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# Disability and Additional Needs Procedure

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# Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

*Update made 27 March 2020*

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic we have made the following temporary changes to this policy in order to support our students:

- You are **not** required to submit medical evidence in support of request for reasonable adjustments if it is not available. Cases where no evidence is available will be considered by the Disability and Wellbeing Team to determine whether it is appropriate to provide a temporary (one semester) Additional Support Plan (amendment to section 3.2 (page 2), section 4.4 (page 3) and Appendix A (page 5)).

We understand that obtaining medical evidence for coronavirus currently goes against guidance given by some governments. In addition, we want to avoid putting unnecessary pressure on healthcare systems. While you will not need to provide up to date medical evidence, if you have access to historical medical evidence this should be provided to the Disability and Wellbeing Team. In the absence of medical evidence an assessment will be carried out by the Disability and Wellbeing Team to decide appropriate reasonable adjustments. This will be through discussions with you and the use of specific screening software. However, these discussions and/or screening will not provide a diagnosis. Any adjustments implemented without evidence will be temporary, for one semester at a time.

The appropriateness of this amendment will remain under review by the UCEM Senior Leadership Team as the circumstances of the pandemic evolve.

For more information about UCEM's response to Coronavirus (COVID-19) visit the [Coronavirus section on the VLE Help page.](#)

# Disability and Additional Needs Procedure

## 1. Introduction

The Disability and Wellbeing Team provide information advice and guidance to prospective and current students on the support and reasonable adjustments that could be provided during their studies. All students can contact the Disability and Wellbeing Team at [disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk) at any stage of their studies.

UCEM is committed to the implementation of reasonable adjustments to support students with disabilities and additional needs, whether they are in the UK or overseas.

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. UCEM is subject the Equality Act 2010, the act 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”.

Where further reasonable adjustments are required the UCEM Disability and Wellbeing Team will use the following procedure to ensure further appropriate reasonable adjustments are implemented.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is considered to be disabled if:
- They have a physical or mental impairment; and,
  - The impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.
- 2.2 According to the Act, the effect of an impairment is long term if:
- It has lasted at least 12 months;
  - The period for which it lasts is likely to be at least 12 months; or
  - It is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person affected.
- 2.3 The act confirms the following requirements for reasonable adjustments:
- 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.
  - 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.
  - 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.
- 2.4 UCEM uses the term ‘Disability’ as an umbrella term which includes:
- Specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia)
  - Mental health conditions
  - Physical or sensory impairments

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- Long term health conditions (e.g. diabetes, cancer, MS)
  - Autism Spectrum disorders
  - AD(H)D
- 2.5 UCEM also recognises students may have temporary additional needs, these can include but are not limited to:
- Third trimester pregnancy
  - Problematic pregnancy
  - Back problems
  - Broken bones
  - Post-operative/medical treatment recovery
- 2.6 UCEM material is written, built and designed in line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0), published by The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). This is the main international standard, for making web content accessible to people with disabilities. If a student has an issue with accessibility of UCEM material, or has a general question about accessibility they should contact:
- email [disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk)
  - call UK (free): 0800 019 9697, International: +44 (0)118 921 4696

## 3. Guide to the Procedure

- 3.1 The Disability and Additional Needs Procedure should be read in conjunction with the [UCEM Code of Practice Chapter: Disability and Additional Needs \(opens new window\)](#). It provides information on the procedures UCEM students and staff should follow to ensure reasonable adjustments are implemented to support students with disabilities and additional needs.
- 3.2 Additional support can only be arranged following the student notifying the Disability and Wellbeing Team of their disability or additional need and providing appropriate diagnostic evidence.
- 3.3 Each students case is managed on an individual basis, as such the time it takes to arrange support varies from student to student. Therefore, students are recommended to notify UCEM of their disability or additional need as soon as possible to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made. Wherever possible, for exam arrangements to be made, the arrangements must be in place no later than 6 weeks prior to the exam.
- 3.4 The aim of the procedure is to provide students with disabilities and additional needs with appropriate reasonable adjustments to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to achieve their academic potential, and no student is disadvantaged because of a disability or additional need.

## 4. Stages of the Procedure

- 4.1 Students are encouraged to disclose their disability or additional need at application. Disclosing at application enables the Disability and Wellbeing Team to work to get all necessary arrangements in place before the start of

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the course. This can be done by selecting 'Yes' to requiring additional learning support on the application form. On completion of this application, the Disability and Wellbeing Team are automatically notified.

