

Harper & Keele

VETERINARY SCHOOL

Reasonable Adjustment Policy

(For Students with Disabilities and Guidance for Staff, Students and Applicants)

1. Introduction

This policy has also been prepared to support the Vet School in meeting its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010. These include the obligation not to treat somebody less favourably because they are disabled and the requirement to make reasonable adjustments to any arrangements or the physical environment that would place a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage.

2. Purpose

We aim to ensure that students receive an inclusive learning experience which means a person with a disability and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them.

UK legislation and associated guidance from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, higher education providers are required to take reasonable steps to:

- mitigate against substantial disadvantage where a provision, criterion or practice may create barriers for the involvement and educational attainment of disabled people.
- alter or remove physical features that place disabled persons at a substantial disadvantage.
- provide an auxiliary aid where, without one, disabled students would be put at a disadvantage.
- consider adjustments to assessments or the provision of alternative arrangements for assessments, being mindful of the specific learning requirements of students with disabilities.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff and students, and of particular relevance to students with disabilities, special educational needs or long term medical conditions. The policy has been developed with reference to good practice available within the sector, including that available from the Equality Challenge Unit. The policy highlights the requirements with the Equality Act 2010 for staff to ensure that the teaching and learning experience is inclusive for all students. Depending on the need of an individual disabled student, the means by which that student is enabled to demonstrate the standard can be adjusted/adapted.

This might involve, for example:

- adapting materials used in an assessment to aid accessibility;

- providing assistance during assessment;
- re-organising the assessment location's physical environment and facilitating the use of assistive technology and a computer.

Similarly in some circumstances it may be most appropriate to provide for alternative assessment arrangements to prevent disadvantage whilst ensuring there is appropriate academic rigour. This policy should be read in conjunction with other School and host institution policies relating to the support of disabled applicants and students. These include, but are not limited to, the Admissions Policy and Support to Study Policy.

Reasonable adjustments are those based on the specific circumstances or needs of individual students that may be required to ensure that a disabled student is not placed at a disadvantage. In making judgements on what is reasonable, account must also be made for maintaining academic standards, the health and safety of the individual and others, practical and financial feasibility and ensuring that others are not, as a consequence of adjustments, placed at a substantial disadvantage. Inclusive adjustments are those which anticipate a range of diverse needs on a general basis and which may benefit many, if not all, students.

The School's policy is to operate in an inclusive manner, in anticipating the diverse needs of all students, wherever possible. Where, however, a student has a disability which needs individualised adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment practices, the manager of the disability service, or nominee, at the student's host institution will determine the specific reasonable adjustments that will be authorised for individual students. In making such decisions, the service manager, or nominee, will take into account the need to maintain academic standards, the health and safety of all individuals, the practical and financial feasibility of adjustments and the need to ensure that others are not, as a consequence of making an adjustment, disadvantaged. The service manager, or nominee, will be informed by psychologists' reports, diagnostic assessments or medical evidence and needs assessment reports from recognised professionals or access centres. UK students with a disability, including dyslexia, may be eligible for support through the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA). These allowances are intended to assist UK students with disabilities who are studying in Higher Education.

Records relating to a student's disability will be retained in line with extant data protection regulations following the conclusion of study, for the purpose of answering any complaints or appeals. This allows the School to align itself with the current Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) complaints process. For students where a dispute is ongoing or is in reasonable contemplation for which there is a statutory limitation period, the records relating to the issue in dispute will be kept for the relevant statutory limitation period.

4. Procedure for Reasonable Adjustment Request which is not funded through the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

If a student (including pre-enrolled applicants) would like to make a request for a reasonable adjustment which is not supported through the DSA then the following procedure must be followed.

Initial meeting with a member of disability services (at the student's host institution) to discuss request and make application for its provision. The student must supply the relevant evidence at least 3 days in advance of the meeting, where the University does not already have copies of the evidence. The service manager or nominee will document the key points arising from the discussion of the request as set out in Annex A.

Suitable evidence to be provided:

Medical evidence	A GP/Consultant or suitably qualified member of the medical profession which clearly justifies the need for the reasonable adjustment and the impact of the adjustment not being made.
Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs) evidence	<p>A report undertaken by either an Educational Psychologist (registered with the HCPC) or a Specialist Teacher Assessor with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate.</p> <p>Diagnostic assessment reports should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use report format recommended in the SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines • Use tests recommended in the SpLD Working Group 2005/DfES Guidelines and subsequently updated SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) and STEC (a sub group of SASC).

If request costs up to and including £3,000/year then the decision will be made by the service manager, or nominee, at the student's host institution in liaison with the equivalent post holder at the other institution, within 7 working days. It is at the discretion of the service manager, or nominee, if further advice is required at this stage.

If request is more than £3,000/year then the application should be made to the service manager. The request and accompanying evidence will be presented to a panel by the service manager, or nominee, at the student's host institution. The decision will be made by the panel and notified to the student by the service manager at the student's host institution within 3 working days.

Request Approved: Where a student's request is approved then the student's host institution will fund the support and make arrangements for the support to be put in place. Approval will state the conditions which must be satisfied by the student for the adjustment to continue.

Request not approved: Any student not satisfied with the outcome of a reasonable adjustment request should follow the Student Complaints Procedure of the student's host institution, available at:

Harper Adams University:
<http://www.harper.ac.uk/keyinfo>

Keele University:
<https://www.keele.ac.uk/studentcomplaints/>

Adjustments to assessment arrangements are intended to compensate for the impact of a student's disability. The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) requires all students, who graduate with an accredited Veterinary degree, to meet all 'Day One' competencies at the point of graduation therefore any reasonable adjustments agreed will need to conform with RCVS policies and to ensure the student can meet these requirements.

