Understanding and Implementing Reasonable Adjustments for Teaching and Assessment

Guidance for staff at the University of Reading

Executive summary

As part of the Implementing Reasonable Adjustments Project (IRAP), this guidance has been put together, to enable the University to respond to the current legal context following recent high profile legal cases involving Universities, in particular the University of Bristol v Dr Robert Abrahart case.

The objectives of the Implementing Reasonable Adjustments Project are to:

- Support disabled students by updating our practice and process to ensure students receive the reasonable adjustments (RAs) they require for the learning environment in a timely manner;
- Support staff to confidently and effectively implement reasonable adjustments at the point of need;
- Identify any system and process barriers that might disadvantage disabled students and drive improvements in operational processes and systems, in support of the efficient implementation of reasonable adjustments;
- Support long-lasting and sustainable change in the above areas, through the engagement and involvement of key stakeholders.

0.1 Key information, Messages, and Process

0.1.1 Key information about this guidance

- This is the University's main guidance document for understanding how to implement reasonable adjustments for students in the teaching and learning context.
- This document is mainly aimed at academic colleagues who deliver teaching and assessment activities but is also relevant for other student-facing staff who have a responsibility for supporting the implementation of reasonable adjustments in the learning environment. E.g., Module Convenors, Disability Representatives (Academic and Admin), Academic Tutors, Support Centre staff, Technicians/Technical Operators or other support staff, demonstrators, guest lecturers, or staff running sessions for students or in Schools, such as Study Advice, Careers, or Liaison Librarians.

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This guidance should be used in conjunction with; the other resources available on the Disability Information webpages, various E-learning on UoRLearn, and the Disability Resources Teams Space. See also the 'short form' grab sheets/flowcharts, in the appendices, and the other resources and training available, signposted to in the links (all housed in the Disability Resources Teams area).

0.1.2 Key messages to take away

In May 2022 a County Court judge found the University of Bristol guilty of indirect discrimination against a student, for failure to make reasonable adjustments for her social anxiety disorder. The judgement was later upheld at a High Court Ruling in February 2024 following an appeal by the University.

The court ruled that:

- the University of Bristol knew without doubt that Natasha Abrahart had a social anxiety disability due to the breadth of indicators in front of them (indicators that spanned several months);
- staff did not put reasonable adjustments in place because they were operating within a standard procedure, which disadvantaged the student. i.e. Natasha was not yet registered with the University's Disability Service (she did not engage with them);
- the University's argument that Physics students' ability to explain their work in oral interviews was a competency standard, was not upheld;
- the University had numerous opportunities to act sooner and should have made adjustments to the student's assessment method, whether she was registered with the University Disability Service or not.

How the Higher Education Sector is responding (what we've learned)

- It is important to remove barriers to students accessing reasonable adjustments, and this includes considering if any standard operating procedure (SOP) or PCPs (Provision, Criterion, or Practice) may cause disadvantage to disabled students.
- If there are enough indicators of disability for a student, staff should put reasonable adjustments in place at the point of need (where reasonable and practicable to do so), and not wait for the student to register with the disability service first.
- Departments need to be clear and consistent with students about the nature of assessments, in particular where there are competency standards to meet, which may be exempt from reasonable adjustments - NB, all competency standards should now be set out clearly in the Programme specs.
- The court emphasised that when one member of staff within a university knows a student is disabled, then the organisation is deemed to know (and is therefore on legal notice to act).
- Building more flexible and inclusive teaching and assessment practices into modules will, on the whole, also account for many reasonable adjustments.

Communications with students
There is no expectation that Schools will need to communicate the specifics of this guidance to students. These are behind-the-scenes processes, which act as a safety net for students who have not already followed the widely communicated process, i.e. to register with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS).

Where there are requests for confidentiality by students, or reluctance to register with DAS, in all cases, staff should inform DAS via the Schools Observed Indicators MS Form (SOI).

0.1.3 Key process to understand

Staff involved in delivering teaching and assessment activities can put reasonable adjustments in place, ahead of students registering with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS), where necessary, by following these guiding principles.

If, as a member of staff, you notice a student may have disability-related needs, you should:

- speak to the student (where possible), to understand their needs;
- consider what adjustments are reasonable and practicable to implement, which will alleviate the disadvantage faced by the student;
- implement the appropriate adjustments in a timely manner;
- report your actions to DAS using the SOI form (Schools' Observed Indicators);
- speak to your Programme Administrator (PA) and/or Dis Rep or Director of Academic Tutoring (DAT) if necessary.

See also Appendix 3 – End-to-end overview of Implementing Reasonable Adjustments and Appendix 4 – Quick overview – guiding principles flowchart

0.2 Quick navigation

To support colleagues in navigating this guidance and locate essential information quickly, refer to the abridged contents list below.

0.0 Executive summary
3.7 Summarising what triggers the need to put reasonable adjustments in place
3.3.2 Implementing reasonable adjustments ahead of input from the Disability Advisory Service
3.5 Reasonable adjustments where the Disability Advisory Services need to be involved
3.6 Who to tell when you have implemented reasonable adjustments for a student
4.1 How do I know if the student is disabled?
4.4 How do I know if an adjustment is reasonable?
6.0 Reasonable adjustments – main list
7.0 Case examples of reasonable adjustments

Note: The use of the terminology 'staff' and 'colleagues' are used interchangeably throughout to mean UoR employees, whom this guidance is aimed at.

Table of Contents

1.0 Section one – Introduction 6

1.1 Introduction to the guidance 6

2.0 Section two – Legal obligations and data sharing 8

2.1 The Equality Act and removing barriers to students accessing reasonable adjustments. Points of clarification from the University of Bristol v Abrahart case 8

