



LIVERPOOL
HOPE
UNIVERSITY
Est. 1844

Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Version Control

Version History	Approved	Comments
20 th February 2017	Rectorate Team	To be used as working document, pending formal approval by Senate (15 th March 2017) and Council (25 th April 2017)
15 th March 2017	Senate	Recommended to University Council
25 th April 2017	University Council	

Reasonable Adjustments

The University is committed to meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to—

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In the context of this policy, that includes the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students. Please note, however, that the concept of reasonableness requires applicants/students to make the University aware of their additional needs as early as possible in the process. Whilst the University will always have due regard to the need to make anticipatory adjustments, failure by an applicant or student to declare their disability at an early stage will make it more difficult for an adjustment to be assessed as reasonable.

1. The University is committed to enabling equality of opportunity in education for students and will take reasonable steps to meet both the general need for access and the specific requirements of individuals with additional support needs. Applications from disabled students are actively encouraged and during the 2015/16 academic year, 17.6% of the University's student population disclosed a disability. This is 66% above the national figure of 10.6% published by the Equality Challenge Unit in November 2016. The University encourages prospective and current students to disclose any disabilities they may have at the earliest opportunity. Early identification enables the University to offer advice and guidance, ascertain students' support needs and make individual reasonable adjustments where appropriate. Late disclosure may delay the implementation of reasonable adjustments.
2. All applications for admission to the University are considered on the grounds of published academic criteria. Information about disclosed disabilities is not made available to University teams who make decisions as to whether an offer is made to an applicant. Applicants for professional qualifications, for example in teaching or social work, must nevertheless comply with the Fitness to Practise requirements of the bodies which govern the respective professions (e.g. Department for Education and the Health and Care Professions Council).
3. Applicants who are offered a place and have disclosed a disability will be contacted by Student Development and Well-being prior to, or shortly after the start of their studies. Applicants will be invited to discuss their support needs with a member of the Learning Support Team and further advice will be provided including, for example, Disabled Students' Allowances and medical evidence requirements.
4. Students who choose not to disclose their disability at the application stage, or who develop or become aware of a disability during their studies, may disclose their disability at any point by contacting Student Development and Well-being. However, in cases where a prospective or current student fails to provide the University with reasonable advance notice of a disability or medical condition, where their needs are complex or the adjustments may take considerable time to plan and/or arrange, the University may defer entry or suspend studies in order to fully consider the case.
5. Most reasonable adjustments cannot be applied retroactively, nor will the student usually have recourse to a claim for mitigating circumstances for assessments already

completed. If a student discloses a disability less than four weeks prior to the start of an examination period, it is not normally possible to put in place reasonable adjustments for those examinations. In these circumstances students may be offered the opportunity to defer their assessments.

6. The University will encourage and assist all students who may be eligible for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) to apply for DSA at the earliest opportunity. Where the University determines that it is likely a prospective or current student is eligible to receive DSA, there is the expectation that the student will take all reasonable steps to access this available support. Where eligibility is likely and the student chooses not to apply for DSA, or fails to complete the application process, the University may withhold the provision of equipment and/or relevant support that would otherwise be available via DSAs.
7. Based on the information available, the Learning Support Team will determine what reasonable adjustments are appropriate for each student. Relevant sources of information could include, medical reports; dyslexia assessment reports; and independent Needs Assessment Reports. The student is responsible for supplying copies of relevant reports and evidence to the Learning Support Team.
8. Any reasonable adjustments to be enabled by the University are specified in a Learning Support Plan (LSP). Once produced, the draft LSP is sent to the student for approval via the LSP approval task. The task includes a written statement regarding the sharing of personal and/or sensitive information. The statement advises the student that by approving their draft LSP they are also providing their consent to share the content of the LSP with those in the University involved in their teaching and support. Once approved by the student, the LSP is then made available to the relevant staff within the University; at the start of a new academic year, the Learning Support Team will ensure that amended LSPs are brought to the attention of tutors.
9. If a student does not agree with the content of their LSP, in that they feel it does not accommodate their disability and/or particular needs, they have the opportunity to speak with a member of the Learning Support Team to address their concerns. Amendments to any of the adjustment(s) identified within the LSP, or the addition of further adjustments to a previously approved LSP, may be requested by the student at any stage during their studies. If the student cannot resolve their concerns informally with a member of the Learning Support Team, they will be provided with written information outlining how to appeal against the reasonable adjustments decision – this is known as the Reasonable Adjustment Policy Email.
10. The Reasonable Adjustment Policy Email should include a copy of this policy and information about how the applicant/student can access further help and advice. This may include access to another member of the SDW team to help with any adjustments required for the appeals process. It will also include advice about how to access assistance via the Students' Union. The first stage of the appeal should normally be made within 10 working days of receiving the Reasonable Adjustment Policy Email. If the appeals policy is invoked by a student, then the LSP and other relevant information held by the Learning Support Team may also be disclosed to those persons who are involved in the decision making and appeals processes.
11. **Appeals process stage 1:** The student must email the Head of Student Welfare and Well-being (sdw@hope.ac.uk) to ask for an appointment to discuss further adjustments or changes they would like to see to their LSP. The Head of Student Welfare and Well-being will respond and make an appointment within 3 working days of the date of the email being received, and arrange for the meeting to take place within 7 working days of

