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Neurodiversity, Disability, and Wellbeing Procedure

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Neurodiversity, Disability, and Wellbeing 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 any stage of their studies, through Student Central, phoning 0118 921 4696, or [emailing the team directly](#).

UCEM is committed to promoting equal education opportunities for all students. Reasonable adjustments will be made to offer all students with disabilities and neurodiversity, an equal opportunity whilst studying with UCEM, whether they are in the UK or overseas. UCEM has a duty to anticipate reasonable adjustments in the design of its programmes, assessments, and in the 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:
- 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.
- 2.2 According to the Act, the effect of an impairment is long term 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.
- 2.3 The act 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.

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- 2.4 Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It highlights that people naturally think about things differently. UCEM recognises autism spectrum disorders, ADHD, and specific learning difficulties as examples of neurodiversity
- 2.5 UCEM uses the term 'Disability' as an umbrella term which includes, but is not limited to:
- Specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia)
 - Mental health conditions
 - Physical or sensory impairments
 - Long term health conditions (e.g. diabetes, cancer, MS)
 - Autism Spectrum disorders
 - AD(H)D
- 2.6 UCEM also recognises students may have temporary additional needs, these can include but are not limited to:
- Third trimester pregnancy and up to 6 months postnatal.
 - Problematic pregnancy
 - Back problems
 - Broken bones
 - Post-operative/medical treatment recovery
- 2.7 UCEM is committed to making its website and materials accessible, in accordance with the Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018. More information can be found on individual sites accessibility statements. If a student has an issue with accessibility of UCEM material, they should contact email the [Disability and Wellbeing Team](#).
- 2.8 For any further definitions the [Glossary of UCEM Terms](#) should be referred to.

3. Guide to the Procedure

- 3.1 The Neurodiversity, Disability, and, Wellbeing, Procedure should be read in conjunction with the [Neurodiversity, Disability, and Wellbeing chapter of the Code of Practice](#). It provides information on the procedures UCEM students and staff should follow to ensure reasonable adjustments are implemented to support students with disabilities and neurodiversity.
- 3.2 Additional support can only be arranged following the student notifying the Disability and Wellbeing Team of their disability or neurodiversity and providing appropriate diagnostic evidence.

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- 3.3 Where a student does not have a diagnosis but believes their studies are being affected by a suspected disability or neurodiversity or they have any wellbeing concerns they should contact the Disability and Wellbeing Team for advice and guidance on obtaining a diagnosis and any possible interim support.
- 3.4 Each student's 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, neurodiversity or wellbeing concerns as soon as possible to ensure reasonable adjustments can be made.
- 3.5 The aim of the procedure is to provide students with disabilities, neurodiversity, and wellbeing issues 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 neurodiversity.

4. Stages of the Procedure

- 4.1 Students are encouraged to disclose their disability, neurodiversity, wellbeing concerns at application. Disclosing at application enables the Disability and Wellbeing Team to work to get all necessary arrangements in place before the start of 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, neurodiversity, or wellbeing concern on their application, it is recommended that this is done as soon as possible after securing a place on a course. Additionally, students with a disability, neurodiversity, or wellbeing concern which is identified during 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 the Student Engagement Team on 0118 921 4696, or
 - Emailing disabilitysupport@ucem.ac.uk
- 4.3 UCEM will endeavor to make anticipatory adjustments to its processes and through an inclusive and accessible learning and teaching environment. However, if a student does not declare a disability or neurodiversity it significantly limits the ability of UCEM to provide additional support. An additional support plan cannot be arranged without sufficient evidence being provided.

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- 4.4 Once the Disability and Wellbeing Team are aware of a student's disability, neurodiversity or wellbeing issue 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 neurodiversity will be requested. Information on the type of documentation that will be accepted can be found in Appendix A. If a student is unable to pay any costs in relation to obtaining diagnostic evidence they should contact the Disability and Wellbeing Team .
- 4.5 UCEM is associated with and advocates a number of external charities that provide a range of wellbeing, financial, and general supports. For information on these charities as well as general information students are encouraged to visit the Listening, Disability, and Welfare area of the [Student Hub](#).
- 4.6 UCEM cannot make adjustments for students where the claim is not supported by appropriate evidence (see Appendix A). Adjustments will not be made that are above the recommendations made by a medical, or suitable qualified, professional.
- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 Once a signed ASP has been returned, the appropriate teams and staff members will be informed. In the first instance this will include Academic and support staff, as well as Apprenticeship Outcomes Officers where applicable. However, any individual or team who require knowledge of a support plan for support to be delivered effectively will be notified.
- 4.9 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, it may include, but is not limited to:
- Additional coursework extensions
 - No penalty for errors in spelling, grammar, and sentence structure
 - Extra time in computer marked assessment
 - Handouts in advance of workshops
 - Ergonomic equipment workshops
 - Provision of assistive technology
 - Provision of specialist non-medical support
- 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.
- 4.10 For additional support to be put in place appropriate evidence must be provided and agreed prior to any assessment deadlines.

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- 4.11 Wherever possible students whose disabilities or health conditions 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 through Student Central and confirm their request by signing a cancelled ASP disclaimer.
- 4.12 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.
- 4.13 UCEM is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to managing physical and mental health is crucial to a student's learning and overall academic achievement. UCEM also recognises there are sometimes circumstances where it is in the best interest of the student for them to stop studying, either temporarily or permanently. In such circumstances UCEM may initiate the [Fitness to Study Procedure](#).
- 4.14 UCEM welcomes all forms of feedback, from compliments to complaints, and are committed to using feedback in a constructive way to improve the service. Feedback can be provided to the team through Student Central or by contacting the Disability and Wellbeing Team directly through [email](#). Students will be invited to complete an annual survey to feedback on the service they have received.
- 4.15 If a student would like to make a complaint they should refer to [the Student Complaints Procedure](#) on the VLE.

5. Guidelines for Members of Staff

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 neurodiversity or wellbeing concern, 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.

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- 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 To ensure appropriate support is provided at the earliest opportunity the Disability and Wellbeing Team will be made aware mitigating circumstances requests that relate to neurodiversity, disability and/or wellbeing. A member of the team will be present at Mitigating Circumstances Committee meetings
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 Where staff have any queries regarding the support available to students with disabilities and how the student should access this support they should raise this directly with the Disability and Wellbeing Team.

6. Benchmarking/References

- 6.1 The Neurodiversity, Disability, and Wellbeing procedure is benchmarked against the following documents:
 - QAA (2018) UK Quality Code, Advice and Guidance: Enabling Student Achievement. <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/enabling-student-achievement>
 - 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>
 - OfS (2020) Effective Practice in Access and Participation. <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/effective-practice/disabled-students/>
 - [Code of Practice: Neurodiversity, Disability and Wellbeing](#)

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Appendix A

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 diagnostic report from a chartered educational psychologist, or a specialist assessor holding a current practicing certificate
Autistic Spectrum Disorders	An educational psychologist report or doctors letter
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 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. If a student is unable to pay any costs in relation to obtaining diagnostic evidence they should contact the Disability and Wellbeing Team