2.2 Data Protection and information sharing 9

3.0 Section three – The University process for implementing reasonable adjustments 11

3.1 The role of the Disability Advisory Service 11

3.2 Responsibility of staff in the learning environment 11

3.3 Inclusive practice alongside reasonable adjustments 12

3.6 The importance of informing others (closing the loop) and filling out the SOI form 16

3.7 Summarising what triggers the need to put reasonable adjustments in place 18

4.0 Section four – Understanding student disability and what is reasonable 20

4.1 How do I know if the student is disabled? 20

4.2 Questions to guide you when talking to students about disclosure 21

4.3 What if I think a student may be disabled but I don't feel qualified to judge? 22

4.4 How do I know if an adjustment requested or proposed is reasonable? 23

4.5 The difference between temporary adjustments and long-term adjustments 23

4.6 Different disabilities groupings 25

4.7 Interpreting the student Individual Learning Plan (ILP) 25

4.8 The different stickers explained 27

5.0 Section five – Guidance on inclusive practice 28

5.1 Inclusive practice 28

5.2 Further related information and links on inclusive practice 28

6.0 Section six – Examples of reasonable adjustments – main list 30

Reasonable adjustments list 30

6.1 The Learning Environment 31

6.2 Exams, tests, and assessments arrangements 38

6.3 Placements, inc. travel to and from (other off campus activities) 43

6.4 Travel / Parking on site 44

6.5 Library 45

6.6 Loan Equipment 45

6.7 Other Services or Facilitated Groups 46

6.8 Student Union 47

7.0 Section seven – Case examples for reasonable adjustments 48

7.1 Standard reasonable adjustment examples 48
7.2 Examples of more complex reasonable adjustments 48
7.3 Examples of ad hoc reasonable adjustments 50
7.4 Other more challenging case examples 51
7.5 Further reminders 52
8.0 Section eight – links to further wellbeing guidance and resources 53
8.1 Other resources and wellbeing support services 53
9.0 Section nine - Appendices 56
Appendix 1 56
A1.1. Glossary of terms 56
A1.2. Document Key 57
Appendix 2: DAS information updates and links 58
Appendix 3: End-to-end process of implementing reasonable adjustments 59
Appendix 4: Quick overview - Guiding principles for implementing reasonable adjustments 60
Appendix 5: Closing the loop: Ensuring colleagues who need to know, know 61
Appendix 6: How to understand if a student is disabled 62
Appendix 7: Handling student requests for confidentiality 63
Appendix 8: Summary of the guidance for academics on deciding when an adjustment is reasonable 64
Appendix 9: Understanding competency standards and reasonable adjustments flowchart (decision tree) 65
Acknowledgements 66

1.0 Section one – Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the guidance

The aim of this guidance is to help colleagues understand the obligation to put reasonable adjustments in place in the learning environment as soon as practicably possible, when they become aware of a student who is considered disabled (under the Equality Act 2010), without the requirement for input from the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) first. This does not mean that DAS should not be involved at all. Quite the contrary. Standard practice is that each disabled student should still register with DAS to ensure they have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) in place. However, this guidance clarifies that colleagues do not have to 'wait' for DAS to process student ILPs, prior to implementing reasonable adjustments.

The University has reviewed its procedures to ensure we support students in a more inclusive way and meet our obligations under the Equality Act. This includes communications to, and training for, staff on our obligations under the Equality Act, and ensuring staff are fully aware of what they can do to implement reasonable adjustments directly for students (at the point of need), without the requirement for DAS involvement first.

It is recognised that academic colleagues may value some further guidance on understanding what reasonable adjustments can be put in place and when. Therefore, this guidance should be used alongside the other training, workshops, and resources available.

Colleagues are encouraged to:

- Explore the Disability Information web pages (staff facing)
- Join the Disability Resources area in Microsoft Teams set up specifically to support colleagues in implementing reasonable adjustments for teaching and assessment
- Take part in training and workshops available from:
    - Centre for Quality Support & Development (CQSD)
    - The Disability Advisory Service (DAS)
    - UoRLearn;
- Share your own 'good practice' examples with colleagues, specifically by way of individual case studies (held in the Teams area), or in training and workshops you attend;
- Look out for local induction, training, and process guidance within your Department;
- Colleagues are also encouraged to seek support from the Academic Development and Enhancement (ADE) team (part of the Centre for Quality Support and Development (CQSD)), their Disability Representatives, their Director of Academic Tutoring (DAT) or directly from DAS (particularly for more complex cases).

1.2 Communications with students

There is no expectation that Schools will need to communicate the specifics of this new guidance to students. These are behind-the-scenes processes, which act as a safety net for students who have not already followed the widely communicated process, i.e. to register with DAS.

It is not a change of advice for students, and it is important that it is not perceived as a long-term alternative to registering with DAS. The message to students should, therefore, remain the same: to register with DAS for the full assessment of needs, and to access an ILP for reasonable adjustments across all of their modules.

The difference for colleagues is that while waiting for the students' ILPs, colleagues should consider appropriate adjustments to support the students in the short term.

2.0 Section two – Legal obligations and data sharing

2.1 The Equality Act and removing barriers to students accessing reasonable adjustments. Points of clarification from the University of Bristol v Abrahart case

It is important to remove barriers to students accessing reasonable adjustments. Although many students will have registered with DAS and have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), which will guide colleagues about the possible range of appropriate reasonable adjustments, students do not need to be registered with DAS before they have reasonable adjustments implemented.

Many adjustments are simply good inclusive practice and can benefit most, if not all, students in the group. Many more address specific student needs but are within the power of academic colleagues to implement without input from DAS first. Some adjustments are more complex to arrange, deliver, or determine, and in these cases DAS will need to be involved to provide a full assessment and to provide advice and guidance to colleagues on the needs of the student.

Reasonable adjustments need to be put in place for a student as soon as reasonably practicable. The adjustment(s) should be offered to the student by Schools upon:

a) the student disclosing their disability, or
b) the university being on notice of the student's disability*

**The law is clear that express disclosure by a student of their disability is not necessary for the duty to make reasonable adjustments to apply. Where a member of staff is, or ought reasonably to have been, aware of a student's disability (for example by observing the student's behaviours or actions), the duty to make reasonable adjustments is triggered. When an individual staff member at the university is 'on notice' of the student's disability, then the university as a whole is deemed to know and is obliged to act.*

During the Bristol ruling[1], it was made clear by the Judge that the law says we do not need evidence of a diagnosis to act and implement reasonable adjustments. The duty is anticipatory,

[1] On 14 February 2024, the High Court upheld the decision of the Bristol County Court in University of Bristol v Dr Robert Abrahart. Ms Abrahart, a physics undergraduate, took her own life in April 2018, the morning before she was meant to deliver an oral presentation. The claim brought by Ms Abrahart's father was that in failing to remove or adjust the requirement for oral assessments, the University had discriminated against her on the basis of her disability. ()

meaning universities and individual staff should consider and plan in advance what might need to be done to make their teaching and assessment activities accessible, and the University will be deemed to have knowledge of a student's disability where it should reasonably have been aware (this could be from observing the student and/or from their behaviour).

A person has a disability if they meet the definition of disability under the Equality Act – namely, a person has a disability if they have *"a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".*

This means that all colleagues must remain aware of students' needs, through monitoring progress and engagement, checking in with students, and keeping records. Where there is an indication of disability-related need identified, there is a duty to respond appropriately by putting support in place for that student at the point of need, and to respond by making adjustments that will alleviate any disadvantage the student may face otherwise, provided such adjustments are reasonable and practicable.

2.2 Data Protection and information sharing

Staff may feel concerned about sharing students' personal data, and this can sometimes feel like a barrier to sharing sensitive information about a student's 'protected characteristics', including disability related needs, as colleagues may feel worried about breaching data protection laws.

General guidance
There are provisions within data protection law that allow for sharing of personal and sensitive data where it is necessary to meet obligations under law.

- **Relevant disability or health information can lawfully be shared within the University** if it is to meet our obligations under the Equality Act to support students with reasonable adjustments.
- **It is important to share information about a student's reasonable adjustments,** so that their needs are met, but you should only tell people who 'need to know', in order to avoid excessive sharing of data.

You can avoid sharing more than is needed by considering what details a person needs to know in order to put the required support in place. For example, this could mean sharing only the information relevant to their present learning needs, and not details about the student's diagnosis or medical history.

Some students will request that you do not share their diagnosis or reasonable adjustment needs. It is important to explain that the University is required to share certain information in order to meet our obligations under the Equality Act. You can explain that only staff who 'need to know' will be informed, and only in order to put reasonable adjustments in place. You can also point them towards the student privacy notice for more information on the basis for this sharing.

