

## Procedure for Individual Examination Arrangements and In Class Tests for Disabled Students

### Introduction

The University of Bolton is committed to the promotion of equality, diversity and a supportive environment for all members of our community. Our commitment to equality and diversity means that this procedure has been screened in relation to the use of plain English, the promotion of the positive duty in relation to race, gender and disability and avoidance of discrimination to other equality groups related to age, sexual orientation, religion or belief or gender assignment.

Applicants to the University are given the opportunity to declare a disability on their application to the University and are actively encouraged on several occasions once they become a student. Declaration will not prejudice any application to the University. The Disability Service will send potential students an email containing information about disability-related support and inviting them to contact the service to make an appointment to meet with a disability adviser to discuss any support requirements. In ALL cases in line with the Equality Act, documentary evidence of a disability which meets the Equality Act definition will be required before a full suite of appropriate support can be put in place. Examples of such documentary evidence include an Educational Psychologist's report, a GP's or consultant's letter. We would also require your consent to implement support arrangements.

There are two levels of support for disabled students – Reasonable adjustments funded if necessary by the University or externally funded by Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) or equivalent.

The purpose of this document is to outline the procedure for individual exam arrangements only. **For more detailed information about support for disabled students and applying for DSA, please contact the Disability Service.**

### Examinations

It is acknowledged that disabled students may need individual examination requirements. Documentary evidence of a disability **must** be submitted to the Disability Service before individual exam arrangements will be considered.

Individual exam arrangements are not automatically '*put in place*': they must be discussed and assessed with a Disability or Mental Health Adviser in advance. Exams arrangements that are not agreed at least 2 weeks prior to the examination may not be implemented.

Arrangements for subsequent exams on the same course should automatically roll over.

**In some circumstances, the Disability or Mental Health Adviser may judge that the arrangements requested by the student or contained in the**

**Assessment of Needs fall outside what is considered a reasonable adjustment. In this case the arrangements will not be put in place.**

## **Process**

Once the arrangements are agreed, with the Advisor they will update your record so that the exams officer can see what adjustments are required. The Disability or Mental Health Advisor will also include this on your notification of support needs for your academic tutors to see. The exams officer will liaise with the academic department to let them know what adjustments are needed.

## **Student responsibility**

All students who have applied and been approved for individual exam arrangements, have a responsibility to check in a timely manner that their arrangements have been processed and what their exam arrangements are. Students should receive a confirmation email of any arrangements made, usually at least 48 hours before their exam. If they do not receive this they can check with their academic department or contact the disability service on [disinfo@bolton.ac.uk](mailto:disinfo@bolton.ac.uk)

## **Mitigating circumstances**

In some circumstances it may not be possible to put exam arrangements in place in time for exams. An example is when a student is assessed for a SpLD, such as dyslexia very shortly before the examination. The student must still attend the examination even if it has not been possible to put arrangements in place. Students can then fill in mitigating circumstances after the examination.

## **Allocation of scribes/readers**

Students who may need to use an examination support worker must discuss this provision with the Disability Service. If the advisor considers that an examination support worker is required they will make a request for this support which will be considered by an internal panel before this can be approved.

Often a reader will be replaced by use of technology. The student will listen to the questions through an ipod or similar device using headphones.

Examination support is provided through external suppliers. The examinations officer will contact the supplier to arrange this. Some students may request that they meet with their support worker prior to an exam for a practise session this should be seen as a reasonable request.

## **What if the student does not agree with the decision of the Disability Service about individual exam arrangements?**

The University has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of disabled students. This duty includes making reasonable adjustments to examination conditions or arrangements to ensure that disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who do not have a

disability. However, the University must also ensure that adjustments do not advantage one student over another. It is the role of the Disability or Mental Health Advisers to determine what is considered a reasonable adjustment and the final decision regarding adjustments for exams lies with the Disability Service.

If a student disagrees with the decision, they should in the first instance discuss their concerns with the Adviser. If a student remains dissatisfied with the conclusion of this discussion, he/she may refer their case to the Disability Service Manager. The student must do this in writing explaining the reasons they feel individual exam arrangements should be made and enclose documentary evidence to support their appeal. This must be done in a timely manner to allow the Disability Service Manager to review the case **before** exams commence.

If the student remains dissatisfied with the way their appeal has been handled they should now follow the University's Student Complaints Procedure