

THE UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Reasonable Adjustments: Students

The following are examples of study aids and support arrangements, which are frequently recommended for disabled students:

Tape Recorder

A tape recorder may be recommended for students who are unable to write by hand, or continue to write over a prolonged period.

Examples include

- A blind/partially sighted student who is unable to use a Braille note taker or laptop
- A student who is hard of hearing or a lip reader
- A dyslexic student who has difficulties taking notes whilst listening
- A student with RSI, back injury, arthritis, or other physical disability
- A student whose concentration may lapse due to discomfort, tiredness or prescribed medication
- A student, for reasons relating to physical disability or mental health difficulty cannot attend lectures or classes at certain times or who requires breaks during a class

Copies of Overheads

There are some situations in which it is recommended that a student is given copies of any overheads because he/she will not be able to take notes from overheads at the same speed as other students. Examples include

- Students who are partially sighted and cannot see the detail in the overhead
- Students with dyslexia who may need longer to process written information
- Students with physical disabilities that affect the speed of writing
- Hearing-impaired students who need to lip read.

Lecture Outline

Outline notes, preferably in advance, enable students to organise and structure information more effectively and to improve learning. These can then be annotated by the student during or after the lecture. If lecture outlines can be made available in electronic format, students with specialist software can produce them in the format which best suits them. Lecture outlines are a particularly important resource for:

- Students who are deaf/hearing impaired
- Visually impaired students
- Students with dyslexia

Alternative formats - large print lecture outlines, course materials.

Many disabled students have access to specialist software which enables them to produce and process information. Therefore, material which is made available electronically can be adapted to suit almost any student at no additional cost to the School. Arial at size 14 is recognised nationally as the most suitable for many students with visual impairment, although all individuals have their preferred format. Clarity, colour and contrast are important – for example some students prefer coloured paper to avoid the glare of black text on white paper. Materials in alternative formats are usually requested for:

- Students with visual impairments
- Students with dyslexia, dyspraxia.

Note-taker

Students may use a note-taker if they are unable to write their own notes. Note-takers are recruited and trained by the Student Support Unit and funded by the student, usually from the Disabled Student's Allowance. Note-takers may be employed to assist:

- Students with hearing impairment who need to lip read
- Students who are visually impaired and unable to see sufficiently well to write
- Students with a physical disability who are unable to write or use a laptop.

Amanuensis

Amanuenses may read aloud or record on audio tape recommended texts, may proof read assignment and produce written work for students who may have difficulties with writing or typing. They can be used in examinations to produce a dictated answer.

Examples include

- Students with visual impairment
- Students unable to write or type because of physical disability

Laboratory Assistant

There may be students who, as a result of their disability, require a lab assistant. Examples include:

- A student who suffers from frequent epilepsy
- A student who has a physical disability and requires assistance with lifting, pouring, measuring (eg due to weakness or spasm).

Special Examination Arrangements

(i) Extra time

Extra time is requested for students with a slow writing speed due to discomfort; students with visual impairment who are using adapted PCs, hand-held magnification, scribes or readers and dyslexic students who usually need time to re-read texts several times. In an exam, where it is vital that details of the questions are understood, dyslexic student are allowed extra time to read questions thoroughly and read their work through at the end. Extra time allows for lack of fluency in putting thoughts into writing.

(ii) Separate accommodation

This allows for stretching and standing. Students who are using certain adapted technology, e.g. PC with speech output, will require a separate room so as not to distract fellow students. Students with certain mental health difficulties and students who have high distractibility levels, such as students with ADD may require a room of their own for examinations.

Funding

For the majority of UK students, the cost of equipment –such as tape recorders, specialist PCs, and the cost of human support such as note-takers, is covered by the Disabled Student's Allowance and is paid for by the student. Other expenses, including the cost of additional photocopying is also covered by the DSA and UK students can also apply to the Hardship Fund for assistance towards the cost of additional photocopying and, in some cases, for help in purchasing equipment. There is an as yet unresolved issue about the financing of specialist equipment or human support for overseas students who are unable to fund themselves, although it is likely that this will be the University's responsibility.

Sue Yates

Head of Student Support

8 July 2002