Keeping students' diagnosis confidential to external third parties (for example, placement providers, parents), personal data should not be shared with third parties without the consent of

the student or where there is another lawful basis for sharing this personal data. Schools should have procedures in place for recording students' consent (e.g. for placements).

Where a student is concerned that others will become aware of their disability due to the fact their reasonable adjustments are visible, the University must have due regard to the confidentiality request and should consider what alternative reasonable adjustments could be put in place to maintain a level of confidentiality (see examples below).

Personal and sensitive data can also be shared lawfully if there is a concern that a student is in immediate danger or at significant risk of harm, or to prevent harm to others. Under the law, in cases of risk or danger to life it is permitted to share such personal data with those that need to know, such as emergency services.

If you have serious concerns about a student's welfare/safety or that of others they are impacting, then you can call security, or 999. Equally, where there is a safeguarding concern, you have a legal duty to report this under Safeguarding legislation. In these high-risk cases, if it is appropriate, it is advisable to let the student know your plan of action, even if they disagree or object.

Example 1: A student requires handouts in large print. These could be sent to the student separately, rather than handed out in the group. (The student could also be signposted to their Academic Tutor and Study Advice in case of additional support.)

Example 2: A student requires room changes so they are able to attend. The cohort should not require a reason for the room change, but if pressed by the cohort to explain the change, avoid revealing that it is due to an individual's needs. This type of action is just good practice, to avoid making any individual feel uncomfortable.

Remember: Any changes to a students' existing reasonable adjustments, or newly implemented reasonable adjustments, should be recorded via a request to update or create a student ILP using the SOI form.

3.0 Section three – The University process for implementing reasonable adjustments

3.1 The role of the Disability Advisory Service

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) provides a specialist information, advice, and guidance (IAG) Service to the University. DAS key stakeholders are disabled students/applicants, and staff who support disabled students.

The main purpose of DAS is to ensure disabled students have access to reasonable adjustments (to provide an inclusive environment and fulfil our duty under the Equality Act). Students should register with DAS as early as possible, preferably before they enrol, to ensure that their adjustments are set up in time for the start of their course.

DAS will assess each student's needs, and generate an Individual Learning Plan (ILP), to include the full range of recommended adjustments which aim to alleviate the disadvantage(s) faced.

DAS also support students to access funded support, such as an academic or social mentor, accommodation subsidies, or help with accessing Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and related non-medical helpers. Please note: Students are not obliged to register with DAS, to make a DSA application.

DAS provides information and guidance on accommodation, social care funding, liaising with healthcare providers, other support services, and access to diagnostic assessments for Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autism.

For more details on the role of DAS, refer to the DAS Service Level Agreement on our main Disability Information web page for staff.

3.2 Responsibility of staff in the learning environment

Staff who are involved in delivering or supporting teaching, learning, and assessment are individually and collectively responsible for implementing reasonable adjustments for disabled students. This could include but is not limited to: Module Convenors, Disability Representatives (Academic and Admin), Academic Tutors, Support Centre staff, Technicians/Technical Operators or other support staff, demonstrators, guest lecturers, or staff running sessions for students or in Schools, such as Study Advice, Careers, or Liaison Librarians, and the Exams Office staff.

Staff must:

- ✓ have given anticipatory consideration to ensuring that your teaching and assessment is inclusive by design;
- ✓ ensure that all teaching and learning materials follow accessibility guidelines;
- ✓ make slides and other materials available to students in advance as stated in the UoR inclusive Teaching & Learning Policy;
- ✓ be aware of the specific needs of students within your cohort and implement reasonable adjustments in a timely manner;
- ✓ advise students who present to you as having a disability to register with the Disability Advisory Service (DAS), and to consider whether any immediate adjustments are needed in the meantime;
- ✓ ensure that other staff who need to know, know, by completing the SOI form (where immediate adjustments are required).

Schools and Departments are encouraged to make local decisions and share best practice with regard to what is reasonable and practicable. This is limited to the in-scope adjustments outlined in section 3.3.2. However, we also request caution with introducing local oversight or approval steps, as the focus is to remove barriers and delays for students.

This anticipatory way of working forms a safety net to support students who have not followed the expected process of registering with DAS before or towards the start of their time with us. We do, however, expect that the vast majority of students will continue to follow the standard approach – i.e. to register with DAS - to access the full range of support.

If colleagues are unsure, it is perfectly acceptable to put temporary arrangements in place, until the student has registered with DAS and has an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) in place. It is important to inform DAS via the process outlined in section 3.6.

3.3 Inclusive practice alongside reasonable adjustments

The University has recently redesigned our curriculum, and this has given us the opportunity to ensure that we are building inclusive teaching and assessment into all programmes.

It is helpful to understand what we mean by inclusive practice, but also to differentiate between this and reasonable adjustments.

We use 3 categories to help identify what should be done in each:

3.3.1 One - General inclusive practice

General inclusive practice should be built into all modules, to enable all learners to participate and progress, without the need for (or ahead of) input from the Disability Advisory Service.

These include:

- Ensuring all documents provided are: accessible and provided in advance
- Having taught information broken down into smaller digestible parts
- Setting out the expectations of your modules up front, so students know what to expect
- Provision of key terms explained and/or guided reading lists
- Instructions on practicals provided in advance to help students prepare
- Being sensitive to the needs of individuals, e.g. providing reasonable processing time during teaching and learning activities
- Building in alternatives to large group presentations, group work, or individual presentations that still allow module learning outcomes to be met
- Alternatives provided when asking for help in larger groups (e.g. having an anonymous whiteboard)
- Building inclusive teaching and inclusive (authentic) assessment into module design, which is open to all students (flexible options for demonstrating learning outcomes).

These inclusive practices are often beneficial to a wide range of students, who may have needs that are not specifically covered under the Equality Act (e.g. Carers, commuters, international students, etc.) and are considered good inclusive practice**,** many examples of which can already be seen across the University.

3.3.2 Two - Reasonable adjustments ahead of Disability Advisory Service input

The standard process for students who have disability related needs requiring specific reasonable adjustments:

1. The student should be signposted to register with DAS.
2. Staff should consider what adjustments can be implemented to teaching or assessment ahead of involvement from DAS.
3. Staff should inform DAS via the Schools Observed Indicators (SOI) form, and ensure other colleagues who need to know, are informed (e.g. DAT, Programme Admin).

The types of adjustments colleagues can implement ahead of students registering with DAS include:

- Adjusted assessments, e.g. alternatives to oral presentations
- Providing alternative means of engaging with learning where disability prevents engagement via the default method, e.g. fieldwork
- Considering if the student may need to rest or move around during long sessions
- Allowances for needing to leave the room occasionally
- Ensuring the environment is conducive to their needs (minimising noise, adapting the lighting)
- Avoiding rushing lectures, seminars or lab instructions; clear communication
- Allowing students time to process information/read/write during taught sessions

- Individual tutor time (or similar) to discuss progress/needs/expectations
- Occasional allowances for lateness or leaving early (medical reasons/anxiety), only where reasonable and practicable
- Access to existing resources when the student is unable to attend lessons (e.g. slides, handouts, recordings)
- Alternatives to being picked to answer questions or read aloud (e.g. anonymous contributions through an available app).

