

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 Plans arranged to ensure a safe environment for students with a disability or long term condition.

3. Legislative Background

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:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/UniversityPolicyonDisabilityRelatedPublications/>

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

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/external/anti-discrimination-law-in-ni.pdf>

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 which will outline the University's commitment to equality of opportunity and supporting students with a disability or long term condition 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:

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

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 eye glasses 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.

Also, both case law and governmental guidance have noted that a wide range of learning disabilities are also covered, including impairments like autism and dyslexia.

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

Students who disclose a disability or long term condition will be offered to meet with a member of the University's Disability Services team to discuss their individual requirements and agree appropriate reasonable adjustments. Currently 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 Disability Services for advice on effectively supporting students with disclosure. This should also include preparation for work placements or Erasmus programmes.

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; that 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 Disability Services students must agree to disclosure for these purposes by completing a 'Student Support Agreement **Form**' upon registration with the service (**see Annex 1**).

5. Admission Process

The University welcomes and encourages applications from students with disabilities or long term conditions and will consider 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 a questionnaire:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/ProspectiveCurrentStudents/ProspectiveStudents/>

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

Where it is anticipated from the information provided that the applicant will require significant support or will require modifications to the academic course, they will be invited to meet staff from Disability Services and relevant members from the academic School to discuss the applicant's individual needs.

Some professional programmes such as medicine, teacher training, social work and nursing require a student to meet certain "core competencies" or "fitness to practice" conditions in order to receive professional registration. **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.

In a small number of cases where there are fitness to practise concerns or where reasonable adjustments may not be feasible to implement, advice will be obtained by Disability Services from the School, the University's Senior Medical Officer 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 Disability Services 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 reasonable adjustments cannot be implemented, the University reserves the right to withdraw an offer.

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

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. If a disability or long term condition is not disclosed until a later stage, the University will endeavour to make any adjustments required before the start of the course, but it may not be possible to have everything in place before this.

Applicants who wish to appeal a decision not to implement adjustments requested 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's/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' Allowances 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 will be available in alternative formats including Braille, large print, Daisy and CD Rom by contacting Marketing Recruitment and Admissions.

6.2 Open Days

The University holds an annual open day for prospective students interested in applying to study at Queen's. The two-day event provides an opportunity to learn about the courses, facilities, and support services. Applicants who may require reasonable adjustments to be able to participate fully in University open days should be encouraged to contact the Eventus Team, in advance to discuss their individual requirements.

6.3 Pre-entry Visits

It is recognised that 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 can arrange for prospective students to visit the campus before they decide to study at Queen's. Disability Services is happy to meet the individual to discuss their support needs, arrange for them to meet staff from Schools and have a tour of University accommodation.

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 policy for the allocation of student accommodation recognises that some students with a disability or long-term condition may need

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

to live in University accommodation to ensure that their specific needs can be addressed.
Students

seeking accommodation through Queen's are requested to provide brief details of their individual requirements on their accommodation application. With further details being sought through completion of a subsequent associated questionnaire prior to submission. Accommodation Services may discuss these requirements with Disability Services to help ensure that appropriate rooms are allocated.

It is also recognised that 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 Disability Services who will coordinate meetings with staff from Estates and appropriate health care professionals. Pre-entry disclosure and staff responsiveness will be key to 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 commence on their chosen course of study the University will endeavour to respond to any required modifications but implementation cannot be guaranteed.

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

Disability Services 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 mechanisms tailored to meet the diverse needs of individual students.

7.1 Registration and Assessment

When a student registers with Disability Services, a Disability Officer will determine their individual support requirements and agree recommendations for any reasonable adjustments that the University needs to implement 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.

Support requirements and reasonable adjustments are based on appropriate medical evidence or a Post 16 Educational Psychologist's report. For further guidance on medical evidence, please refer to:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/ProspectiveCurrentStudents/CurrentStudents/>

7.2 Individual Student Support Agreement

The supports 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 also sent to the student.

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 Disability Services 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 Individual Student Support Agreement, 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.

Queen's University

Disability Support Code of Practice

The ISSA proforma is set out in Annex 4.

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 Needs Assessment, Disability Services will discuss appropriate reasonable adjustments to enable students to be assessed fairly. In terms of one-to-one support, this would be in relation to the provision of Exam Scribes / Readers / Prompters. Reasonable adjustments will be 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 Disability Services, 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. but not required.
- This communication along with any supporting evidence should be used by the School to determine whether an alternative form of assessment or re-sit without penalty will be approved.
- The student and Disability Services should be notified of the outcome in writing by the School.

