



UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
OF ESTATE MANAGEMENT

UCEM Code of Practice

Disability and Additional Needs Chapter

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UCEM Code of Practice

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Code of Practice Chapter provides a framework for the implementation of reasonable adjustments to support students with a disability or additional need. UCEM aims to ensure that all students achieve their full academic potential and that no student is disadvantaged because of a disability or additional need.
- 1.2 UCEM has a duty to anticipate reasonable adjustments in the design of its programmes and their assessment, and in the development and provision of other facilities and services that support students and their learning. A reasonable adjustment is a reasonable variation or alteration made to UCEM processes so that a disabled student can access without disadvantage the higher educational opportunities of UCEM, as an online institution, without compromising the expected academic standards. There is no duty on UCEM to make adjustments to genuine academic competence standards.
- 1.3 UCEM is subject to the Equality Act 2010 (the “Act”). The Equality Act 2010 requires that UCEM pays due regard to the need to: “advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it”.
- 1.4 The Act confirms that a person has a disability if:
 - a) they have a physical or mental impairment; and,
 - b) the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- 1.5 According to the Act, the effect of an impairment is a long-term effect if:
 - a) it has lasted at least 12 months;
 - b) the period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months; or
 - c) it is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.
- 1.6 The Act (section 20) confirms the following requirements for reasonable adjustments:
 - (i) where a provision, criterion or practice of (an institution) puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the disadvantage.
 - (ii) where a physical feature puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to avoid the disadvantage.
 - (iii) where a disabled person would, but for the provision of an auxiliary aid, be put at a substantial disadvantage in relation to a relevant matter in comparison with persons who are not disabled, to take such steps as it is reasonable to have to take to provide the auxiliary aid.
- 1.7 UCEM is also committed to operating within the precepts set out in Section B4 of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Quality Code for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education which relates to its treatment of disabled students.

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- 1.8 Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. In addition, disabled students and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of inclusive design wherever possible and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary.
- 1.9 The Data Protection Act 2018 and General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) define information about a person's physical or mental health to be sensitive personal data (or "special categories of personal data" under GDPR). The information must be treated even more carefully in terms of whether, and why, it needs to be collected and who can have access to it. This data is requested for specific purposes and will not be used for any other purpose. Nor will sensitive personal data be released to a third party without the student's consent, unless it is necessary to protect the vital interests of the student or another person. Students' sensitive personal data will only be kept for as long as it has a purpose. UCEM's [Data Protection Policy and Privacy Policy](#) set out how this information is collected and how it can be used.

2. Responsibility

UCEM

- 2.1 The Disability and Wellbeing Team has primary responsibility for working with individual students with disabilities and additional needs in advising on their support needs and recommending an appropriate course of action.
- 2.2 The Disability and Wellbeing Team must respect the dignity and confidentiality of a student disclosing a disability. Apart from cases where failure to do so might put at risk the health and safety of the student or others. Information will not be disclosed further without the student's prior written consent and if this consent is given, any further disclosure will be on a need to know basis.
- 2.3 Should a student disclose to a member of staff at UCEM or should a member of staff become aware of a student with a disability or additional need, written consent to share the information will be required before it can be passed to the Disability and Wellbeing Team.
- 2.4 UCEM as an institution accepts overall responsibility for implementation of this Code; however individual students are required to abide by the principles set out below.
- 2.5 All information regarding disability is treated as sensitive and is not shared with another party without the student's consent. The Disability and Wellbeing Team uses a Case Management system to ensure that information regarding a student's disability is kept confidential.
- 2.6 Where additional support funding is being claimed through ESFA, UCEM monitors the students' needs and the use of the support provided.
- 2.7 Where information needs to be shared for the provision of student support the Disability and Wellbeing Team use UCEM's data management systems to share relevant information with appropriate staff, in accordance with the students additional support plan.

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STUDENT

- 2.8 Students are encouraged to disclose their disability or additional need at the application stage. In addition, the Disability and Wellbeing Team make students aware of the service at appropriate times during the semester, so that support can be discussed. It should be noted that where a student chooses not to disclose a disability it is more difficult for UCEM to comply with its legal obligations under the Equality Act.
- 2.9 Students need to comply with UCEM procedures for determining and implementing their support and adjustments. Reasonable adjustments cannot be delivered unless a disability is disclosed, appropriate evidence provided, and consent given for dissemination of necessary information for implementation to a limited number of individuals on a 'need to know basis'.
- 2.10 If the needs of a student change after they have signed an additional support plan they are encouraged to notify the Disability and Wellbeing Team as soon as possible. If the student, no longer feels they require an additional support plan they must confirm this by signing a Cancelled ASP Disclaimer form, this must be requested in writing from the Disability and Wellbeing Team through Student Central.
- 2.11 For information on what is considered as appropriate diagnostic evidence please refer to the Disability and Additional Needs procedure document. Any further queries should be emailed to disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk.
- 2.12 Students are also encouraged to refer to the Student Charter, specifically to those points referring to their responsibilities as a student:

3. Accessibility

- 3.1 As an online provider of education UCEM does not have a physical campus. If external premises are used for events, such as workshop, examinations or graduation ceremonies, the Disability and Wellbeing Team will work with students to ensure that they are able to access these sites or make alternative arrangements.
- 3.2 UCEM material is written, built and designed in line with The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) which has published Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), the main international standard, for making web content accessible to people with disabilities.