Colleagues may need to speak with the individual student to identify what adjustments will be effective for them. Consideration should be given to: the guidance on PCPs (provision criterion practice[2]) and Competency Standards, in relation to reasonable adjustments; what is reasonable and practicable; and how to decide what to put in place. NB. Competency Standards are excluded from the obligation to made reasonable adjustments, though the process of assessment is not. All Competency Standards should now be set out clearly in the Programme specs.

For a more comprehensive list of reasonable adjustments which can be applied without the need for DAS involvement first, please see Section 6 of this guidance. Please note, this list will be regularly updated, so please always refer to the latest version of this guidance, saved in the shared Disability Resources area on Teams.

Important note:
In order to ensure that your actions are recorded and the student can access a full range of support, including an ILP which will be shared with other staff who need to know, students should always be referred/signposted to the Disability Advisory Service (DAS).
However, students are not obliged to register with DAS, and colleagues should not wait for them to register to implement such reasonable adjustments.
It is important to tell DAS and your Programme Admin (PA) when you implement adjustments without DAS input. Inform DAS by completing the SOI form.

3.3.3 Three - Reasonable adjustments requiring Disability Advisory Service input

In some cases, particularly for students with complex needs, the Disability Advisory Services (DAS) will need to assess the student's needs and may need to liaise with other stakeholders to facilitate the implementation of reasonable adjustments. Where students have more complex needs or where further adjustments or input are necessary, the student should be strongly encouraged to

[2] *PCPs - A Provision Criterion or Practice is a legal term used to assess whether ways in which an organisation may operate for the sake of standard working practices, could result in a different outcome depending on individuals' characteristics, referred to as 'adverse impact'. PCPs may put a disabled individual at a disadvantage, and therefore could be cause for a discrimination claim.*

register and engage with DAS, who can provide a fuller and more detailed assessment of the needs. DAS must be informed via the SOI form.

Examples of adjustments that require DAS input:

- Any additional time – examinations, tests, or coursework extensions (blanket extensions)
- Rest breaks, or other complex exam arrangements
- Assistive technology / equipment needs during tests or exams
- Human support, such as scribes, non-medical helpers, BSL interpreters, lab support
- Assistance animals (includes requests for therapy animals)
- Students who are wheelchair users, or with complex needs/multiple diagnoses
- Timetable change requirements
- Students who have a carer or live in support, social care provided support/funding
- Bespoke equipment or furniture for campus activities
- Allergies or serious medical conditions that require emergency plans, safety and risk management
- Accommodation adjustments
- Peer support (mentors)

See the full list of adjustments in section 6.

Note on ad hoc adjustments: There may sometimes be exceptions to the above, where you need to act sooner and put in ad hoc adjustments which would usually be outside your remit, even if the student has already been referred to DAS and is awaiting an ILP. For example, permitting extra time, or rest breaks for an in-class test. Colleagues are encouraged to make local decisions regarding what is reasonable and practicable to implement for specific students' needs as they arise.

It is vital to:

1. Record these decisions and actions centrally, by telling DAS via the SOI form.
2. Understand your School's local arrangements for recording and sharing students' adjustments needs.

These two action steps ensure that students adjustments are implemented in a timely manner, and those who need to know, are informed.

If you are ever unsure, speak to your School Director of Academic Tutoring (SDAT), Department Director of Academic Tutoring (DDAT), Disability Representative (Dis Rep), or directly to DAS.

Refer also to the case examples in this guidance in section 7.

3.6 The importance of informing others (closing the loop) and filling out the SOI form

It is important to report and record your actions and ensure we 'close the loop'. This means informing others in the University who need to know, to implement reasonable adjustments.

When colleagues implement reasonable adjustments for a student prior to DAS registration, or when significant changes to an existing ILP are being requested, *and* colleagues have made an informed judgement that the adjustments are likely to be required across all of the student's modules, then colleagues should provide the details to DAS via the Schools' Observed Indicators Microsoft Form (SOI).

Even when students are unsure/unwilling to register, DAS still need to be informed.

DAS will invite the student to register with the service (if they have not already done so), so that a full assessment of the student's needs can take place. DAS will then ensure an ILP is put in place (where appropriate), so that the reasonable adjustments are communicated to all the relevant staff who need to know. This will mean the student is able to get access to the full range of support/adjustments available to them.

Where colleagues are aware that a student has a need for an adjustment that is outside their remit to implement but are also aware that the student has not engaged with DAS, they should strongly encourage the student to register with DAS, and let DAS know via the SOI form. This includes when colleagues have put in place a temporary ad hoc adjustment, for example additional time/coursework extension. They should also ensure that other colleagues who need to know, are informed (e.g. Programme Admin - to avoid late penalties).

Colleagues are requested to inform students that any information disclosed will be shared with DAS, so they are not surprised when they receive an email from DAS.

Who should fill out the SOI form?

In principle, the academic colleagues responsible for ensuring reasonable adjustments are implemented for disabled students in the learning/assessment environment, should complete the SOI form, to maintain oversight whilst providing continued support to technical and support staff.

Other staff can complete the SOI form, where appropriate, this may include student-facing staff who need to report and record actions around supporting a disabled student to DAS, though these examples are expected to be less frequent. E.g. staff providing one-to-one sessions become aware that a student is disabled, isn't yet registered with DAS, and requires an ILP.

3.6.1 Who else needs to be informed about students' needs?

It is important to inform others including other student-facing staff who have a role in supporting the implementation of reasonable adjustments for students in the learning environment. Examples include Technicians and other support staff in Schools, demonstrators, guest lecturers, or other staff running sessions for the School, such as Study Advice, Careers, or Liaison Librarians.

- Local support should continue as per usual practice, i.e. ensuring staff have the relevant information they require to fulfil their role (this should be included in staff inductions).
- Local conversations and planning may be required to ensure colleagues who 'need to know' have access to student's ILPs (e.g. Module Convenors (MC) or Dis Reps sharing the disability report for those students), including ensuring Technicians/Technical Operators, demonstrators, guest lecturers, or embedded teaching sessions (Careers, Library) are informed about the relevant reasonable adjustments that students' require.
- Schools can develop local practice, for example in identifying who to take reasonable adjustment issues to within Schools.

Who else to tell when you fill out an SOI:

- To avoid any system errors, for example late penalties, make sure you also tell your Programme Admin (for specific adjustments – e.g. ad hoc extensions)
- You are strongly advised to liaise with your DAT if you are not sure about the student's other modules or deadlines.

3.6.2 When students are reluctant to share or register with DAS

There may be occasions where students are reluctant to contact or register with DAS. In these cases, colleagues should inform DAS via the SOI form, so that DAS can reach out to the student and ensure an ILP is put in place, where appropriate.

Where a student explicitly asks for the information related to their adjustments/needs to not be shared, please always inform DAS (via the SOI form), and let the student know that information will be shared with certain members of the University in accordance with the University's obligations under the Equality Act and in accordance with the student privacy notice. Fill out the relevant sections in the SOI form relating to the student asking for their information not to be shared so that DAS is aware of this. In these cases, it is still possible to implement reasonable adjustments, and Schools are encouraged to consider what alternative reasonable adjustments can be put in place for the student, whilst maintaining a certain level of confidentiality. We are unable to promise complete confidentiality (see section 2).

