

Guidelines on Support for Short-term Impairments

There may be occasions when a student may be injured/ impacted or require surgery which can result in a short term impairment e.g. broken limb, illness, medical procedure, undiagnosed mental health concerns etc. The University recognises that temporary impairments may impact on academic progress (e. g. difficulties getting to class, taking notes, sitting exams etc.) and through the short-term impairments process, we can consider adjustments that may help students continue with their academic progress.

What is a short-term impairment?

The potential length of time that a student may be impacted by their impairment will guide the mechanism by which they are supported. Short-term impairments are not chronic, therefore initially would not be expected to last beyond 12 months. Therefore short term impairments would not be classified as a disability at point of disclosure.

A disability or long-term condition is one that has impacted or is likely to impact the individual for 12 months or more. 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". (Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). In these cases students should be directed to make an appointment with the University [Student Disability Services](#), as soon as possible, for an assessment of their support requirements, including those related to examinations.

A student may be registered with Disability Services for another condition and find themselves experiencing a separate short term impairment, therefore requiring additional support. In these cases the short term impairment process would also apply.

Note: Ongoing non-attendance is not considered a temporary impairment, and will be considered within attendance policies and Leave of Absence procedures, depending on the timeframe.

If an impairment/ condition is likely to impact the student less than a month they may be better supported through Exceptional Circumstances: [Guidelines for Students on Exceptional Circumstances | Academic & Student Affairs | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#).

Considering Short-Term Impairment Adjustments

Students who acquire a short-term injury or condition (but do not have an underlying disability) should advise their School Office, as soon as is practicable, to enable special arrangements to be considered.

The student should complete [Part A of the Special Examination Arrangements and Support Form \(Short-term Impairment\)](#) (Annex 1) and provide supporting evidence where possible, noting the:

- temporary impairment,
- impact the temporary impairment will have on studies,
- likely length of time the impairment will last.

It may take up to 5 working days for a School to consider and advise if support can be put in place, but where possible a conversation with the student should be facilitated quickly. Adjustments and length of extensions will depend on factors such as School policy, type of assessment, stage of academic year etc. There is no legal obligation to ensure adjustments for short-term impairments are in place, but where possible, reasonable adjustments should be considered in reference to these guidelines.

An appropriate member of staff within the School, such as an Advisor of Studies or Personal Tutor should discuss possible special arrangements with the student to agree appropriate supports and complete [Part B of the Special Examination Arrangements and Support Form \(Short-term Impairment\)](#) (Annex 2)

Consideration should be given for the most appropriate action for the student's attendance / assessment or performance. The University Fit to Sit policy should be discussed to help inform the student's decision to sit any upcoming exams.

Short-term impairments may impact a range of areas across a student’s studies and so adjustments should be considered across these areas. In course supports can be offered and agreed between the School and student from a list of standard reasonable adjustments. For any support required outside the standard reasonable adjustments, the School should consult with the Disability and Wellbeing service to consider potential additional appropriate supports.

Any exam support required outside of class tests should be shared with the Disability and Wellbeing Service via SharePoint for consideration and approval. School staff should communicate these using [Part B of the Special Examination Arrangements and Support Form \(Short-term Impairments\)](#) (Annex 2)

Student Disability & Wellbeing Service will review the student’s entitlement to special examination arrangements with any queries discussed with the School. Student Disability & Wellbeing Service will forward recommendations to the Examinations Office who will, as far as reasonably possible, implement these arrangements and communicate them to the student.

Please note, while the University will endeavour to put appropriate supports into place, it may not always be possible to accommodate requests due to resource limitations and/or time constraints. If it is unclear what support may be required, the Student Disability & Wellbeing Service can provide advice and guidance.

School based 'in course' support

A number of in course supports can be considered to help a student access their studies.

