

Queen's University

Disability Support Code of Practice

1. Purpose of the Disability Support Code of Practice

The University's Code of Practice provides a framework for the University's support provision for students with disabilities and long-term conditions. The Code is reviewed annually to ensure changes in legislation and student finance are considered alongside feedback from students, staff, external agencies and other stakeholders.

2. General Principles of Disability Support Provision

- Applications for admission from students with a disability or long-term condition are assessed on the same basis as all other applicants. The main selection criteria for most programmes are academic background and qualifications.
- The University will aim to create an environment where students are comfortable in disclosing a disability or long-term condition
- The University endorses the principles of inclusive curriculum for all students.
- Students with a disability or long-term condition will have access to appropriate reasonable adjustments to enable them to participate in all aspects of University life.
- Following disclosure, students are provided with the opportunity to discuss their individual requirements with an appropriate member of staff.
- Staff who are required to implement reasonable adjustments will have access to appropriate information.
- Members of staff will have access to training opportunities to enhance their awareness and confidence in meeting the needs of students with disabilities and long-term conditions.
- The University will ensure that students who acquire a disability or long-term condition during their time at University and disclose this, will be provided with the opportunity to discuss their individual needs, with a view to arranging reasonable adjustments to enable them where possible, to complete their course.
- Where reasonable, the University Estate will be accessible to all students and Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans arranged to ensure a safe environment for students with a disability or long-term condition.

3. Legislative Background

Queen's University is guided by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order 2005 and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Order (SENDO) extends the provision of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to education providers and ensures that people with a disability have equal opportunities to benefit from and participate in the teaching, learning and other services available in Higher Education institutions.

The University's Disability Policy clearly sets out the legislative framework in which we provide support to students with disabilities and long-term conditions. Please refer to: [Student Disability Policy](#)

In addition, the Equality Challenge Unit provides clear guidance on anti-discrimination legislation for Northern Ireland in comparison to the rest of the UK. Please refer to: [Anti-discrimination law Northern Ireland](#)

4. Disclosure and Confidentiality

The University is committed to creating an environment where students are comfortable in disclosing a disability or long-term condition. Students are strongly encouraged to inform the University about their disability so that support can be put in place.

To support appropriate disclosure, it is recommended that University Prospectus materials include a

section on Equality and Diversity, outlining the University's commitment to equality of opportunity and supporting students with a disability or long-term condition to have equitable access as far as reasonably possible, to all aspects of University life. This should also include reference to the University's Disability Policy to ensure that prospective students are aware of what constitutes a disability and the range of qualifying and non-qualifying conditions as determined by legislation in Northern Ireland.

The statutory definition and supporting information on qualifying and non-qualifying conditions is detailed in the following table:

Northern Ireland legislation defines 'Disability' as:

"A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

Conditions automatically covered by legislation and that do not need to satisfy the definition of long-term or substantial impact are: Cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV infection. These conditions are deemed to be qualifying disabilities from the point in time that a person develops one or other of them.

Impairments that definitely are not qualifying disabilities and therefore exempt from legislative protection are:

- ✓ Visual impairments that can be corrected with eyeglasses or contact lenses,
- ✓ Hay fever,
- ✓ Addiction to alcohol or nicotine or drugs (except for properly prescribed medications),
- ✓ A tendency to steal, or to set fires, or to physically or sexually abuse others,
- ✓ Voyeurism and exhibitionism.

There is no official list that specifies whether any other impairment is or is not a qualifying disability. So to determine whether a particular person has a qualifying disability means making an assessment about the duration and severity of his or her particular impairment and about how it affects his or her daily life.

The relevant test is as follows:

- ✓ it must be a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- ✓ 'long term' for this purpose means that the substantial adverse effects of the impairment must have lasted, or be likely to last, for at least 12 months
- ✓ 'normal day-to-day activities' are simply the things that people generally do on a daily basis, for example walking to a bus stop, shopping, doing the housework, speaking on a telephone or reading a newspaper.

The definition of 'disability' does not only apply to physical impairments. The definition itself notes that mental health impairments are also covered.

In addition, both case law and governmental guidance have noted that a wide range of learning difficulties are also covered, including impairments like dyslexia.

Students who disclose a disability or long-term condition will be assessed by a staff member from the University's Accessible Learning Support team to determine their individual requirements and appropriate reasonable adjustments. Students are provided with the opportunity to disclose a disability or long-term condition when applying to the University and during the enrolment and registration process. Disclosure at these times helps to facilitate the early implementation of reasonable

adjustments. However, students can disclose a disability at any time during their studies at Queen's.

The University recognises that under SENDO, if a student discloses a disability or long-term condition to any member of staff at any stage, the University is deemed to be aware of the student's disclosure. Therefore, all staff should be proactive and provide opportunities for students to disclose. Staff should contact Accessible Learning Support for advice on effectively supporting students with disclosure. This should also include preparation for work placements or Study Abroad opportunities.

Information obtained regarding a student's disability or long-term condition will be treated as personal and sensitive data. The information will be held in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy and shared in line with the University's [Student Privacy Notice](#).

Please note; relevant information is only shared to ensure agreed supports and reasonable adjustments are implemented or when a safeguarding issue necessitates. To avail of support and reasonable adjustments through Accessible Learning Support students must agree to disclosure for these purposes by completing a '**Student Support Agreement Form**' upon engagement with the service (see Annex 1).

5. Admission Process

The University welcomes and encourages applications from students with disabilities or long-term conditions and considers their application on the same grounds as non-disabled candidates. An individual's disability or long-term condition will not influence the University's decision to offer a place.

On receipt of an offer from the University, applicants who have disclosed a disability or long-term condition will be asked to complete the [Accessible Learning Support Form](#)

The information detailed by applicants on their completed support form will be used to help determine reasonable adjustments, should they be accepted and placed on their chosen course at Queen's.

Students who are successful in getting a place on their course at Queen's and who have submitted the Accessible Learning Support form will be assessed by a Disability Officer. The Disability Officer will agree appropriate reasonable adjustments with the student. These adjustments relate to support within the academic or learning environment e.g. support for examinations.

Some professional programmes such as medicine, teacher training, social work and nursing require a student to meet certain "core competencies" or "fitness to practise" conditions in order to receive professional registration. This may include mandatory placement(s) or course specific requirements.