3.7 Summarising what triggers the need to put reasonable adjustments in place

Staff who are involved in delivering (or supporting) teaching and assessment activities are individually and collectively responsible for implementing reasonable adjustments for disabled students. There is a legal duty to work in an anticipatory way, meaning Universities and individual staff should consider and plan in advance what might need to be done to make their teaching, learning, and assessment activities, and other services, accessible.

Staff should act as soon as reasonable and practical to do so, when presented with a clear indication that a student might need reasonable adjustments to their learning and/or assessment based on a disability. Much like a duty to report a safeguarding concern, or health and safety risk, the responsibility is on the observer.

An indication of need could comprise any or a combination of the following:

- The student shares information of an existing or recurring medical diagnosis.
- The student self-reports they believe they have a condition, or a need which is clearly aligned to a disability, or concerns about their ability to engage or progress due to a condition which is most likely aligned to a disability.
- The student's behaviour or engagement changes noticeably, and in a way which has a *substantial and long-term impact* on their ability to progress.

  For example: they have severe anxiety, depression, executive processing or learning difficulties, a long-term medical condition, sustain a serious injury with a long-term impact, social difficulties, sensory impairment or dysfunction, mobility issues, sudden or unusual levels of/changes in engagement which could align to a disability.

Because academic colleagues work most closely with students, and are the staff responsible for implementing reasonable adjustments relating to academic engagement, the onus is on academic colleagues to:

- act anticipatorily by planning and designing inclusive teaching and assessment activities;
- act as soon as practicable when a student presents with a disability-related need;
- understand what is and isn't reasonable to implement in your area;
- report the concern (via the SOI Form) so all colleagues who need to know are informed;
- signpost the student to DAS and/or other wellbeing services (where relevant);
- communicate course expectations and especially competency standards* clearly to students from the outset (prior to starting their course – to avoid any problems later on);
- have mechanisms in place to assess students' suitability for meeting the demands of the course, including early discussions and assessment of adjustment requests, to ensure they are both reasonable and practical to implement.

Refer to the Technical guidance under the Equality Act, and the guidance on 'what is reasonable?'.

*NB. For example, in the University of Bristol v Abrahart case the course team argued that 'in-person large group presentations' were necessary, but they were not able to uphold this in court as a competency standard and were therefore found guilty of indirect disability discrimination. The appropriate competency standards for programmes will need to be included in the Programme Specifications from 24/25.

Remember: If there are not enough indicators of disability, then we are not on notice to put reasonable adjustments in place. In addition, where an adjustment requested or proposed is not reasonable, the University is not required, under the Equality Act, to implement the adjustment.

4.0 Section four – Understanding student disability and what is reasonable

4.1 How do I know if the student is disabled?

You know this if:

- The student is registered with DAS and appears on the Disability report on RISIS.
- The student notifies you of their disability.
- You are aware, or you become aware, or should reasonably be aware from observing the student and/or their behaviour, that the student is disabled.
- The student has declared a disability on their UCAS application – they have an asterisk next to their name on module reports (see further information below).

In all cases, the impairment will need to meet the Equality Act definition of a disability.

The Equality Act 2010 definition of a disability: A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a **substantial** and **long-term** adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

What do 'substantial' and 'long-term' mean?

- 'substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task like getting dressed.
- 'long-term' means it has or will be likely to last 12 months or more, e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

Disabilities can also be:

- Congenital, meaning the individual has the condition at or from birth (usually life-long);
- Progressive, meaning they will worsen over time;
- Fluctuating or recurring, meaning they may be unpredictable or change over time;
- Impacted by environmental factors and stress. It is common for students to have conditions flare up at university, because of the challenges involved.

What is not a disability?

Acute illnesses or injuries, such as recovery from surgery or a short period of stress, like a bereavement, are not disabilities. Colleagues can consider what support students with temporary adjustments in these cases may require. For example, assisting them to catch up for a period of absence or medical appointments, or considering room layout such as sourcing a footstool for a broken leg. When extensions are necessary, or work is missed, these instances would always be dealt with by the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) process.

The asterisk on module reports

When a student has an asterisk next to their name on module reports, this means the student ticked the 'I have a disability' box on their UCAS form when they applied for their course. But only students registered with DAS will also appear on the Disability report on RISIS.

DAS contact all students (at frequent intervals) who tick the UCAS box to invite them to register, so we can assume that students who have not registered might not want to (this is their prerogative), or they may not feel they need to (yet), or they may not understand the importance of registering. However, the asterisk still informs you they have disclosed a disability.

What colleagues can do:

If you notice an asterisk which is not linked to an ILP, you can:

- monitor the student in case you become aware of reasonable adjustments needs they have not disclosed;
- ask the student if they have any reasonable adjustments needs and encourage them to register with DAS.

4.2 Questions to guide you when talking to students about disclosure

Staff should speak to each student (where possible) to understand their needs

- *Understand* the '**problem**' and *agree* a '**solution**'.
- Agree what is both **reasonable** and **practicable.**
- Get *creative* with what you *could* do, to be more inclusive, and find an adjustment that is both reasonable and practicable.

The following questions should help determine if the student has a disability/if the condition is long-term, if they've had support before, and what they think could help.

Suggested questions to ask the student:

1. How long have you been feeling this way/found this hard/struggled with this?
2. Have you told anyone else or had any professional help from anyone/your GP/a therapist?
3. Did you get any extra help in school or college? (If so, what sort of help?)
4. What do you think could most help you right now/for this piece of work?

The following questions should help you understand, what the disadvantage is they face, and whether adjustments proposed are reasonable and practicable.

Questions to ask yourself:

1. Is it likely the student has a disability (are they placed at a disadvantage to that of non-disabled students and is the condition long-term and has a substantial impact)?
2. What disadvantage(s) are they facing, and what can be done to alleviate the disadvantage(s)?
3. What is reasonable and practicable to do (within the time/resources available)?
4. If you are struggling to make an adjustment requested due the practicality of implementing it, what else could you do?

4.3 What if I think a student may be disabled but I don't feel qualified to judge?

It isn't always straightforward recognising if a student is disabled. It is important to note that colleagues are not expected to diagnose students, as we are not qualified to do this, but if there are enough indications that the student is likely to be disabled, then we are on notice to act. The following guidelines are intended to help:

- You do not need to 'diagnose' a student to see that they require additional support.
- You are not expected to make a clinical diagnosis. Just continue to monitor your students' progress, engagement, and needs as you usually would.
- A student is unlikely to ask for additional support unless they require it.
- Don't be afraid to ask a student about their needs. It is better to have the conversation than not. Some students might just be shy to ask, or not want to be a burden.
- Some students will not disclose their disability (they might not even be aware), but if you observe they likely have a disability, you have permission and responsibility to put reasonable adjustments in place to support them.
- Making small changes that alleviate the student's disadvantage will mostly be inclusive practice.
- For further help with decisions about reasonable adjustments, refer to Appendix 9.
- If you are unsure you can check with your Dis Rep, DAT, or DAS, or refer to other resources on reasonable adjustments on the Disability pages, or CQSD guidance on embedding inclusive practice.
- It is worth remembering that the University of Bristol had numerous indicators over a period of several months. You are not expected to make a snap judgement on the spot.
- It is also worth remembering that if you do not have enough indicators of disability, and you are not sure, then you are not on notice to implement reasonable adjustments.

