breaks with clock stopped
- 100% additional time
- Rest breaks to be given on request
- May require 30 minutes recovery from seizure
- Rest breaks with clock stopped
- 25% extra time to include rest breaks

### **Format of Exam Papers**

Changing the format of the exam paper can have a large impact on a student being able to access the exam. Changes may be needed to the font size/style, the layout on the paper or the colour. These changes may be related to a specific learning difficulty, visual impairment or other disability affecting a students ability to quickly read and assimilate information provided in standard text.

- 1.5 line spacing
- 1 question per page
- 12 Arial question papers
- 35 Arial Bold
- 36 Arial Bold
- A4 Arial 14
- A4 Arial 16
- A4 Arial 18
- A4 Arial 24
- A4 Arial 28
- A4 Arial 28
- Braille Exam Papers Required
- Handouts on yellow paper
- Question papers Peach
- Question papers Aqua

- Question papers Blue
- Question papers Cream
- Question papers Green
- Question papers Light Grey
- Question papers Light Green
- Question papers Lemon
- Question papers Mauve
- Question papers Pink
- Question papers Yellow
- Question papers Lilac
- Question papers Orange
- Enlarged Papers A4-A3
- Agency to provide specialist papers
  - In Braille or modified
- Enlarged diagrams

### **Additional Equipment/ People**

Some students may need additional equipment to enable them to fully access the examination and utilize their coping strategies.

- Memory Prompt sheet (See memory prompt guidelines: Appendix 1)
- Overlay used
  - A coloured overlay can make reading easier and alleviates the need for coloured papers. Student will provide their own.
- Reader
  - To read aloud the questions or read back the students answer. This is recommended if the student finds it difficult to read and/or understand text.
- Reader NOT required in Maths exams
- Time Prompt (Where a student may need a prompt to help remind them to move on to the next question. In 'there is an hour remaining', 'there is 15 minutes remaining')
  - This may be for a variety of reasons, maybe the student cannot see the clock or the student has a disability that impacts on time management or an awareness of time.
- Invigilator and carer in exam room
  - Carer needs to be present in the room. Room needs to be large enough to facilitate an extra person.
- Invigilator to remind re sticker
  - Stickers indicate to the marker to take a specific learning difficulty into account. It cannot be added retrospectively so student may need a reminder to include it on their answer. Student will provide their own sticker.
- Female invigilator required
  - If the student is unable to be alone in a room with a male. Only usually recommended if student has an individual room.
- Practical Assistant in Practical exams
  - Support worker required to assist with practical/ note taking as per the student's usual way of working with an assistant.
- Staff may need to wear radio aid transmitter
  - Student uses hearing aid which requires a transmitter to be effective.
- Allowed to use ruler in exams

- Often a strategy to enable to student to track the text.
- Screen magnification required on PC for Exams
- Will require JAWs - Dolphin braille software
- Requires use of Dragon Software in exams
  - Student requires specialist software
- Invigilator to check student heard instructions
  - Student may have a hearing impairment or 'zone out' so they do not always hear instructions.
- Ear plugs allowed in exams
  - Student is easily distracted by sounds and finds ear plugs aid their concentration.
- Power socket may be required for power chair to charge
- Requires the same invigilator where possible
  - Student needs familiarity
- Invigilator to act as prompt
- Invigilator to outline colours on exam papers if asked
  - Student finds it difficult to distinguish between colours.
- Student requires mentor in exam room
  - Mentor needs to be present in the room. Room needs to be large enough to facilitate an extra person
- Invigilator to have phone alarm required for blood sugar
  - To remind student to check blood sugar at correct time.
- Requires blank paper in exam with PC
- Requires scrap paper with exam answer paper
  - To facilitate the student making notes/ making a plan

### **Adjustments for specific types of exams**

As there are various types of exams different adjustments may be required

- 25% viva
- 25% multiple choice exams
- Rest breaks to be given during viva
- Rest breaks in practicals
- Allowed to take thesis into VIVA
- Familiar with questions before VIVA panel
- Allowed notes in VIVA
- Student requires VIVA in the afternoon
- Student requires VIVA in the morning
- One question at a time in Viva
- Memory prompt allowed in VIVA

### **Staff awareness/Health and Safety**

If a student has specific needs that staff need to be aware of this will be communicated.