Further Guidance:
 Day one Competencies: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/day-one-skills/>
 DDA Guidance: <https://www.rcvs.org.uk/document-library/dda-guidance/>

For coursework assessments, which are not time constrained, no further adjustments are made, other than through the additional learner support arrangements provided. Students may indicate on their assignment submission form that they have a Specific Learning Difficulty and that they would particularly welcome detailed and constructive feedback regarding structure,

grammar and spelling. Students are encouraged to discuss this feedback with their personal tutor to help them to develop their study and written communication skills. No adjustments should be made to marks, where effective communication is a specified assessment criterion.

A staff development programme is in place to assist staff in all areas of the School to meet the general and specific needs of students with disabilities. This includes programmes relating to learning, teaching and assessment and inclusive practice.

In addition to a staff development programmes, guidance on inclusive practice is available from the following links:

Harper Adams University's 'Guide to Inclusive Learning and Teaching' available at: <https://www.harper.ac.uk/keyinfo>

Resources at Keele University regarding inclusive practice available at: <https://www.keele.ac.uk/inclusiveteaching/>

5. Guidance for Staff, Students and Applicants

The following provides a list of those who can be contacted by any staff member, student or applicant who is seeking guidance on how disabled students can be supported through inclusive or reasonable adjustments. The services are normally open during undergraduate term times between 9am - 5pm on weekdays and by appointment at other times. In the first instance, members of the learner support team should be approached for general queries as below:

Harper Adams University:

Jane Hill (Disability and Learner Support Manager), oversees the advice, screening and support arrangements for applicants and students with disabilities. One-to-one appointments can be booked through Debbie Harrison (Learner Support Officer) in FS9 in the Faccenda Centre, or alternatively for specific queries, Jane Hill can be contacted at lsupport@harper-adams.ac.uk or 01952 815417. Jane is based in FS15 in the Faccenda Centre.

Keele University:

The Disability and Dyslexia team members are based at the Student Service Centre, Tawney T32. The team support students by giving advice and guidance and overseeing reasonable adjustments. They will arrange one-to-one interviews to ascertain individual needs. The team can be contacted on telephone number: 01782 733950 or email support.dds@keele.ac.uk.

Available Services and Resources to Support Students with Disabilities

The following services and resources are available to help learners reach their full potential.

The Disability Teams are available in each intuition to assist students in:

- arranging screening, initial and expert assessments of disability or specific learning difficulties, such as dyslexia;
- arranging needs assessments in support of identifying reasonable adjustment requirements;
- making Disabled Students' Allowance claims (i.e. consumable allowances);
- arranging with the Examination's Team for provision of specialist support, including readers, sign-language interpreters, note-takers, lip readers and non-medical personal assistants;

- arranging any special assessment arrangements (see Section 6 Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements below);
- arranging for information materials to be made available in alternative formats (e.g. Braille or audio formats);
- arranging, with the Library Manager, specific reasonable adjustments in the library;
- arranging, with the Disability Teams and Accommodation Managers, specific accommodation requirements.

Software Available

A range of assistive technology software is available for use by students, where appropriate.

Please contact your host institution for further details:

Harper Adams University:

The Learner Support team are based at the Faccenda Centre, FS9. The team can be contacted on telephone number: 01952 815282 or email learnersupport@harper-adams.ac.uk

Keele University:

The Disability and Dyslexia team are based at the Student Service Centre, Tawney T32. The team can be contacted on telephone number: 01782 733950 or email support.dds@keele.ac.uk.

Other Equipment

Other equipment available to loan includes a limited number of laptops, preloaded with some assistive software, dictaphones, and the provision of coloured overlays. Please note that a small deposit may be charged.

6. Adjustments to Assessment Arrangements

Assessment Arrangements

Assessment arrangements should be organised to ensure that a student's disability does not, unfairly, disadvantage them in demonstrating that they can satisfy module learning outcomes. Reasonable adjustments typically include revising the assessment arrangements and, in those circumstances where this is not appropriate, offering an alternative mode of assessment. Any reasonable adjustments agreed will need to meet RCVS requirements.

Reasonable adjustments, as approved by the RCVS may be made, where agreed with the Disability Manager (at the student's host institution) by the published deadline before examinations commence.

Requests made after the published deadline for making reasonable adjustments to examination arrangements (as advertised by the School) cannot be guaranteed to be approved although the School will give consideration where there are mitigating circumstances to do so. Students are made aware of deadlines and the University needs a reasonable period of time in which to make separate arrangements for individual students.

Where time constrained assessments are organised outside of the formal examination periods, tutors are responsible for liaising with the Examinations Office to ensure that these adjustments are made. Such in-class assessments are normally constrained to designated weeks in an academic year, in order to ensure that special support needs can be met. Students must make Disability and Dyslexia Services aware of their needs at least four weeks in advance of such assessments, so that any reasonable adjustments can be considered.

Alternative Modes of Assessment

In circumstances where adjustments to assessment arrangements are not sufficient to overcome the disadvantage of a student that is caused by their disability, any requests for alternative modes of assessment to the School would need to meet the requirements of the RCVS.

Curriculum Modification

Any requests for curriculum modification should be made to the School but would need to meet the requirements of the RCVS.

Complaints

Any student not satisfied with the outcome of a reasonable adjustment request should follow the Student Complaints Procedure of the student's host institution, available at:

Harper Adams University:

<https://www.harper.ac.uk/keyinfo>

Keele University:

<https://www.keele.ac.uk/studentcomplaints/>

Approval and Amendment History

Version 1.0, approved by Interim Joint Academic Board, August 2019.

Lead	Head of Harper & Keele Veterinary School
Policy to be reviewed	Every 3 years
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