4.4 How do I know if an adjustment requested or proposed is reasonable?

The following are factors to be taken into account when deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable:

1. **Will the adjustment alleviate the disadvantage identified?** If the adjustment will have little impact on the disadvantage identified, it is unlikely to be reasonable.
2. **Is the adjustment practicable?** Will the adjustment detrimentally impact on your ability to deliver the educational services to other students? Or are there cost, time, or resource implications which are unreasonable?
3. **Are there justifiable pedagogic reasons why the adjustment is not reasonable?**
4. **Are there alternative adjustments which would have the same or similar effect as the adjustment requested?** If this is the case, it may be reasonable to put in place these alternative adjustments rather than the adjustment requested.

Note: Where an adjustment requested or proposed is not reasonable, the University is not required, under the Equality Act, to implement the adjustment.

For further guidance see Appendix 9 - Reasonable Adjustments Guidance on deciding when an adjustment is reasonable, PCPs and competency standards**.**

Note: There will always be exceptions. If you are concerned about a student, it is better to put adjustments in place, even if they turn out to be temporary.

4.5 The difference between temporary adjustments and long-term adjustments

It can sometimes be challenging for colleagues to identify if a student has a long-term condition (chronic), or a temporary difficulty (acute), without discussing it with the student and/or consultation with DAS.

Temporary adjustments may be necessary to help a student overcome temporary challenges they may face, most commonly: Injury, surgery recovery, acute stress, bereavement, or other exceptional circumstances. As outlined in Section 4.1, such temporary challenges are unlikely to fall within the definition of a disability due to them not being classed as 'long-term'.

For such temporary circumstances, inclusive practice would be to discuss the student's needs with them to consider if there are any small and practicable adjustments which can be made, until such a time as they no longer require them. Exceptionally, and by DAS referral only, a student can have a temporary ILP put in place, where deemed appropriate. However, when extensions are required,

or deadlines are missed, these would always be dealt with by the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) process.

It is also worth noting that, whilst some students may *appear* to be well, and coping on the surface, they may have an ongoing condition that is being well-managed, with coping strategies in place that are not always visible to us. Some students with disabilities may be good at 'masking' their condition (NB. Not specific to autism, but common). For all these scenarios, without reasonable adjustments in place, students may struggle to cope. Our advice is to stick to the 'never assume' rule.

However, where students appear well but are using coping strategies/ managing their disabilities, and have not disclosed their disability to the University, colleagues are not expected in these situations to have knowledge of the disability, as this will not be apparent.

Some long-term medical conditions may flare considerably during certain circumstances. Mental health is possibly the most difficult to determine, as it can appear acute, even when it is chronic. The rule of thumb is to ask the student if they have experienced this before. Remember the 'long-term' part of Equality Act law. If it has been going on for more than 12 months or likely to last more than 12 months, it will be considered a disability, even if it is a reoccurrence from some time in the past.

This does not mean we wouldn't support someone who is experiencing 'acute' mental health concerns. In fact, inclusive practice, and the EC process, is even more important here, as it could be what assists someone in preventing a longer-term episode of ill health and struggle.

Some examples of what students may experience

- "I had a short period of acute stress following a family incident. I had an extension via an EC and I've been fine ever since, so I don't need this adjustment anymore".
- "My mental health is stable at the moment, but my reasonable adjustments make a big difference in keeping me well, I need to keep them in place".
- "My mental health is unpredictable and without reasonable adjustments I don't think I could cope".
- "I struggled with mental ill health many years ago and have been well now for a long time since, but being at university has triggered a resurgence of those symptoms".
- "My long-term medical condition is usually well managed with the help of my reasonable adjustments, but university life stresses have caused a bigger and more difficult flare up than I am used to, which means I have had to use the EC process several times this year".

4.6 Different disabilities groupings

Listed below are the disability groupings used by UCAS. These groupings are most commonly used to understand disability groups of similar needs. It is important to remember that many students will have co-occurring conditions, and one student's experience of autism, for example, will vary a lot from the next student. It is always advised to speak to students directly about their needs, to gain a full understanding.

UCAS disability groupings:

1. Specific learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or Dyscalculia
2. Neurodevelopmental condition such as Autism, ADHD, Tourette's, or OCD
3. Blind or visually impaired - uncorrected by glasses
4. Deaf or with a severe hearing impairment
5. Long-term health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, heart disease, CF, or epilepsy
6. Mental health condition, such as depression, schizophrenia, eating disorder, or anxiety
7. Physical impairment or mobility issues

4.7 Interpreting the student Individual Learning Plan (ILP)

Students' Individual Learning Plans are always recorded on RISIS. Students will usually receive 2 RISIS generated emails with their agreed adjustments listed. One which includes their overall teaching and learning adjustments and any other specific relevant information related to their needs, and a second email listing their exam adjustments (where they have exams). They will be contacted by the exams team once their exams are timetabled.

Staff who require access are able to download student ILPs from RISIS in the Disability Report format.

It is made clear to students within their ILP email that the ILP is a set of recommendations, which may require discussion and/or adaptation.

Schools are obliged to consider adjustments which alleviate the disadvantage(s) students face as a result of a disability, but adjustments must also be reasonable and practicable to implement. DAS will advocate for the student's needs by suggesting a range of adjustments appropriate to their disability, but DAS are not experts on what is possible/practicable for each Department or module. Therefore, the student ILP may need to be adapted to suit, but only in a way that does not disadvantage the student further.

For clarity, each ILP contains the following advice for students:

- *Please make sure you proactively discuss your needs with your tutor at the very start of the year.*
- *Your ILP is a guide to your needs as outlined by your Disability Adviser, but we strongly advise that you discuss with your course team also, so the department understand what your needs are in practice, and in relation to your learning on your course.*
- *Your adjustments are recommendations, which occasionally may not be fully possible to implement, or may need adapting, if they conflict with your course requirements. It is important to discuss this with your tutor.*

DAS Adviser role = advocate the student's needs in a general way appropriate to their disability, by creating an ILP on RISIS, whilst liaising with relevant stakeholders for complex cases.

Academic role = interpret the ILP in line with modules, Learning Objectives, and Competency Standards, communicate with the student about their needs; ensure students understand the demands expected of them.

4.7.1 Some examples of interpreting adjustments recommended in the ILP

I. **Adjustment recommended: Facilitating group work** - this does not mean staff have to be present and facilitate the group.
   a. **You could try -** building *'how to'* skills sessions into teaching at the start; discuss separately with specific students, if necessary, to enable them to participate; develop a weekly 'drop-in' session for a Q&A (actual example from Henley Business School HBS)).