4. Admissions

- 4.1 UCEM does not discriminate on the grounds of disability. Information about the requirements of individual courses is available in the prospectus and through the website. Students should refer to the [Code of Practice: Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning Chapter](#).
- 4.2 The Disability and Wellbeing Team offers advice and guidance to any person with a disability or additional need, who is considering studying with UCEM.

5. Reasonable Adjustments

- 5.1 A reasonable adjustment is a reasonable variation or alternation made to university processes so that a student with a disability can access the educational opportunities of the institution without compromising the expected academic or professional standards. There is no duty on UCEM to make adjustments to genuine competency standards.
- 5.2 When a disability is declared at the admissions stage, or at any time during their study with UCEM, the student will be contacted by the Disability and Wellbeing Team and offered support in identifying needs and drawing up an Additional Support Plan, if appropriate. Where the student has declared a disability on their application form they will be contacted within 10 working days of them receiving their offer letter.
- 5.3 For students with disabilities as defined by the Equality Act 2010, adjustments are only made from the point at which a signed Additional Support Plan is returned
- 5.4 At this stage the Programme Administration Team will inform the relevant Academic staff of the support recommended.
- 5.5 A new Additional Support Plan must be put in place for any new programme of study undertaken by the student.
- 5.6 Reasonable adjustments, including consideration of alternative form of assessment, will be determined on a case by case basis. The support offered will vary according to the student's individual needs.
- 5.7 Reasonable adjustments are made on the basis of identifiable evidence verified by the Disability and Wellbeing Team. It should be noted that reasonable adjustments a student may have had at a previous educational institution prior to their starting a programme of study at UCEM will not necessarily be adopted.
- 5.8 Once all reasonable adjustments have been arranged, normal Academic, general, and assessment regulations will apply.
- 5.9 Although short term health conditions are not specifically referred to in the Equality Act 2010, UCEM will take a sympathetic approach to significant and properly verified short term conditions. This Code of Practice defines a "short term condition" as any condition not covered by the definition of a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010. If reasonable adjustments cannot be made for a short-term condition, the student should submit mitigating circumstances.
- 5.10 The UCEM Mitigating Circumstances procedure be used in cases where it has not been possible to make reasonable adjustments, or the reasonable adjustments implemented were not sufficient. The Mitigating Circumstances Policy should be consulted in addition to this Code of Practice. The Policy can be found on the VLE

6. Staff Development

- 6.1 UCEM ensures that all staff involved with disability and additional needs provision are informed and clear about their roles and responsibilities.
- 6.2 All UCEM student support staff receive an induction with the Disability and Wellbeing Team, so that they are fully aware of the support that is offered and are able to refer students to the Team, when required. Advice from the Disability and Wellbeing Team is available to student support staff throughout the year.
- 6.3 All academic staff receive ongoing training, advice and briefing throughout the year
- 6.4 The Disability and Wellbeing Team is committed to CPD and ensure that they remain informed about current internal and external policy, procedures and guidelines.

7. Monitoring, Review and Student Feedback

- 7.1 The Disability and Wellbeing Team monitors and tracks supported students during each semester. It also provides an outcomes-based report for each academic programme.
- 7.2 Student feedback on the service is collated annually and forms part of the Disability and Wellbeing Service annual report which is reviewed by the Vice Principal – Student Experience.
- 7.3 Students in turn are informed of developments and improvements to the service which are made as a result of their feedback.
- 7.4 The code of Practice is reviewed four yearly by the Quality Standards Enhancement Committee.

Appendix A Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- [QAA Quality Code Chapter B4](#);
- [UCEM Code of Practice](#);
- [Disability and Additional Needs Procedure](#)
- [Privacy and data protection policy](#);
- [Student Charter](#);
- [UCEM Code of Practice: Equality and Diversity](#)
- [Code of Practice: Admissions and Recognition of Prior Learning](#).
- [Code of Practice: Safeguarding and Prevent](#)

Appendix B Benchmarked Policies

QAA (2013) UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B4 Enabling Student Development and Achievement.
<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/the-existing-uk-quality-code/part-b-assuring-and-enhancing-academic-quality>

OIA (2017) The Good Practice Framework: Supporting Disabled Students.
<http://www.oiahe.org.uk/providers-and-good-practice/good-practice-framework/supporting-disabled-students.aspx>

University of Warwick Disability Policy -
<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/equalops/disability/policy/>

University of Kent Disability Policy -
<https://www.kent.ac.uk/studentsupport/policies/index.html>