- 4.2 If a student has not declared their disability on their application, it is recommended that this is done as soon as possible after securing a place on a course. Additionally, students who face a disability or additional need which arises their studies should contact the Disability and Wellbeing Team as soon as possible. This can be done by either:
  - Raising an enquiry on Student Central
  - Phoning Student Advice on 0118 921 4696, or
  - Emailing [disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk)
- 4.3 Once the Disability and Wellbeing Team are aware of a student's disability or additional need they will contact the student to discuss the student's specific needs, how best to support them, and signpost to any external support services. Diagnostic evidence of the student's disability or additional need will be requested. [Information on the type of documentation that will be accepted](#) can be found in Appendix A. It is the student's responsibility to pay any cost in relation to obtaining diagnostic evidence.
- 4.4 UCEM cannot make adjustments for students where the claim is not supported by appropriate evidence. Adjustments will not be made that are above the recommendations made by a medical, or suitable qualified, professional
- 4.5 Wherever possible, following the receipt of appropriate diagnostic evidence an additional support plan (ASP) will be produced, detailing the reasonable adjustments being offered to the student. This is sent to the student to sign and return. No arrangements will be made prior to receipt by UCEM of a signed ASP.
- 4.6 Once a signed ASP has been returned, the appropriate teams and staff members will be informed. In the first instance the Programme Administration and Examinations Teams will be notified, via email, to put the agreed additional arrangements in place. The Programme Administration will then notify the relevant academic staff of the student having an additional support plan in place by email. Students who are on an apprenticeship program will also have their Apprenticeship Coordinator informed unless otherwise requested.
- 4.7 Reasonable adjustments, including consideration of an 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, but may include:
  - Extra time in examinations
  - Use of a PC in examinations
  - Use of a reader or scribe in examinations
  - Additional coursework extensions
  - Handouts in advance of workshops
  - Ergonomic equipment for exams
  - Special examination paper
  - One-to-one invigilation

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This list is not exhaustive, and the Disability and Wellbeing Team are willing to discuss any ideas the student may have on what type of support they would consider to be a reasonable adjustment.

- 4.8 For additional support to be put in place appropriate evidence must be provided and agreed no later than 6 weeks prior to the exams. After 6 weeks there can be no guarantee that adjustments will be made.
- 4.9 Wherever possible students whose disabilities or additional needs are temporary, or likely to change over time, will be contacted regularly throughout their studies to ensure appropriate reasonable adjustments are continuing to be implemented effectively. If a student no longer wishes to have an additional support plan in place they must contact the Disability and Wellbeing Team and confirm their request by signing a cancelled ASP disclaimer.
- 4.10 A student's signed ASP, diagnostic evidence, and any further documentation they have provided will be kept in the Disability and Wellbeing Team's confidential records for the remainder of the student's studies.
- 4.11 If a student would like to make a complaint they should refer to the [Student Complaints Procedure \(opens new window\)](#).

## 5. Guidelines for Members of Staff

- 5.1 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 needs, consent should be requested from the student that the Disability and Wellbeing Team be informed to enable appropriate support to be considered. The member of UCEM staff should come to an agreement with the student that the information may be passed to the Disability and Wellbeing Team and should make the student aware of the benefits of such a disclosure.
- 5.2 If an agreement cannot be reached to share information, it should be explained to the student that this will limit the support and reasonable adjustments available to them. The student's desire that the Disability and Wellbeing Team are not informed should be confirmed in writing by the student and a confidential record of this should be kept for as long as it has a purpose.
- 5.3 If the member of staff is concerned about the student's safety, or think they may be at risk or harming themselves or others, they should contact the Safeguarding Team by emailing [safeguarding@ucem.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@ucem.ac.uk).
- 5.4 Where staff have any queries regarding the support available to students with disabilities and additional needs and how the student should access this

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support they should raise this directly with the Disability and Wellbeing Team.

## 6. Benchmarking/References

- 6.1 The Disability and Additional Needs procedure is benchmarked against the following documents:
- [QAA \(2013\) UK Quality Code for Higher Education. Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B4 Enabling Student Development and Achievement \(opens new window\)](#)
  - [OIA \(2017\) The Good Practice Framework: Supporting Disabled Students \(opens new window\)](#)

## Appendix A: Information on the type of documentation that will be accepted

Below is a table showing what type of documentation will be accepted. This list is not exhaustive and if you are unsure of what you need to provide please contact the Disability and Wellbeing Team through Student Central.

Type of disability or additional need	Documentation accepted
Specific learning difficulties	A post-16 diagnostic report from a chartered educational psychologist, or a specialist assessor holding a current practicing certificate
Autistic Spectrum Disorders	An educational psychologist report
Sensory impairment	A recent letter from GP or specialist confirming condition and where possible/appropriate providing recommendations on appropriate adaptations to learning materials.
Mental health conditions	A recent letter from GP or specialist confirming condition. If specific arrangements are required these should be included in the letter.
Long term health conditions	A recent letter from GP or specialist confirming condition and providing

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	recommendation on support where appropriate
Temporary injuries	A recent letter from GP or specialist confirming injury and duration of recovery time
Pregnancy	MatB1 form confirming expected due date

It is the student's responsibility to pay any costs in relation to obtaining the required documentation.