II. **Adjustment recommended: Individual tutor time** – if individual tutor time is not reasonable to implement, for example in very large cohorts:
   a. **You could try -** ensuring students are having contact hours with their Academic Tutor; develop an anonymous feedback/Q&A practice for large groups; run separate smaller workshops for Q&A (themed around module content).

III. **Adjustment recommended: Adapting communication style** – this adjustment is important to suit social differences and language differences, this is generally just good teaching practice, so that communication is clear, unambiguous, structured, and inclusive to all. Disability Advisers may include this in a student's ILP to emphasise the student's social and communication difficulties.

IV. **Adjustment recommended: Chunking and scaffolding learning** – this is also good teaching practice, so that student expectations are managed (with no surprises), and they are better able to progress, understanding what they need to do, and when. Disability Advisers may include this in a student's ILP to emphasise the student's executive functioning and processing difficulties.

4.8 The different stickers explained

As a reasonable adjustment some students, typically those with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), are not penalised for grammar and spelling issues in their written work. As most coursework and centrally timetabled exams are marked anonymously, stickers are used to ensure students receive this adjustment without their identity being revealed during marking. Each student receives a unique sticker number which is not known to markers.

Green stickers are for coursework, and it is the student's responsibility to ensure they include their green sticker at the front of their work. Students receive a digital copy of their ILP by email when the adjustment is approved, which has their sticker attached, so that it can be printed out for physical submissions. Green stickers are also used for online centrally timetabled exams.

Yellow stickers are for in-person centrally timetabled exams and should be provided to the students on their assigned desks in the exam room.

For in-class tests, both online and offline, which may not have the option of including a sticker, students will need to consult with the Module Convenor and/or Support Centre ahead of time to ensure their sticker is taken into account.

5.0 Section five – Guidance on inclusive practice

5.1 Inclusive practice

The University's Policy on Inclusive Practice in Teaching and Learning, and the range of Inclusive teaching and learning resources and wellbeing resources available, ensures that all students benefit from a diverse support system during their time at Reading, regardless of whether they have declared a disability or supplied evidence of disability.

Below are some of the key inclusive teaching practices to consider:

- Permission to record lectures subject to the University's recording policy.
- Key resources provided or downloadable from Blackboard (the University's Virtual Learning Environment) at least 48 hours in advance of a taught session.
- Accessible presentations and handouts of materials available in a variety of electronic formats via Blackboard. Training on Blackboard Ally is available through the University for tech support in providing captions for pictures (for blind students to know what a picture or graph is and how significant).
- Accessible materials provided, following the University's Guide to Creating Accessible Teaching and Learning Materials.
- Reading lists provided in advance of the module beginning.
- Clear marking criteria.
- Consideration in advance when planning field trips, practicals, group work, presentations and teaching and assessment methods best practice.
- Advance notice of dates of group work, presentations, field trips and any non-standard teaching or assessment practice (ideally at the beginning of the year – in writing (programme handbook and Blackboard) and verbally.
- Avoid clustered deadlines as far as is possible.
- Avoid back-to-back lectures in various locations.
- Consider travel times for those who are less mobile (where possible).
- Consider rest/quiet spaces nearby should someone need to leave.

5.2 Further related information and links on inclusive practice

Inclusive Teaching & Learning (reading.ac.uk) (landing page)

Engaging and Inclusive Teaching to Support Student Attendance (2023) (reading.ac.uk)

New Closing Awarding Gaps toolkit in development – early draft is available on the UoR Inclusive T&L website.

Would you like to evaluate a new or existing inclusive T&L initiative? Contact Michael Kilmister (CQSD-ADE): m.kilmister@reading.ac.uk or Lydia Fletcher.

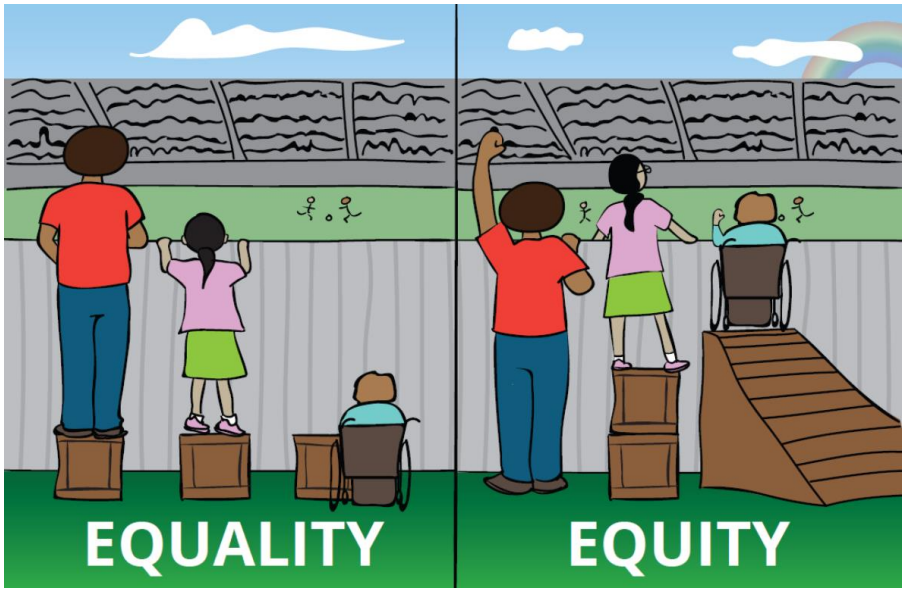
New student voice publication: 'Road to Unity' inclusivity zines.

Interested in enhancing student voice in your teaching? Drop Mat Haine (SSE) or Victoria Grace-Bland (CQSD-ADE) a line: m.l.b.haine@reading.ac.uk, v.grace-bland@reading.ac.uk

5.3 A helpful visual to understand what we mean by Inclusive (equality v equity)

It is a common mistake to think that equality of access – i.e. everyone being offered the same services, is fair and equal. We like to use this visual to explain the difference between fairness and making reasonable adjustments. Put simply, equity means everyone has access to the support they individually need so that they are able to participate, and do not suffer any disadvantage.

Equality – everyone has access to the same support. This seems fair, but it might not be appropriate to meet everyone's needs.
Equity – everyone has access to the support they individually need, to participate fully. This is what we mean by 'levelling the playing field' (by implementing reasonable adjustments).



www.equitytool.org/equity/

6.0 Section six – Examples of reasonable adjustments – main list

As each student is different, and the adjustments that may work for them will vary for each individual, even two students with the same diagnosis will have different needs. Therefore, the best way to understand their needs and what is appropriate for them, is to speak to them directly, where possible. Some cohorts are very large, however, and in these cases good inclusive practice, and more creative methods for managing student engagement and progress can be considered.

See the case study examples and ideas of good practice in Section 7 of this guidance, and in the Disability Resources Teams area.

Colleagues are also encouraged to:

- read the Disability Information web resources;
- use the guidance on reasonable adjustments for different disabilities, located in the Disability Resources Teams area;
- get to know your local Disability Representative/volunteer for this role;
- attend workshops/training on inclusive practice and disabilities/reasonable adjustments;
- join the Disability Resources Teams area to:
    - share ideas and worries in the discussion group
    - share and learn from colleagues' best practice examples
    - access further links and resources.