7.4 Review of Support

ISSA's are issued for the duration of a student's course. Should a student's condition change or their support needs no longer meet their requirement, students should contact Disability Services for a review. Students registered with Disability Services will be contacted on an annual basis, normally towards the end of the academic year, to review their support requirements. This provides students with an opportunity to review and feedback on the quality of support received during the year. It also allows students to discuss their needs for the following academic year and to request changes to their support provision where additional support is required or support is no longer necessary.

7.5 External Funded Support

A significant proportion of students registered with Disability Services will be eligible for funded support through Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) or a comparable scheme. The University will help the student to apply for support through DSA or a comparable scheme.

(i) Queen's Needs Assessment Centre

Eligible students are required to complete a needs assessment through Queen's Needs Assessment Centre to determine their support requirements in relation to specialist equipment, one-to-one support, transport, and general study costs.

Please note: The needs assessment for funded support is also based on appropriate medical evidence or a Post 16 Educational Psychologist's report, and information obtained from the student on the impact of their disability or long term condition. For further guidance on medical evidence, please refer to:

For further information on Queen's Needs Assessment Centre, please refer to:
<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/NeedsAssessmentCentre/>

(ii) Queen's Register of Support Providers

During the DSA Needs Assessment, it will be determined whether or not a student would benefit from one-to-one academic support including; Academic Mental Health Tutors, Dyslexia Tutors, Study Skills Support etc. The support provided is designed to enable

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

students to develop effective strategies for minimising the impact of their disability in the academic environment. 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 suitably qualified, trained and experienced Support Providers.

Please note: In instances when the Register of Support Providers cannot match a student with suitably qualified, trained and experienced Support Providers, the Register will sub-contract this support provision to a third party provider but will still oversee coordination and monitoring of the support.

For further information on the one-to-one support available for students, please refer to: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/StudentsReceivingOne-to-OneSupport/>

For further information on the Register of Support Providers, please refer to: <http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/QueensRegisterofSupportProviders/>

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 medical evidence and information obtained at the registration and assessment meeting with Disability Services. 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. Disability Services 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 Disability Services and, if appropriate, the University's Occupational Health Service. 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 is set out in Annex 3.

8.2 Flexible Deadlines

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

Disability Services generally recommend flexibility with deadlines for on-course assessment and examinations for the following reasons:

- A student is diagnosed with a fluctuating condition, prone to flare-ups and resulting in periods of ill-health.

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

- A student with specific learning difficulties such as; dyslexia, which reduces capacity to complete a high level of reading within a standard timeframe.

If the student is eligible for **flexibility with deadlines** this will be explicitly detailed on their Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA).

On Course Assessment

If the flexibility with deadline relates to on-course assessment, the student is advised by Disability Services to contact the academic member of staff responsible for setting the assessment if they need to request an extended deadline for submission. The academic member of staff should then liaise with the School Disability Advisor to review the student's individual needs alongside specific course requirements including; scheduled Board of Examiner dates, to agree a suitable length of extension. This will help to ensure the length of extension is reasonable and proportionate to student need, academic requirements and marking deadlines.

Examinations

If the flexibility with deadline relates to their inability to undertake an examination due to disability related reasons, the following process should be applied (as outlined in 7.3 Examination Support):

- The student should notify their School Office and Disability Services, 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 but not required.
- This communication along with any supporting evidence should be used by the School to determine whether an alternative form of assessment or re-sit without penalty will be approved.
- The student and Disability Services should be notified of the outcome in writing by the School.

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 and 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)

The University's Education Committee approved a separate Guidelines on Marking the Work of Students with Dyslexia in 2009. The guidance document can be accessed from the Disability Services website:
<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/UniversityPolicyonDisabilityRelatedPublications/>

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 provided a copy of a Post 16 diagnostic assessment verifying a specific learning difficulty in these areas. 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 Boards of Examiners.

The assessment must be conducted by an educational psychologist or specialist dyslexia assessor, and include the range of diagnostic tests appropriate for adults. 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 reimbursement for the cost of the assessment.

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

Please refer to Disability Services website for further guidance on supporting and teaching students with Dyslexia:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/UniversityPolicyonDisabilityRelatedPublications/>

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 Disability Services 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 Disability Services. 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 will be dealt with under the University's Conduct Regulations.

8.7 Course Material in Alternative Formats

Some students with visual impairments may require course material in alternative formats such as Braille, 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 alternative formats can be obtained from Disability Services.

9. Disability Provision within the Academic Environment

9.1 School Disability Advisers

The University has a well-established support system at a School level 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 Disability Services 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.

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

- v. It is important that the DA is aware of the 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 the Disability Services to identify training needs within the School.

Further information on the role of the School Disability Adviser can be found on Disability Services website, please refer to:

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/TypesofSupportAvailable/AcademicSupport/DisabilityAdvisers/#d.en.678467>

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.