Please note: *It is recommended that information about these requirements is readily available to prospective applicants to assist them in making informed decisions when choosing to apply for a course.*

Where there are Fitness to Practise concerns or where reasonable adjustments may not be feasible to implement, advice will be obtained by Accessible Learning Support from the School, the Occupational Health Service and appropriate external agencies to ensure every reasonable effort is made to support the student in taking up their offer on their chosen course at Queen's. Following these discussions, staff from Accessible Learning Support and the School will offer to meet with the applicant to discuss the support available to enable them to make an informed judgement on the suitability of the course. In the exceptional and unlikely event where Fitness to Practise issues remain a concern or where reasonable adjustments cannot be implemented, the University reserves the right to withdraw an offer.

The University recognises that the decision to disclose a disability or long-term condition is a personal one, although it is recommended that applicants do so as early as possible to support the timely implementation of agreed reasonable adjustments. The University will endeavour to make any adjustments in a timely manner, but if a disability or long-term condition is not disclosed until a later stage there may be a delay in implementation of those adjustments, beyond the start of the programme.

Applicants who wish to appeal a decision not to implement adjustments requested and which prevent the applicant from taking up their offer of a place on a course, may write to the Director of Academic and Student Affairs to request a review of the decision.

The process for appealing decisions not to implement adjustments requested is set out in Annex 2.

As detailed in *Section 3: Disclosure and Confidentiality*, any information obtained regarding an applicant/student's disability or long-term condition will be treated as personal and sensitive data. The information will be held in accordance with the University's Data Protection Policy and will only be shared to ensure agreed supports and reasonable adjustments are implemented or when a safeguarding issue necessitates. Explicit consent will be sought to share any information we hold beyond these purposes.

Students applying to study at Queen's University who access Disabled Students' Allowance from Student Finance England should be aware that Equality Act 2010 does not apply to Northern Ireland. Any funded support recommended to be met by the 'host institution' as part of a needs assessment may not be covered. This should be taken into consideration when a student is making a choice of university.

6. Pre-entry Support, Advice and Information

6.1 Material in Alternative Format

It is recognised that some applicants with a disability or long-term condition may have difficulty in reading the University prospectus in standard print. The University has made a commitment that all University publications can be made available in alternative formats. Queen's provides both printed and online versions of our prospectuses and accompanying literature. Should alternative versions be required, please contact Global Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/MRCI/>.

6.2 Open Days

The University holds annual open days for prospective students interested in applying to study at Queen's. These events provide an opportunity to learn about the courses, facilities and support services within the University. Applicants who may require reasonable adjustments to be able to participate fully in University open days should be encouraged to contact the Domestic Recruitment and Events Team in advance, to discuss their individual requirements.

6.3 Pre-entry Visits

Some students with disabilities or long-term conditions may find the transition to university life more daunting due to concerns about support provision and living away from home. In order to alleviate these concerns the University Campus Tours service can arrange for prospective students to visit the campus before they decide to study at Queen's.

A meeting with Accessible Learning Support and/or Accommodation Service can also form part of this tour. For further information see: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/about/Visit-Us/Campus-Tours-Meet-Us/>

6.4 University Accommodation

The University has a number of rooms available within Queen's Accommodation which meet the needs of students with disabilities or long-term conditions. The University recognises that some students with a disability or long-term condition may need to live in University accommodation to ensure that their specific needs can be addressed.

Students seeking accommodation through Queen's are requested to disclose their disability and provide brief details of their individual requirements on their application to "Accommodation at Queen's". Accommodation Services may discuss these requirements with Accessible Learning Support to help ensure that appropriate rooms are allocated.

Some students may require reasonable modifications to the physical environment including the installation of specialist equipment. Staff responsible for student accommodation should liaise closely with Accessible Learning Support, Estates and appropriate health care professionals. Pre-entry disclosure is important and will be key in ensuring modifications can be made prior to the student commencing their studies at Queen's. If a student does not disclose their support requirements until they have confirmed their place the University will endeavour to make any necessary modifications but these cannot be guaranteed for the start of their course.

7. Disability Provision for Students with disabilities and long-term conditions

Accessible Learning Support is the first point of contact for prospective and current students with a disability or long-term condition. The Service works in partnership with staff from across the University and external stakeholders to offer a range of support tailored to meet the diverse needs of individual students.

More information on a range of related topics can be found at Accessible Learning Support frequently asked question: [FAQs](#)

7.1 Accessing Support and Assessment

To access support through with Accessible Learning Support a student will be invited to complete the [Accessible Learning Support Form](#) and if available submit supporting documentation. An assessment will then be carried out by a Disability Officer to determine the individual support requirements and agree recommendations for any reasonable adjustments required to ensure the teaching and learning environment is accessible to the student. Generic recommendations will also be agreed for placements, field trips, lab work and opportunities to study and work abroad. However, it is always recommended that students meet with a Disability Officer once the full details of such opportunities have been agreed to further consider any specific support requirements.

Supporting documentation is no longer a pre-requisite for accessing support from the Accessible Learning Support service. A more complete package of support may be available if a student has supporting documentation, as this is still required to access funded support.

7.2 Individual Student Support Agreement

The support and reasonable adjustments that are recommended for each student are detailed on an Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA). The information outlined in the ISSA is communicated to the relevant School via SharePoint and a copy is made available to the student on request

It is recognised that in some instances Schools may have difficulty in implementing some reasonable adjustments due to course requirements or requirements of professional bodies. In such circumstances, it is vital that concerns are raised and alternative strategies discussed with Accessible Learning Support to ensure that individual staff and the University are compliant with SENDO. This must be done as soon as possible after receiving the Individual Student Support Agreement, to ensure timely communication with a student and ability to consider alternatives.

After receiving the ISSA, it is the responsibility of the School to ensure that the recommended academic adjustments are implemented and shared with other Schools if necessary. Any concerns about the implementation of a recommendation from an ISSA should be raised with the relevant Disability Officer as soon as possible. Recommended support and reasonable adjustments outlined in the ISSA will be applicable for the duration of the course. These can be amended following reassessment by Accessible Learning Support at the request of the student or following a change of circumstances.

The ISSA proforma is set out in Annex 3.

7.3 Examination Support

It is acknowledged that the completion of university examinations may pose significant challenges for students with disabilities and long-term conditions. During the student's initial assessment, Accessible

Learning Support will discuss appropriate reasonable adjustments to enable students to be assessed fairly e.g. one-to-one support including Exam Scribes / Readers / Prompters or additional time. Reasonable adjustments are then communicated to the Examinations Office / Queen's Register of Support Providers for implementation during the main examination periods.