Flexibility with assignment deadlines for the next upcoming assessment	Students may require flexibility with deadlines to complete some aspects of in-course assessment and examinations. This can include conditions resulting in periods of ill health or a flare-up of pain. It may also be required when a students focus and concentration is impacted due to pain management, side effects of medication or the impact of an undiagnosed mental health concern.
Lecture notes/slides in advance	When not available on Canvas a student may benefit from notes/ slides in advance to help them prepare or focus in class when their focus or concentration is impacted by their impairment/ condition.
Permission to record lectures and/or tutorials	When a student's ability to take notes or absorb information is impacted, recording lectures may help them capture relevant information. 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.
Consideration for handwriting	In some instances, such as an injury to an arm or hand a student may require marking considerations.

- **Exam Support**

Queen's University is committed to ensuring that our examination procedures are effective in assessing the knowledge and abilities of students, while at the same time, ensuring the maintenance of academic standards. There are a number of Special Examination Accommodations and Supports that can be considered to meet the individual requirements of students who have been impacted by a short-term impairment.

Rest breaks -Up to 15 minutes per hour	Supervised rest breaks may be granted as appropriate. Some students may need to take breaks for pain management or require medical or other treatment during an examination. A student may also benefit from rest breaks if they are experiencing symptoms of anxiety that is not a diagnosed condition. If an examination is interrupted for such reasons, the duration of the break will not be deducted from the time allowed to complete the examination paper.
Extra Exam time- usually 25%	The amount of additional time will be determined based on individual requirements. Students may require additional time if their condition can cause fatigue or limited strength or reduced mobility / dexterity. A student's concentration or attention can be compromised due to experiences of pain or impact on their mental health that is not a diagnosed condition.
Change of venue (individual room/ smaller room)	Some students may need to complete their examination in an alternative venue for reasons relating to their injury or short term impairment. A change of venue will be required to accommodate extra time or rest breaks through the green room.
Use of PC- Laptop	Due to an injury a PC may be the most effective means of completing an assessment by examination for some students.
Bathroom close to venue	Depending on the condition, some students may need access to a toilet in close proximity to the exam venue.
Consideration for handwriting	In some instances, such as an injury to arm or hand a student may require marking considerations.
Ergonomic Supports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Specialist desk ○ Footstool ○ Back support ○ Writing slope ○ Document holder ○ Specialist chair 	It is important that venues are as comfortable as possible for all candidates. Some students may require additional or alternative items of furniture due to an injury or condition.
Accessible venue	If a student's mobility is impacted an accessible venue may need to be considered. Unfortunately, some exam venues are not fully accessible. This may need to be considered during timetabling.

- One to one support

A student may benefit from one to one support to help them complete examinations or access their studies. This support is funded and arranged by the School via the Queen's Register of Support Providers by contacting nmhregister@qub.ac.uk to request this. Support Providers will carry out practical tasks for a candidate whose short-term impairment prevents them from doing so themselves. Support Providers are not permitted to give factual information or advise the candidate on how to structure responses.

Exam Scribe	To scribe dictated answers for students in an examination situation.
Note taker	To attend lectures, tutorials and other classes and take notes as requested.
Campus Assistant (General)	To assist the student in accessing campus facilities as required e.g. open doors, carry bags etc

For further information on 1:1 support roles please visit:

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

- **Library Support**

Library staff can provide help and support to students who are experiencing difficulty accessing library materials.

[Help and Support | Information Services | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

- **Wellbeing support**

Often short-term impairments can have an impact on a student's wellbeing and the Student Wellbeing Service can provide advice, information and guidance to staff supporting students. Guidance on how to support students, make referrals and find out about the services offered can be found here: [Information for Staff | Student Centre | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

Students can also be directed to the daily Disability and Wellbeing drop-in: [Connect With Us | Student Centre | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

Ongoing support and monitoring

The impact of short-term impairments can vary and so it is important that a timeframe of support is agreed with an option to review if the impact continues. At this stage, further support through the short-term impairments process can be considered, or if the condition is likely to last 12 months or more, the student should be directed to Disability Services. The Disability and Wellbeing Team can provide guidance on the most appropriate process including support recommendations.