As part of the registration and assessment process, staff from Disability Services 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.

For further advice and support, please refer to:

The Equality Challenge Unit's Guidance for Academics

<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/sgc/disability/UniversityPolicyonDisabilityRelatedPublications/>

The Equality Challenge Unit's Guidance on Creating an Inclusive Environment

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/inclusive-environment/>

9.3 Dissemination of Reasonable Adjustments to School Staff

As noted in Section 7.2, an Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA) documents the support 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 Disability Services SharePoint site. The ISSA contains two sections:

- Part A which details the student's disability or long term condition and impact on academic learning
- Part B details reasonable adjustments and support to be implemented

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 Office.

Part A

Schools must ensure that **School Managers, Disability Advisors and Head of School** are the only personnel with access to **Part A of the ISSA** due to the sensitive and personal nature of the information detailed. In the event that a Head of School wishes for Part A to be shared with another member of School staff, explicit consent must be sought from Disability Services in advance.

Part B

Schools should ensure that staff who are required to implement reasonable adjustments, should have access to **Part B 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 **Part B** should be shared by the School with **a nominated supervisor**

Queen's University

Disability Support Code of Practice

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) and in respect of the student's right to confidentiality.

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

10.2 Extra-curricular Activities, Marketing and Commercial Events

All extra-curricular activities, marketing and commercial events held on University's 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 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 Disability Services 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.

Applicants in receipt 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.

Applicants who have a disability or long term medical condition which affects their mobility but **do not** hold a 'blue badge' can apply for an accessible parking permit for a short-term period. Please refer to the Estates Directorate webpages for further information on how a student **without** a blue badge can apply for an accessible parking permit.

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

Please note: Applicants who **do not** hold a blue badge must provide supporting information from their GP or a relevant medical professional detailing their reasons for requiring an accessible parking permit and the length of time that this will be required.

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.

Disability Services staff liaise with individual students registered with the service, to advise on the need for a PEEP. If a PEEP is required, Disability Services will arrange for the student to meet with the Estates Manager or Assistant Estates Manager (Fire Safety) for an individual PEEP to be developed.

The PEEP will consider the student's needs in relation to their School facilities and other services and facilities that they will regularly use within the University. Recommendations and agreements required to assist the student in the event of an emergency will be detailed on a pro forma evacuation plan. Completed PEEPs will be disseminated to Disability Services and the student's School via Sharepoint.

Designated Fire Wardens 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

The goal of Information Services which includes Library provision, Student Computing Facilities etc. is to provide the highest quality information resources and services to students and staff of the University. It has demonstrated a clear commitment to meeting the needs of students with a disability or long-term condition by implementing the following measures:

- **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.
- **Material in alternative format**
A procedure has been agreed with subject librarians that once in receipt of the reading list from the student's School, they will source an accessible copy of it from the publisher, who has responsibility to make it available for use by blind and visually impaired users.
- **Trained and Skilled Staff**
Staff in the library receive Disability Awareness and SENDO training and are competent in the use of the adaptive 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.

Queen's University Disability Support Code of Practice

A guide for students with disabilities can be found here:
<http://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/InformationServices/TheLibrary/UsingtheLibrary/Disability-AdditionalSupport/>

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 their

application 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 Disability Services team to discuss their individual requirements and agree appropriate reasonable adjustments that 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 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 are unlikely to be eligible for this support while abroad. Therefore, 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, it is recognised that 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 invited to meet a member of Disability Services staff for a Needs Assessment to determine their individual needs and the extent of the reasonable adjustments that can be implemented.

14. Occupational Health Service

The University may require a student with a disability or long term condition to have an assessment with the University's Occupational Health Service. This assessment will help to determine the likely impact of the student's disability or long term condition whilst studying at Queen's and support recommendations on appropriate reasonable adjustments, which may help the student to progress on their programme of study.

15. 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

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

16. Fitness to Study

It is recognised that the University has a responsibility to balance its duty of care for students with disabilities and long term condition with its duty towards all other students and staff. Every effort will be made to ensure that students with disabilities and long term conditions can complete their studies with the implementation of appropriate reasonable adjustments. However, there may be occasions when it is deemed in the best interest of the student or the University for a student to withdraw from their studies. The University has developed Guidelines on Fitness to Continue in Study on the Grounds of Health and/or Safety (see the University's General Regulations for further information).

17. 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 Senior Medical Officer and Disability Services 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 procedure outlined in the Fitness to Practise Procedure (see the University's General Regulations for further information).

18. Staff Training

It is recognised that 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 contact the University's Staff Training and Development Unit for further information.