Please note: If a student is unable to undertake an examination due to disability-related reasons the following process should be applied:

The Student should notify their School Office and Accessible Learning Support, as far in advance as reasonably practical, via email, citing the reason(s) that they are unable to sit and providing additional supporting evidence, if available.

The School should then determine whether the student can complete an alternative form of assessment or sit the exam at a later date without penalty. (see 8.1 for further guidance on Alternative Assessment and 8.2 for Flexibility on Examinations) The student and Accessible Learning Support should be notified of the outcome in writing by the School.

7.4 Review of Support

ISSAs are issued for the duration of a student's course. Should a student's condition change or their reasonable adjustments no longer meet their requirements, students should contact Accessible Learning Support for a review. This can be done at any point during their course and students undertaking a new course of study will need to re-engage with Accessible Learning Support for a new assessment of need.

7.5 External Funded Support

A significant proportion of students engaged with Accessible Learning Support will be eligible for funded support through Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) or a comparable scheme. Accessible Learning Support can advise and help students to apply for any available funded support.

(i) The Needs Assessment Centre at Queen's

Eligible students are directed to complete a DSA needs assessment through The Needs Assessment Centre at Queen's to determine their support requirements in relation to specialist equipment, one-to-one support and transport.

Please note: The needs assessment for funded support is also based on appropriate supporting documentation and information obtained from the student on the impact of their disability or long-term condition. Student Finance Northern Ireland require that students provide supporting documentation such as a report or letter from their doctor or consultant or a diagnostic assessment from a psychologist or suitably qualified teacher with their application for DSA.

For further information on the Needs Assessment Centre at Queen's, please refer to:

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/accessible-learning-support/NeedsAssessmentCentre/>

(ii) Register of Support Providers at Queen's

During the DSA needs assessment it will be determined whether a student would benefit from one-to-one academic support including Academic Mental Health Tutor, Dyslexia Tutor, Study Skills Tutor etc. If the assessment is carried out at Queen's and the provision of one to one support is agreed through the student's funder, a referral can be made to The Register of Support Providers at Queen's to match students with suitably qualified, trained and experienced Support Providers. The support provided is designed to enable students to develop effective strategies for minimising the impact of their disability in the academic environment.

Please note: Students can decide to avail of this support through alternative providers or

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independently arrange their one-to-one support.

Once a student's needs assessment has been approved by their relevant Student Finance body, a referral will be made to Queen's Register of Support Providers to match the student with a suitably qualified, trained and experienced Support Provider(s).

For further information on the one-to-one support available through the Register of Support Providers at Queen's, please refer to: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/accessible-learning-support/NeedsAssessmentCentre/OnetoOneSupport/>

8. Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments must be made to any aspect of teaching or assessment which would substantially disadvantage a student in relation to their peers, unless this adjustment would compromise the academic standards or professional practices associated with the course of study.

As indicated under 7.1, decisions regarding reasonable adjustments are based on supporting documentation and/or information obtained at the registration and initial assessment with Accessible Learning Support. These may include:

8.1 Alternative Forms of Assessment –

For a small number of students, the completion of formal examinations may present considerable challenges due to the nature and impact of their disability or long-term condition. Accessible Learning Support will explore appropriate reasonable adjustments with the individual student regarding examinations. If, having put reasonable adjustments in place, the student is still deemed unable to undertake the standard examination as a result of his/her disability or long-term condition, alternative assessment may be considered. This is subject to the maintenance of academic standards and may not be appropriate for all courses.

A decision to grant an alternative assessment should be agreed by the Director of Education and based on advice from Accessible Learning Support and appropriate medical evidence. Schools should ensure that students are aware of the procedure for requesting alternative forms of assessment, and all decisions should be documented.

The procedure and pro-forma for considering requests for alternative forms of assessment are set out in Annex 4.

8.2 Flexible Deadlines

Accessible Learning Support recognises that **occasionally** students with disabilities and long-term conditions may require flexibility with deadlines to complete some aspects of in-course assessment and examinations **for disability-related reasons**.

Accessible Learning Support generally recommends flexibility with deadlines for in-course assessment and examinations for the following reasons:

- A student is diagnosed with a fluctuating condition and is prone to flare-ups resulting in periods of ill-health.
- A student with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, which reduces capacity to complete a high level of reading within a standard timeframe.

All students are encouraged to meet standard deadlines for submission of assignments. Students are advised to use disability support when completing coursework eg assistive technology and/or one-to-one support. Extensions should only be requested for disability-related reasons eg when there are difficulties accessing support or on occasions when there is an unexpected flare-up of their condition.

If the student is eligible for **flexibility with deadlines** this will be explicitly detailed on their Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA). They have an opportunity to request an extension for reasons related to their disability or long term condition if needed via the [QUB Portal](#). Those who have an ISSA but are requesting ISSA related flexibility with deadlines without this recommendation on their ISSA, should be referred back to Accessible Learning Support for a

review of their supports.

Decisions on the length of extension to be granted will be made by the School and will depend on factors such as stage of academic year, exam board deadlines, specific School policies and the individual circumstances of the student.

Requests for non-disability related reasons should be dealt with via Exceptional Circumstances. Please see the Assessment Support Hub (<https://qubstudentcloud.sharepoint.com/sites/assessment-support-hub>) for more details.

Flexibility with Examinations

If the flexibility relates to a student's inability to undertake an examination due to disability-related reasons, the following process should be applied (*as outlined in 7.3 Examination Support*):

If student is unable to attend an exam due to a flare-up of their condition they should notify their School as soon as possible prior to the exam. Schools may then direct the student to the [QUB Portal](#) to request to take the exam, uncapped at the next available opportunity.

Please note: Requests for ***flexibility with deadlines for disability-related reasons*** must be processed separately to students requesting extensions under the University's Exceptional Circumstances Policy. Additional supporting evidence ***should not*** be sought from the student.

8.3 Marking the Work of Students with Dyslexia and/or other Specific Learning Difficulties (SPLDs)

Marking guidelines are part of the anticipatory reasonable adjustments that legally the University must make for students with a disability. This allows fair and consistent assessment of work across the institution. Consideration should be given when marking the work of students noted as having a specific learning difficulty (SpLD), such as dyslexia.

These students can experience a range of difficulties, independent to their intellectual ability, including slow processing, organisation, memory difficulties, putting ideas into writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and reading.