receipt of the email. The Head of Student Welfare and Well-being may invite the Senior Learning Support Adviser to attend where necessary.

At the meeting, the Head of Student Welfare and Well-being will either agree to further adjustments or explain why the University is unable to make these. This process should be fully documented by the Head of Student Welfare and Well-being and the student should be advised that if they are not satisfied with the outcome they may instigate stage 2 of the appeals process.

12. **Appeals process stage 2:** If the student remains dissatisfied, they may appeal to the Dean of Students by emailing HAUGHAP@hope.ac.uk and setting out their concerns regarding the adjustments decision in writing. The student shall normally have 10 working days of receiving the outcome to instigate stage 2 of the process. The Dean of Students will review all documentation and either agree to further adjustments or explain in writing why the University is unable to make these. The Dean of Students will respond within 10 working days of the receipt of the written appeal.
13. **Appeals process stage 3 (final):** If the student remains dissatisfied, they may appeal to the University Secretary by emailing donelag@hope.ac.uk within 10 working days of receiving written notification of the Dean of Students' decision. The University Secretary will convene a panel to review the decision. The Panel will comprise the University Secretary (Chair), a professional expert (this could be a member of the Learning Support Team if there is an adviser available who has not had prior involvement in the matter) and an academic member of staff.
14. The Panel will be organised by the Head of Committee Secretariat. If the University Secretary deems it a requirement, the student may be invited to attend the panel meeting to present their appeal as may relevant members of the Student Development and Well-being Team.
15. The Chair will determine whether a full hearing is required where the student is asked to give evidence or whether the panel has enough written evidence to make a decision without needing to have a hearing. The Panel may consider evidence from a range of sources including occupational health referrals, medical evidence, independent needs assessment reports, general notes of communications between the student and Learning Support Team and independent Needs Assessors. Evidence to be considered by the Panel will be made available to the student except where such evidence may be in contravention of any legal requirements. The Panel may wish to ask further questions or clarify any evidence before them.
16. One or more of the following decisions will be made by the Panel:
 - To require further information from the student or a third party
 - To request further medical evidence
 - To agree additional adjustments to the LSP
 - To agree deferral of assessments/exams due after the appeal has been held
 - To defer entry into the University
 - To reject the Appeal.
17. The student should be told that they have the right to be accompanied by a companion at all stages of the procedure. The role of the companion is to support the student. It is not the role of the companion to speak on behalf of the student. The companion can remind the student of points they wished to make or to seek clarification on points of detail. The companion will normally be a Students' Union officer or trained nominee of the Students' Union, a member of academic staff or a student of the University. Only in

exceptional cases will this rule be varied and will require authorisation by the University Secretary (or his nominee). The student must make representations to the University Secretary in advance of any meeting or hearing at which they wish to be accompanied by someone other than a Students' Union officer or trained nominee of the Students' Union, a member of academic staff or a student of the University.

18. The OIA

If the student remains dissatisfied with the decision of the Appeal Panel and they are registered at the University, their case may be eligible for review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). The OIA is an independent body set up to review student complaints and is free to students. Further details of this scheme will be given to students when internal procedures are exhausted. The OIA's website is at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>

19. Data Protection

All records and correspondence relating to a prospective or current student's disability disclosure will be securely stored and processed in accordance with the University's Data Protection policy.

The student's consent will always be obtained before seeking further information from third parties, except when attempting to source information that is in the public domain.