Special Examination Arrangements and Support Form (Short-term Impairment)

Part A (to be completed by the student)

1. Details of the Student Requiring Special Arrangements			
First name		Course of Study	
Surname		Year of Study (PT or FT)	
Student Number		QUB e-mail	
Date of Birth		Contact number	
Details of the injury/condition and likely impact the temporary impairment will have on studies			
Anticipated length of time the condition/ impairment will impact academic studies			
Outline supports that may be helpful in relation to area of study i.e. access to lectures, examinations and assessments			
Where appropriate the school may seek guidance from the Disability and Wellbeing Service to consider your request and appropriate supports.			
Student Signature		Date	

This form should be submitted to the School office alongside supporting evidence where possible, noting the:

- temporary impairment,
- impact the temporary impairment will have on studies,
- likely length of time the impairment will last.

Special Examination Arrangements and Support Form (Short-term Impairment)

Part B (to be completed by the staff member)

2. Details of Staff Member Requesting Special Arrangements for a Student					
Title		School			
First name		QUB e-mail			
Surname		Head of School Name			
Has the student consented to their information being shared with Student Disability & Wellbeing if appropriate?			YES		NO
3. Information to Support Special Arrangement					
Date impairment / issue Reported		Supporting evidence	YES		NO
Details of any supporting evidence produced by the student					

3. Support Agreed

3a. School Based 'in course' Support

Standard Reasonable Adjustments	Select support required	Period of adjustment
Flexibility with assignment deadlines for the next upcoming assessment		
Permission to record lectures and/or tutorials		
Consideration for handwriting		

No School Based 'in course' Support required

3b. One to one Support

Standard Reasonable Adjustments	Select support required	Period of adjustment
Note taker		
Campus Assistant (General)		

To arrange one to one support the School should contact the Queen's Register of Support Providers (nmhregister@qub.ac.uk).

School agree to incur the charges for 1:1 support if students are not registered with Disability Services.

No One to One Support required

3c. Exam Support

N.B. Exam support required outside of class tests must be shared with the Disability and Wellbeing Service via SharePoint for consideration and approval as noted on completion of this form.

Provide the following information in relation to the examinations to be undertaken	
Exam period (ie month and year)	
Title and date of specific examinations:	

Standard Reasonable Adjustments	Select support required	
Rest breaks -Up to 15 minutes per hour		
Extra Exam time- usually 25%		
Change of venue	Green Room	
	Smaller room	
	Individual room (required for exam scribe)	
Use of PC- Laptop		
Bathroom close to venue		
Consideration for handwriting		
Ergonomic Supports	Specialist desk	
	Footstool	
	Back support	
	Writing slope	
	Document holder	
	Specialist chair	
Accessible venue		
Exam Scribe		
<p><i>To arrange one to one support the School should contact the Queen's Register of Support Providers (nmhregister@qub.ac.uk).</i></p> <p><i>School agree to incur the charges for 1:1 support if students are not registered with Disability Services.</i></p>		

No Exam Support required	
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3d. Library Support
<p>Students can be directed to library staff for help and support to access the library.</p> <p>Help and Support Information Services Queen's University Belfast (qub.ac.uk)</p>

3e. Wellbeing Support

Guidance on how to support students, make referrals and find out about the services offered can be found here: [Information for Staff | Student Centre | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

Students can also be directed to the daily Disability and Wellbeing drop-in: [Connect With Us | Student Centre | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

Student Wellbeing Referral	Select support required
Staff member to refer student to Student Wellbeing	
Student to contact Student Wellbeing	

Agreed timeframe of support			
Staff signature		Date	
Student Signature		Date	

Disability & Wellbeing Approval (only required for central exam support)			
Staff signature		Date	

For central exam support staff then upload completed form to the Student Wellbeing Sharepoint site:

[Student Wellbeing - Special Exam Requests - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#) > Special Exam Arrangements > relevant School Folder.

Student Disability & Wellbeing will review the student's entitlement to special examinations arrangements. (Any queries will be discussed with the School).

If supports are appropriate, Student Disability & Wellbeing will forward the form to the Exams Office.

>The ability to implement the support will be confirmed to the student by the Exams Office. (If, for any reason supports cannot be implemented, e.g. time, venue restrictions, Exams Office will notify the student, School and Student Disability & Wellbeing.