The University also has an anticipatory duty to provide a flexible and inclusive approach to learning and with recent advances in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), is becoming commonplace. This should decrease the need for the recommendation of reasonable adjustments. The assessment process must ensure students with a disability have the opportunity to show that they can meet the learning outcomes and competence standards required. This may be supported through implementation of reasonable adjustments or offering alternative forms of assessment.

Overarching principles when marking the work of students with a Specific Learning Difficulty include:

- The course must have clear learning aims and objectives, which take into account any professional body requirements.
- Marking guidelines should make clear what is expected to meet the learning outcomes, so university academic standards are not compromised.
- If spelling and grammar are a competence standard and are being marked, this must be clearly stated in the mark scheme of the module, including how many marks are being awarded for this. If it is not mentioned, it can be assumed that it is not in the criteria and there should be no penalty.
- Subjects where spelling, grammar and expression are explicitly assessed (e.g. Languages) or there are professional requirements (e.g. Law, Medicine and Allied professions), the competence standards or professional body's requirements cannot be compromised. This

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often relates only to professional exams and not all University assessments. Reasonable adjustments can still be made and alternative assessments can still be offered in many cases.

- A student with dyscalculia (a specific and persistent difficulty in understanding numeracy, arithmetic and maths concepts) should have the marking guidelines applied only to those aspects covering use and application of number (although dyscalculia often co-occurs with other SpLDs).
- Reasonable adjustments do not override competence standards and must not compromise academic integrity.
- Do not give extra marks to students because they have an SpLD.

The complete **Guidelines for Marking the Work of Students with Dyslexia and/or other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)** can be found in **Annex 5**

8.4 Dyslexia Assessment and Adjustments Following Diagnosis

Many students are diagnosed with dyslexia for the first time whilst attending University. It is often difficult for examiners to determine if a student's writing skills are affected by dyslexic tendencies or general ability. Factors such as comparison with peers, family history/observations or examiners' feedback may lead to the student seeking a diagnosis. The University will implement reasonable adjustments such as consideration for spelling and grammar once a student has this noted as an adjustment in their ISSA. Schools will not review work that has previously been submitted unless they were aware of the disability and there has been a failure to implement reasonable adjustments. Such issues should be considered under extenuating circumstances by the School Board of Examiners.

The diagnostic assessment must be conducted by a Chartered Psychologist or Specialist Teacher who holds a current practising certificate in Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) assessment. The University acknowledges that students may have difficulty in meeting the cost of the assessment and therefore eligible students can apply to the Student Support Fund for up to £400 towards the cost of the assessment. Accessible Learning Support can advise students on eligibility and the referral process for assessments.

Please refer to Accessible Learning Support website for further guidance on supporting and teaching students with Dyslexia: [Staff guidance for working with students with SpLDs](#)

8.5 Copies of Notes in Advance of Lectures

Some students may require handouts or PowerPoint presentations in advance of lectures, for example visually impaired students who use assistive technology software to access course material, or students who have difficulty with concentration or processing information as a result of their disability or long-term condition. Being able to access lecture material in advance of classes helps to ensure that they are not placed at a significant disadvantage in comparison to their peers.

Where a School is unable to provide this reasonable adjustment, it is important that the appropriate academic member of staff liaises with Accessible Learning Support and the student to discuss and agree alternative reasonable adjustments.

8.6 Recording of Lectures

Students with a disability or long-term condition may be permitted to record lectures and tutorials if it is deemed a reasonable adjustment by Accessible Learning Support. Students are advised that all recordings remain the property of the University and are for personal use only. Students who do not comply with these conditions may face disciplinary action under the University's Conduct Regulations. There may be occasions when recording will not be appropriate in classes e.g. when personal or sensitive information is being shared. On such occasions, teaching staff liaise directly with students who are recording and agree alternative reasonable adjustments if necessary.

8.7 Course Material in Alternative Formats

Some students with visual and hearing impairments may require course material in alternative formats such as large print or electronic format. In order to comply with SENDO it is important that Schools ensure that reading lists are available in advance, to ensure that books can be sourced from publishers in an appropriate format. Schools also have an anticipatory duty under the legislation to ensure that they consider the needs of students with a disability or long-term condition when preparing course material. Further advice on accessibility guidelines can be obtained from CED.

Please Note Reasonable adjustments recommended for the learning environment may not always be transferrable to the clinical placement or work setting.

9. Disability Provision within the Academic Environment

9.1 School Disability Advisers

The University has a well-established support system within Schools to ensure the needs of students with disabilities and long-term conditions are addressed. Each School has a nominated staff member who is a key contact within the School for issues relating to disability support. The School Disability Adviser (DA) has the following roles and responsibilities:

- i. The DA is a point of contact for students with a disability or long-term condition; it is therefore important that Schools promote the role so students know who they are and how they can be contacted.
- ii. The DA should liaise with Accessible Learning Support staff, assist in making reasonable adjustments for students and exchange information as required.
Please note: Flexibility with deadlines for **disability-related reasons** should be confirmed with the **School DA to ensure the length of extension is reasonable and proportionate to student need and academic requirements.**
- iii. The DA should have a general awareness and understanding of University and School policies, procedures and practices and how these may impact on students with disabilities and long-term conditions.
- iv. The DA should also have an awareness and understanding of SENDO, to ensure that their School is compliant with the legislation and is promoting inclusive learning for all students.
- v. It is important that the DA is aware of Disabled Students' Allowance to enable them to encourage students to apply.
- vi. The DA is not expected to have expert knowledge of disability issues. However, it is important that they work in collaboration with Accessible Learning Support to identify training needs within the School.

Further information on the role of the School Disability Adviser can be found on the Accessible Learning Support website, please refer to: [Staff information](#)

9.2 Accessible Curriculum and Assessment

The University endorses the practice of inclusive teaching and assessment and aims to ensure that courses are accessible and enable full participation for all students. Schools are encouraged to ensure that accessibility is a key consideration when developing new courses or when redesigning or evaluating existing courses. In particular, the University supports Universal Design for Learning (UDL), in developing a curriculum which is flexible and embraces the diverse student population at Queen's. Further information on UDL and inclusive learning and teaching are available on the Centre for Educational Development's website: [University Design for Learning](#)

As part of the registration and assessment process, staff from Accessible Learning Support may request that applicants are provided with the opportunity to discuss the course curriculum and key learning requirements in advance. This will help to ensure that necessary adjustments are in place where possible, and the student is given the opportunity to make an informed decision regarding their choice

of modules.