This ensures that staff are prepared to act appropriately, for example if the student is taken ill.

This also covers issues which would normally be prohibited by exam rules and regulations but which are reasonable in some situations, for example, food and drink being taken into the room, wearing a hat.

- Epilepsy Protocol
- Epipen
- Food/Drink/Medication in exam room
- Allowed to wear cotton gloves in exams
- Hat allowed in exams
- Invigilator to be aware student is lipreading
- Move around
- Invigilator to be aware possibility of panic attack
- Invigilator made aware prone to faint
- Invigilator aware student has blackouts
- Student allowed stress ball in exam
- Student requires ear defenders during exams
- Will use own lumbar support in exams
- Student requires white noise box in exams
- Allowed to wear sunglasses

### **Complex assessment adjustments - details via email**

Sometimes it is difficult to break down the students' needs into codes, in this instance a conversation may need to be had with exams to establish how best we can meet the needs of the individual student and details will be sent in an email. This adjustment code highlights that an email has been sent.

**Appendix 1**  
Keele University

**Guidelines in using Memory Prompts**

**Purpose of the prompt sheet**

The prompt sheet is aimed at compensating for the sequencing and poor memory difficulties experienced by people with dyslexia that are exacerbated by the stress of examinations. In the process of examinations dyslexics can often experience memory blocks and black outs which undermines the preparation they have undertaken for the examination. Any information that is of symbolic nature is likely to be lost in these conditions. The prompt sheet

may be recommended for certain examinations and not others. This will be made clear on the Examination Arrangements request form.

**Any request for such arrangements will only be made when the diagnostic report clearly:**

- **states that the memory weakness relating to the dyslexia is severe**
- **recommends the use of memory prompt sheets**

**Method of Preparing**

The student should make a formal request to use a prompt sheet through Disability Services.

When the use of a prompt sheet is granted the department should identify the tutor who will be responsible for working with the student to approve the final sheet. The departmental tutor should sign the sheet and pass it directly to the Examinations Office.

The latest time for receipt of the agreed prompt sheet by the Examinations Office is **48 hours before** the start of the examination for which the prompt sheet is required.

The sheet will be retained by the Examination Office. It will be given to the student by the invigilator at the beginning of the examination, along with the question paper. A student will not be allowed to bring into the examination room their own copy of the prompt sheet.

The student should treat the memory prompt as part of the examination and therefore treat it as confidential information.

It is advisable for the department to retain a copy of the agreed sheet.

## Content

The prompt sheet should be clearly headed with the subject, date and time of the examination and the name of the student.

A memory prompt sheet **may** contain:

- a list of spelling of complex, technical or unusual words
- Formulae
- Names           in alphabetical order
- Dates           in numerical order

For a seen examination essay the sheet may contain a skeleton structure or plan.

A memory prompt sheet **may not** contain any indication of meaning,

It should be no longer than one side of A4 paper.

## Roles

Disability and Dyslexia Support

Disability and Dyslexia Support will:

- Complete the Examination Request Form in accordance with advice given in any appropriate reports, if the student requests the arrangement to be made. Making it clear which examinations are included in the request.
- Provide advice and guidance to any party involved in the preparation of the prompt sheets if requested to do so.

Student

The student will:

- Request permission to use a prompt sheet through Disability Services
- Prepare the prompt sheet for themselves
- Ensure it is approved by the departmental tutor before the date it needs to be submitted to the Examination Office.
- Record the date on which the approval was given

The Dyslexia Tutor

The Dyslexia Tutor will:

- Provide advice and guidance on the process by working with the student if requested by the student to do so.

Departmental Tutor

The Departmental Tutor will:

- Set the date for receipt of the prompt sheet for approval by the department
- Approve the prompt sheet and ensure it reaches the Examinations Office after signature of approval.
- Retain a copy of the prompt sheet in the department

#### Examinations Office

The Examinations Office will:

- Keep the prompt sheet secure and to give it to the student with the examination paper.