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

Annex 1



STUDENT SUPPORT AGREEMENT

Disability and 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 note: If you are a student studying at St Mary's or Stranmillis in receipt of funded support (including DSA) you are agreeing to supports being delivered in line with the terms above.

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](#).

PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Please sign below to indicate that you agree to participate with support from Disability and Wellbeing services, and the sharing of information on the above conditions.

Signed _____ Date _____

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 studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk. Upon receipt of this request, a relevant staff member will make contact with you to discuss this further.

DECLARATION TO DECLINE SUPPORT FROM DISABILITY AND WELLBEING SERVICES

Following an initial meeting, I confirm that I do not wish to avail of any further support from Disability and Wellbeing services at present. However, I understand the service may have a duty to disclose the information shared to date in line with the University's [Student Privacy Notice](#) and/or if there is a known or suspected risk of harm to myself or others.

Signed _____ Date _____

Queen's University

Disability Support Code of Practice

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 a disclosed a disability on their UCAS form or via direct entry application will be asked to complete a questionnaire and return to Disability Services.
- (ii) Disability Services consider the information provided alongside medical documentation to help determine the reasonable adjustments that applicants may require. Additional information may be requested.
- (iii) 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 the commencement of their studies.
- (iv) In addition, 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, will 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.
- (v) 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, Senior Medical Officer and appropriate external agencies.
- (vi) Following these discussions, the applicant will be invited to meet again with the relevant School and Disability Services to discuss the support available and further options.
- (vii) In the event that the course is deemed to be inappropriate, 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 Disability Services.
- (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 which they wish the panel to consider.
- (iv) On receipt of this request and supporting documentation, an independent panel who 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 Services (or nominee)
 - Senior Medical Officer (if applicable)
 - Appropriate external disability expert (if applicable)

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

Annex 2

Please note: A nominee may occasionally be required, 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.

Queen's University

Disability Support Code of Practice

Annex 3

Alternative forms of Assessment

The University has responsibilities under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order to make reasonable adjustments to its provision, including methods of 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, Disability Services will liaise with the Exams 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 Disability Services.
- (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 in reaching the decision, 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 Disability Services.
- (ii) In the first instance, Disability Services 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 Disability Services 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 exam.
- (v) Disability Services, with the student's consent, may seek the advice of the University's Senior Medical Officer on the impact of the student's' disability or long-term condition on their ability to sit examinations.
- (vi) If after discussion with the student and receipt of appropriate medical verification, the Disability 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.

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

Annex 3

- (vii) Following receipt of the request from Disability Services, 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 complete the relevant section of the pro-forma and return it to Disability Services.
- (x) If an alternative form of assessment is deemed inappropriate, the DE will document the reasons for this on the pro-forma and return it to Disability Services. 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

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

Annex 3

Request for Alternative Form of Assessment

Part A - To be completed by Disability Services

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:

Report difficulties which impact on undertaking scheduled examinations:

Medical evidence obtained verifying difficulties

Advice obtained from University Senior Medical Officer:

Yes/No

Sent to relevant Director of Education:

School _____

Dir Educ. _____

Date _____

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

Annex 3

Request for Alternative Form of Assessment

Part B - To be completed by Relevant School

Student Name and 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?

Yes, an alternative form of assessment can be undertaken.

Please complete details of these arrangements below, date and sign this pro-forma and return to Disability Services in order that their Disability Officer can update our records and assist with any additional equipment/student support required.

No an alternative form of assessment is not possible.

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.

Signature of Director of Education: _____

School: _____

Date: _____

Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA)

Part A

To: Head of School, School DA and School Manager

Student Name:
Student No:
Course: e.g. MSc Software Development
Level: UG / PGT
Disability Officer:
Date:

Student Profile:

Nature of disability:
Impact on learning activities:
Other information:
NB: Recommended support and reasonable adjustments outlined in Part B will be for the duration of the course and will only be amended following reassessment by Disability Services at the request of the student or the University as a result of a change of circumstances. Any changes to a current ISSA must be supported by appropriate medical or other evidence supplied by the student.

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

Annex 4

Individual Student Support Agreement (ISSA)

Part B – For distribution to all staff who have to implement reasonable adjustments

Recommended support and reasonable adjustments outlined below will be for the duration of the course and will only be revised (e.g. Due to change of circumstances) following reassessment by Disability Services at the request of the student or the University.

Student Name:
Student No:
Course:
Duration of course:
Disability Officer:
Date:

Nature of Disability:

Action by	Reasonable adjustment required	Please select	Further details or comments
School			
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Disability Services			
	DSA application	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Library			
	Extended Library Loans	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Exams and Office Based School Examinations			
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Queen's University
Disability Support Code of Practice

		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Placement/ Study Abroad Support			
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

Other Information (e.g. field trips, off campus activities)

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