9.3 Transcriptions and Close Captions

The University recognises that is best practice from a Universal Design for Learning (UDL) perspective for on-line teaching to be fully accessible which includes close captions and transcriptions of spoken content.

Please see CED website for guidance on making teaching material including videos, text documents and PowerPoints accessible: [Digital Accessibility](#)

It is recognised, that the provision of close captions and transcriptions will require an additional number of actions by teaching staff. The above accessibility guide provided by CED is designed to direct and support staff with this process. If further guidance or assistance is sought, please contact CED directly.

From a legislative perspective, students with disabilities and long-term conditions who experience difficulties with note taking will require access to close captions and transcriptions of spoken teaching content as standard to ensure content is fully accessible and the University is compliant with DDA and SENDO legislation.

Please note: the Schools of students with Note Takers must give those Note Takers access to live classes and / or to transcriptions / recordings. If unable to access the live classes, Note Takers will then use the transcripts to write summary notes of the key themes / main points for revision purposes.

If you require any further guidance on supporting students with disabilities and long-term conditions please contact Accessible Learning Support directly.

9.4 Dissemination of Reasonable Adjustments to School Staff

As noted in Section 7.2, an Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA) documents the supports and reasonable adjustments that are required by a student to ensure equitable access to the learning and teaching environment. ISSAs are shared with the student's respective School via Accessible Learning Support SharePoint site. The ISSA contains information on the student's disability or long-term condition and a list of reasonable adjustments and support to be implemented. Schools must ensure that a limited number of personnel have access to the full ISSA, due to the personal and sensitive nature of the information within it.

Schools should ensure that staff who are required to implement reasonable adjustments, should have access to the reasonable adjustment section of the ISSA. This should include staff who are responsible for modules which the student may be studying in other Schools.

If a student is required/elects to participate in a placement ***the relevant placement support information*** contained in the ISSA should be shared by the School with ***a nominated supervisor*** within the placement. The nominated supervisor must be reminded that this information is personal and sensitive data and therefore should be shared in line with data protection guidelines (GDPR).

Please note: All information should be held and shared in line with the University's Data Protection Policy and Student Privacy Notice. Further information on dealing with personal and sensitive data can be obtained from the University's Information Compliance Unit.

10. General Facilities and Provision for Students with a disability or long-term condition

10.1 Physical Environment

As outlined in the University's Physical Access Policy 'the University will ensure effective systems and procedures are in place to deal with physical access requirements, recognising its leadership role in Northern Ireland and beyond'.

The Estates Directorate has an ongoing commitment to ensure that physical and structural access

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considerations are a routine element in design briefs and refurbishment projects. Staff within the Directorate work closely with Accessible Learning Support to ensure the needs of all students are met by making changes to the physical and structural environment as required.

Occasionally there will be students who due to a disability or long term health condition, require specific furniture, such as a specialist chair. Where course timetabling dictates that this furniture needs moved across campus, the School is responsible for making necessary arrangements via Estates.

Furniture provision at home may also have to be considered for students who are engaging in remote learning but are not eligible for DSA. While Accessible Learning Support can offer advice and guidance on this, Schools would be responsible for making necessary arrangements and also covering payment.

10.2 Extra-curricular Activities, Marketing and Commercial Events

All extra-curricular activities, marketing and commercial events held on University premises or at venues off-campus should, as far as reasonably practical, be accessible to people with disabilities and long term conditions. This includes activities organised by student clubs and societies. It is the responsibility of the School/Department/Service/Third Party Organisation who is organising the event to ensure access arrangements are considered for all applicants who wish to attend. Organisers must provide ample opportunity for attendees to declare any access arrangements they require. It is recommended that this is facilitated at the point of application to allow sufficient time for arrangements to be put in place. At times it may be necessary for organisers to complete a risk assessment to ensure any health and safety implications concerning an attendee's participation in an event is considered and appropriately mitigated against. Staff in Accessible Learning Support are happy to offer advice and guidance to ensure that all such events are inclusive.

Please note: Organisers are responsible for meeting any associated costs in relation to access arrangements that are required. Examples of access arrangements are; physically accessible venues, loop induction systems, materials in alternative formats, sign language interpreter, accommodation of an assistive dog, etc.

10.3 Accessible Parking-

The University has a number of accessible parking bays across the campus. Demand for car parking exceeds the provision, and therefore the University has a clear policy on the allocation of parking permits, which are allocated on the following grounds.

Car parking permits are generally issued as follows:

- Applicants in possession of a 'Blue Badge' are entitled to a parking permit, free of charge. Please refer to the Estates Directorate webpages for further information on how a student **with** a blue badge can apply for an accessible parking permit.
Please note: There is no requirement for blue badge holders to produce further supporting information from a GP or medical specialist.
- If the applicant has a disability or medical condition which affects their mobility but who do not currently hold a 'blue badge'. If applicants are not in possession of a Blue Badge, information on how to apply to the Blue Badge scheme can be found at [Applying for a Blue Badge](#)
- If the applicant chooses to apply to the Blue Badge scheme, they may be eligible to apply to the Estates Department for a temporary car parking permit whilst they await decision on their Blue Badge application. Please contact Accessible Learning Support for more information.

10.4 Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are designed to support the safe evacuation of people with disabilities or long-term conditions in the event of an emergency, such as the activation of a fire alarm.

If a PEEP is required, Accessible Learning Support will arrange for the student to meet with the Fire Safety Officer within Queen's, who will develop an individual PEEP with that student.

The PEEP will consider the student's needs in relation to their School facilities and other services which they will use regularly within the University. Recommendations and adjustments required to assist the student in the event of an emergency will be detailed on an evacuation plan. Completed PEEPs will be disseminated to Accessible Learning Support and the student's School via Sharepoint. Students will receive a copy also.

Designated Fire Wardens across departments within the University undertake PEEP awareness training to further support the safe evacuation of people with disabilities or long-term conditions in the event of an emergency.

11. Information Services

Information Services, which includes Library provision, Student Computing Facilities etc. provides high quality information resources and services to students and staff of the University. It has committed to meeting the needs of students with a disability or long-term condition. Some of their measures include:

- Web Accessibility
The core Queen's University Website has been designed to meet Level AA (2) of the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C-AA) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).

All pages within the Content Management System comply with WCAG 2.0 (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) in accordance with standards recommended by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3).
- Assistive Technology provision

A range of specialist software packages, for both students and staff members, are available across the University's Student Computing Centres including TextHelp Read and Write Gold, Mindview, Jaws, Dragon and Equatio. More information can be found at the [ALS Assistive Technology hub](#)

- Material in alternative format
Accessible copies of reading list material may be sourced from publishers at the request of blind and visually impaired users. This can be arranged by the Library Disability Liaison Officer.
- Trained and Skilled Staff
Staff in the Queen's libraries receive Disability Awareness and SENDO training and are familiar with the use of the assistive software available.

In addition, the Library has implemented a range of reasonable adjustments to ensure that students with a disability or long-term condition are not placed at a significant disadvantage in comparison to non-disabled students. As well as a designated disability support librarian, there are also named people in each library branch who can offer help and advice.

A guide to library supports for students with disabilities can be found here:

[ALS library support](#)

12. Placements and Study Abroad

The University welcomes and encourages applications for placement and study abroad opportunities from students with disabilities or long-term conditions and will consider applications on the same grounds as applicants without a disability or long-term condition. An individual's disability or long-term condition will not influence the University's decision to offer a place.

The application process for placement/study abroad must provide students with the opportunity to disclose a disability or long-term condition. Students who disclose a disability or long-term condition should be advised to meet with a member of the University's Accessible Learning Support team to discuss their individual requirements and agree appropriate reasonable adjustments which will support them during their study/placement abroad. Agreed supports will be detailed on the student's ISSA and shared with relevant academic and professional support staff responsible for coordinating the

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student's placement/study abroad.

Please note: Students in receipt of one-to-one support through Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) or a similar funding body may not be eligible for this support while abroad. In such cases, the responsibility for funding this support will lie with the placement/study abroad scheme.

13. Support for International Students

The University recognises its duty under SENDO and is committed to supporting international students with a disability/long-term condition in an equivalent manner to 'home' students so far as reasonably possible. However, international students are not entitled to Disabled Students' Allowance, which may impact on the range of support mechanisms available. International students who disclose a disability or long-term condition will be assessed by Accessible Learning Support staff, to determine their individual needs and reasonable adjustments required.

14. Students' Union

Queen's Students' Union exists to:

- promote the interests of its members by presenting them to the University and beyond
- provide its members with impartial advice services
- manage and develop the provision of student focused services, offering value for money and attuned to the needs of a diverse student population

The Students' Union is committed to ensuring that all students can participate and access all commercial services, clubs and societies and advice services available to the student population.

15. Support to Participate Fully in Studies

The University is committed to supporting students with disabilities and long-term conditions to participate fully in their studies through the implementation of appropriate reasonable adjustments. The University has a responsibility to balance its duty of care to individual students with its responsibilities to the wider University community, including other students and staff.

While the aim is always to enable students to continue their studies wherever possible, there may be rare occasions where, following careful consideration, it is determined that a student may need to temporarily withdraw or take a break from their studies in the interests of their own wellbeing.

To guide such decisions, the University has developed Guidelines on the Procedure on Support to Participate Fully in Studies and/or University Life on the Grounds of Health and/or Safety, which outline a supportive and transparent process.

See the full guidelines here:

[Support to Participate Fully in Studies](#)

16. Fitness to Practise

A disability or long-term condition does not preclude applications for courses which lead directly to professional occupations. However, students who study these courses are required to comply with fitness to practise policies of the bodies which govern these professions. The University will seek the advice of the Occupational Health Service and Accessible Learning Support to ensure that students with a disability or long-term condition have access to appropriate reasonable adjustments. However, where a student's disability is impacting on their ability to practise, the University will follow the appropriate process outlined in the Fitness to Practise Procedure (see the University's General Regulations for further information).

17. Staff Training

Negative attitudinal stereotypes are often one of the main barriers preventing students with disabilities and long-term conditions participating in all aspects of university life. To overcome this barrier, the University is committed to ensuring that staff have access to disability awareness training, including specialist courses on specific conditions prevalent in the student population. All staff are also required to undertake an online course on equality and diversity to heighten awareness of under-represented groups in society.

Please see the University's Staff Training and Development Programme for further information.

Annex 1

Student Support Agreement

Accessible Learning Support and Student Wellbeing offer a range of specialist services to enable all students to have a positive learning experience. A specialist staff member can meet with you to listen to your issues, identify a range of possible options and ensure you have the right supports in place that meet your needs.

We know that confidentiality is important to you, and the University is committed to creating an environment where students are comfortable in seeking support. Disability and Wellbeing services will hold and process your data in line with the University's [Data Protection Policy](#).

Please be assured that all information we receive is treated sensitively and that we only disclose appropriate levels of information to relevant University staff and associated personnel. However, it may be necessary for us to share information with relevant third parties including health and social care professionals, parent and/or next of kin if there is a known or suspected risk of harm to yourself or others. There may also be occasions where we have a legal obligation to share information and you will be advised of this. If you wish to view more details about how and when we will use your data, please refer to the [Student Privacy Notice](#).

If you are residing outside of Northern Ireland (NI), please note the delivery of our services will be undertaken in accordance with the laws and regulation standards in NI, and any disputes will be subject to NI law.

Agreement to Student Support

Please sign below to indicate that you agree to participate with support from Accessible Learning Support and Student Wellbeing, and the sharing of information on the above conditions:

Please note: You have the right to withdraw your consent to disclose information at any time. You can do this by informing us in writing to [Student Wellbeing](#). Upon receipt of this request, a relevant staff member will make contact with you to discuss this further.

Signature

Signed _____ Date _____

Annex 2

Reviewing the decision not to implement adjustments requested

The University has developed a comprehensive support system to meet the needs of students with disabilities and long-term conditions who wish to study at Queen's. As noted in Section 4, the University welcomes applications from students with a disability or long-term condition on the same academic grounds as non-disabled candidates. An individual's disability or long-term condition will not influence the University's decision to offer a place.

Process for determining reasonable adjustments

- (i) On receipt of an offer from the University, applicants who have disclosed a disability on their UCAS form or via direct entry application will be asked to complete an online questionnaire and submit appropriate medical evidence, if available, to Accessible Learning Support.
- (ii) All applicants who have completed a questionnaire and are accepted on their course will be invited for a registration meeting with a Disability Officer prior to or on commencement of their studies. Accessible Learning Support will consider the information provided to help determine reasonable adjustments which applicants may require.
- (iii) Applicants who are considered to have significant support requirements or who may have a disability or long-term condition which has health and safety or fitness to practise implications, may be invited to meet a Disability Officer and a member of School staff to discuss specific needs and necessary reasonable adjustments, at an early stage of the application cycle.
- (iv) In the unlikely event that there are concerns regarding the University's ability to implement reasonable adjustments, further advice will be sought from the School, the Occupational Health Service and appropriate external agencies.
- (v) Following these discussions, any support recommendations or further options will be discussed with the applicant.
- (vi) In the unlikely event that an applicant is unable to register on their chosen course due to health and safety or fitness to practise issues, the University will ensure the applicant is advised of his/her options regarding change of course.

Appeal Process

- (i) Should the University be unable to implement reasonable adjustments or make appropriate changes to the course, this will be communicated to the applicant by the Director of Education for the relevant School, with advice from Accessible Learning Support.
- (ii) The applicant can request a review of this decision by writing to the Director of Academic and Student Affairs within 10 days of receiving the decision.
- (iii) The applicant will be required to document their grounds for appeal and provide any supporting documentation that they wish the panel to consider.
- (iv) On receipt of this request and supporting documentation, an independent panel which has not been involved in previous discussions, will be convened by Academic Affairs to include representation of:
 - ☐ Pro-Vice Chancellor
 - ☐ Relevant Head of School
 - ☐ Head of Disability and Wellbeing Service (or nominee)
 - ☐ Appropriate external disability expert (if applicable)

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Please note: A nominee may occasionally be permitted, on behalf of an individual member of staff involved in the initial decision.

(v) The panel members will consider all the documentation, the factors regarding the initial decision not to amend academic/competence standards and reasons why reasonable adjustments cannot be implemented.

(vi) The decision of the review panel will be final.

Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA)

FAO: All staff who implement reasonable adjustments

Recommended support and reasonable adjustments outlined will be for the duration of the course and will only be amended following reassessment by Accessible Learning Support at the request of the student or the University.

Student:		Student No:	
Course:		Sub-plan:	
Course Duration:		Date of ISSA:	
Disability Officer:			

Student Profile (including nature of disability / condition):
--

Reasonable Adjustment(s) Recommended:	Additional Notes (if applicable):
School based "In Course" Supports	

Exams and School based Examinations Support	

Library	

Important Information:

Please note that while these are recommendations, the University has a duty to comply

with the Special Education Needs and Disability (Northern Ireland) Order 2005.

Annex 4

Alternative forms of Assessment

The University has responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order to make reasonable adjustments to assessment, to ensure that students with disabilities are not disadvantaged for reasons relating to their disability.

- (i) Adjustments to assessment for a student with a disability may take one of two general forms:
 - a. Modifying the circumstances under which the existing assessment is taken
 - b. Providing an alternative form of assessment
- (ii) Most adjustments will consist of modifying the circumstances under which the existing assessment is taken. For formal examinations, Accessible Learning Support will liaise with the Examinations Office to provide appropriate adjustments such as the allowance of additional time.
- (iii) For coursework or in-course tests, suitable arrangements must be made by the School in consultation with Accessible Learning Support.
- (iv) In a small number of cases, the effects of the student's disability or long-term condition are such that an alternative form of assessment is required. For example, an extended piece of course work, as opposed to written, time-limited examinations.
- (v) The aim in all alternative forms of assessment should be to modify the assessment method or process, while assessing the same set of learning outcomes to the same standard.
- (vi) Devising an alternative assessment is an academic matter. Therefore, due consideration must be given to academic or other prescribed standards required by professional or qualifying bodies, whilst giving students the opportunity to demonstrate their academic achievement despite their disability.
- (vii) The procedure for organising alternative assessment arrangements for students with a disability or long-term condition is set out below:

Procedure for arranging alternative forms of assessment

- (i) All requests for alternative assessment arrangements must be made directly to Accessible Learning Support.
- (ii) In the first instance, Accessible Learning Support will discuss reasonable adjustments that will enable the student to sit the examination. This may include additional time, rest breaks, use of PC, flexible scheduling etc.
- (iii) Students with a disability or long-term condition wishing to be considered for an alternative form of assessment must meet with Accessible Learning Support as soon as possible and by week six of the semester at the latest.
- (iv) No request for alternative forms of assessment on the basis of disability or long-term condition can be considered unless the student provides appropriate medical evidence in support of the request. For example, a doctor's letter outlining the difficulties in sitting a formal examination.
- (v) Accessible Learning Support, with the student's consent, may seek the advice of the Occupational Health Service on the impact of the student's disability or long-term condition to sit examinations.
- (vi) If after discussion with the student and receipt of appropriate medical verification, the Disability

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Officer recommends that the student would benefit from an alternative form of assessment, the Disability Officer will complete the alternative assessment pro-forma and send it to the relevant Director of Education (DE) for consideration and approval.

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- (vii) Following receipt of the request from Accessible Learning Support, the DE will liaise with relevant colleagues to determine whether a new assessment brief can address the same learning outcomes as the original examination/assessment.
- (viii) In reaching their decision to permit the alternative form of assessment, the School will consider any competence or prescribed standards that are required by the course or professional body.
- (ix) Should an alternative form of assessment be permitted, the School will advise the student of the new assessment method and timescale for completion. The School should also update Accessible Learning Support of the outcome.
- (x) If an alternative form of assessment is deemed inappropriate, the DE will document the reasons for this on the pro-forma and update Accessible Learning Support of the outcome of the decision. A meeting will be arranged with the student, the relevant DE and Disability Officer to discuss this decision and what further action is required to enable the student to achieve progression in their chosen course of study.
- (xi) Following this meeting, should the student remain unhappy with the outcome, they may address this through the University Student Complaints Procedure.

Annex 4

Request for Alternative Form of Assessment

Part A - To be completed by Accessible Learning Support

Student Name:	
Student Number:	
School, Course of Study and Year of Study:	
Disability Officer:	
Nature of disability or long term condition and current reasonable adjustments in place:	
Medical evidence obtained verifying difficulties	Yes / No

Annex 4

Request for Alternative Form of Assessment

Part B - To be completed by Relevant School

Student Name:	
Student Number:	
Can an alternative form of assessment be undertaken which will not disadvantage the student and will ensure that academic and/or professional standards are maintained?	
	<p>YES - an alternative form of assessment can be undertaken.</p> <p>Please complete details of these arrangements below, date and sign this pro-forma and return to Accessible Learning Support in order that their Disability Officer can update our records and assist with any additional equipment/student support required.</p> <p>Details of arrangements:</p>
	<p>NO - an alternative form of assessment is not possible.</p> <p>Please outline the reasons for this below, including what further action is required to enable the student to achieve progression in their chosen course of study/module. A further meeting with the relevant Director of Education, the student and their Disability Officer will be arranged to discuss this outcome.</p> <p>Reasons an alternative form of assessment is not possible.</p> <p>Further action(s) required to enable the student to achieve progression in their chosen course of study/module.</p> <p>Date of Meeting with DoE, student and Disability Officer:</p>
Date Outcome Communicated to Accessible Learning Support:	

Signature of Director of Education: _____

School: _____

Date:

Annex 5

Guidelines on Marking the Work of Students with Dyslexia and/or other Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs)

Marking guidelines are part of the anticipatory reasonable adjustments that legally the University must make for students with a disability. This allows fair and consistent assessment of work across the institution. Consideration should be given when marking the work of students noted as having a specific learning difficulty (SpLD), such as dyslexia.

These students can experience a range of difficulties, independent to their intellectual ability, including slow processing, organisation, memory difficulties, putting ideas into writing, spelling, grammar, punctuation and reading.

The University also has an anticipatory duty to provide a flexible and inclusive approach to learning and with recent advances in Universal Design for Learning (UDL), is becoming commonplace. This should decrease the need for the recommendation of reasonable adjustments. The assessment process must ensure students with a disability have the opportunity to show that they can meet the learning outcomes and competence standards required. This may be supported through implementation of reasonable adjustments or offering alternative forms of assessment.

Overarching principles when marking the work of students with a Specific Learning Difficulty include:

- The course must have clear learning aims and objectives, which take into account any professional body requirements.
- Marking guidelines should make clear what is expected to meet the learning outcomes, so university academic standards are not compromised.
- If spelling and grammar are a competence standard and are being marked, this must be clearly stated in the mark scheme of the module, including how many marks are being awarded for this. If it is not mentioned, it can be assumed that it is not in the criteria and there should be no penalty.
- Subjects where spelling, grammar and expression are explicitly assessed (e.g. Languages) or there are professional requirements (e.g. Law, Medicine and Allied professions), the competence standards or professional body's requirements cannot be compromised. This often relates only to professional exams and not all University assessments. Reasonable adjustments can still be made and alternative assessments can still be offered in many cases.
- A student with dyscalculia (a specific and persistent difficulty in understanding numeracy, arithmetic and maths concepts) should have the marking guidelines applied only to those aspects covering use and application of number (although dyscalculia often co-occurs with other SpLDs).
- Reasonable adjustments do not override competence standards and must not compromise academic integrity.
- Do not give extra marks to students because they have an SpLD.

Written assignments and exams

- Individuals with SpLDs often cannot identify mistakes and their work may appear to be less polished than their peers. This does not mean that they have not proofread it or had access to assistive technology to support their learning. SpLD students may spend longer on assignments, but they often think in a holistic, non-verbal way and can find it harder to put their ideas into words. Even after word processing and using a spell check tool, there still may be errors such as homophone substitution (where / wear), phonetic equivalents (words that sound the same), incorrect word substitutions and American spellings.

- Students with dyscalculia may not be able to identify errors in number sequencing, basic arithmetic or time telling, but may be able to demonstrate knowledge of the concepts being assessed.
- Clarity and flow can be affected.
- Extra time in exams is often recommended to support slower processing, memory recall or slow handwriting. It will only usually lead to a very small improvement in spelling and grammar, if at all, and written expression is often still affected.
- Some students with SpLDs (only UK and ROI) will have Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) funded support, which can include 1:1 dyslexia tutor support and assistive technology. Dyslexia Tutors work with students to develop strategies to improve academic skills and foster academic independence. They do not proofread a student's work. Some students, mostly postgraduate, are awarded proofreading support. If a student has access to assistive technology, with practice this can improve writing skills, but some errors will still remain.

Marking

- A quick initial read can sometimes increase the marker's ability to focus on content rather than errors.
- Look for content, ideas, understanding, critical thinking and knowledge.
- Consider whether or not the learning outcomes have been met and what marks are being awarded for.
- Are spelling, grammar and technical accuracy learning outcomes?
- If reasonable adjustments have been applied and the submitted work does not meet learning outcomes or does not show academic competence, then marks should not be awarded.

Feedback

- Give constructive, sensitive feedback.
- If feedback is being given on spelling, grammar and sentence structure, choose a small section, rather than the whole assignment, and inform student that this is what has been done.
- Positive feedback and reinforcing good points is invaluable for SpLD students.
- Give a clear explanation of what was required, what was wrong with the work and provision of examples, so the student knows how to change their work.
- Do not use red or green pen. It may have negative connotations from past experience for the student. It can also be harder to read.
- Feedback should be word processed and clarified orally, if possible, to ensure that the student has received and understood it.
- Be clear if the student has not been penalised for spelling and grammar and that only content is being marked.

Oral presentations

It is not just written work that can be difficult for students with SpLDs. Oral presentations can be hard for a number of reasons. These are detailed below:

- Memory weakness can result in the student forgetting what they had planned to say
- Students may be unable to quickly retrieve and organise their ideas.
- It is often challenging for SpLD students to read aloud and they may experience anxiety connected with previous negative experiences.
- Students may misread their own slides, mispronounce words and find quickly answering questions about their presentation difficult.

Marking

- Have clear learning outcomes.
- Mark for content and ideas, not fluency

Feedback

- Positive feedback is valuable, both verbal and typed

Viva Voce, Differentiation, APR assessments, Spoken exams

Students with SpLDs can face a number of challenges in a Viva exam or exam with a spoken element.

Difficulties include:

- ordering sequentially
- organising ideas
- memory difficulties which can result in forgetting questions
- finding it difficult to locate information in their submission
- stress

It can be helpful if:

- Questions are clear, with unambiguous wording.
- Questions are repeated or broken down if necessary.
- Answers just address a single point, not multiple parts.
- The student is given extra thinking time to find the words to respond and explain their work.
- The student is given extra time to allow for organisation and sequencing difficulties, finding and referring to specific pages.
- Consideration is given to the fact that reading aloud may be extremely stressful for the student.
- Short breaks can help the student refocus if there are difficulties.

Marking

- Mark for content rather than fluency.