Reasonable adjustments list

Please refer to the tables below as a guide only, in understanding implementing reasonable adjustments in the learning environment (6.1) and for exams or tests and other assessments (6.2). These lists are detailed, but not exhaustive.

Where 2 or more methods have been suggested, this is because:

- In typical practice staff should be able to implement these as standard.
- DAS may also add these to students ILP.
- Depending on the case, they may sometimes require further DAS involvement, or, for more complex cases, wider stakeholder involvement.

Remember: If you are implementing reasonable adjustments without DAS input – and – the adjustment needs to be implemented on more of the student's modules, then DAS need to be informed via the SOI form, so that the student can have an ILP put in place.

6.1 The Learning Environment

Section A	Section B	Section C
Without DAS input / DAS may also recommend via ILP	a) without DAS input **upfront** b) via DAS registration	Via DAS registration only
These adjustments are just inclusive practice, or are reasonable adjustments that can be easily applied without DAS registration first	*These reasonable adjustments may be implementable without DAS input first, but may require DAS input for more complex cases*	*These reasonable adjustments require DAS input*

Section A - Without DAS input / DAS may also recommend via ILP	**Learning environment**	**Disabilities**
Adjustment	**Method**	**Helpful for**
Ensuring all documents provided are accessible (use Blackboard Ally to check)	Without DAS input	Inclusive practice for all students
Being able to record lectures where appropriate and permissible	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Inclusive practice for all students
Having taught information broken down into smaller digestible parts	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups Inclusive practice for all students
If writing on whiteboard/screen, read the information aloud	Without DAS input	Visually or hearing impaired Inclusive practice for all
Instructions on practicals provided in advance to help students prepare	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups Inclusive practice for all students
Individual tutor time recommended	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups Inclusive practice for all students
To receive glossary and reading list in advance to allow additional time for absorption	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups
Alternative to presentations, or flexible presentation styles as an option	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups
Rest breaks during teaching	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments
Time between lectures Implement where possible, unless	Without DAS input, DAS will also	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health

requires timetabling/DAS input. (student may have mobility aids, crutches, or a wheelchair)	recommend via ILP	Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Visually or hearing impaired
Allowances for needing to leave the room	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments
Allowances for needing to move around during long sessions	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments
Seating position away from/by door Seating position away from/by light Seating position away from/by window Seating position corner of room Seating position front/back of room etc.	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups
Allowances for occasionally arriving late / leaving early (e.g. needing time to attend medical appointments) *NB. Late arrival may not always be possible, for example if students were to miss a safety briefing. Always make this clear to students in advance*	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments
Allowances for missing occasional sessions (e.g. flare up of condition, or stay in hospital)	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments
Access to resources when unable to attend lessons	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments
Student struggles if picked to answer questions in class – general rule, check with the student	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions
Student struggles when picked to read aloud – general rule, check with the student	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	SpLD Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Visual or hearing impaired
Support with concentration: May struggle to concentrate or have foggy headedness. May experience fatigue and may	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Visual or hearing impaired

need time to recover or re-set during the day		
Support with fears: May experience extreme stress in certain situations (severe anxiety, phobias)	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Visual or hearing impaired
Alternative presentation styles, for example: presenting to staff, or smaller groups, recorded in advance, or on Teams, written, reading from a script, or extra time for presentations – check with the student. NB: If presentations are key to the course skills development, consider ways to support the student in increasing confidence over time	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups
Alternatives to group work, or facilitated group work	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Visual or hearing impaired
Transcriptions or subtitles for audiovisual	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Visual or hearing impaired SpLD General inclusive practice
Provision of guided reading list	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Visual or hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Provision of glossary of technical terms	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Neurodevelopmental conditions Visual or hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Sensitive to noise and sound (reduce background noise)	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Visually impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health General inclusive practice
Sensitive to light / flashes	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Long-term medical conditions Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Use colour and enlarged images, graphs, and tables	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Visually impaired General inclusive practice
Circular layout in seminars (for lipreading)	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Font size, coloured paper, paper size	Without DAS input, DAS will also	Visually impaired General inclusive practice

	recommend via ILP	
Provide visual prompts (e.g. charts, diagrams, icons) with verbal and written communication	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Presenters to utilise a microphone fully when talking	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Presenters to ensure that they are fully facing the audience whilst talking	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Viva/oral assessments: Student to be advised in advance they will be given an agreed length of thinking time before being required to answer each question	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Viva/oral assessments: Student to be advised in advance they can ask for a question to be repeated or re-phrased, or that they can request clarification	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Viva – questions in advance	Without DAS input, DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups

Section B – both a) without DAS input upfront, b) via DAS registration	Learning environment	Disabilities
Adjustment	**Method**	**Helpful for**
a) Accessible venues/rooms where reasonable to implement locally/temporarily b) more complex permanent needs, timetabling input required, etc.	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Physical impairments Visual or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Long-term medical conditions
a) Short distances between events where reasonable to implement locally/temporarily. b) more complex permanent needs, timetabling input required, etc.	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Physical impairments Visual or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Long-term medical conditions
a) Use of software where resource available/reasonable to implement locally/temporarily b) Use of a screen reader, notetaking software, advice, support, or funding required	a) Without DAS input b) via DAS registration	All 7 disability groups General inclusive practice
a) Allergies (mild) b) Allergies (severe)	a) Without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Long-term medical conditions General inclusive practice
a) Additional assistance needed for labs, where small adjustments and reasonable to implement locally/temporarily b) Where resource limited, or for more complex needs (lab assistant)	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Visual or hearing impaired Physical impairments Long-term medical conditions
a) Simple adaptations to furniture or layout locally/temporarily b) more complex needs, specialist equipment or furniture required, to include estates/timetabling/fire safety/accommodation (student may have mobility aids, crutches, or a wheelchair)	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Temporary injury Physical disabilities Visually impaired Long-term medical conditions
Cannot sit or stand for long periods: a) Simple adaptations to furniture or layout locally/temporarily b) more complex permanent needs	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Visually impaired Physical impairment Long-term medical conditions
Requires a toilet pass or radar key: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporarily, b) More complex needs, to include estates	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Visually impaired Physical impairment Long-term medical conditions
May need to take a break to administer medication:	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Long-term medical conditions

a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary b) More complex needs, to include DAS		
Needs to use an elevator: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary/planned carefully for field trips etc.* b) More complex needs, to include DAS/estates/timetabling. *will need to register with DAS for all timetabled adjustments including exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Temporary injury Visually impaired Physical impairment Long-term medical conditions
Classrooms close together to reduce travelling distances. Or avoid certain lecture theatres: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary/planned carefully for field trips etc.* b) More complex needs, to include DAS/estates/timetabling *will need to register with DAS for all timetabled adjustments including exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Visually impaired Physical impairment Long-term medical conditions
Viva – extra planning time: a) locally implemented where possible. b) complex needs/guidance required	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	All 7 disability groups
Viva – student to visit room / rehearsal: a) locally implemented where possible. b) complex needs/guidance required	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
May require monitoring and need assistance: may faint, may experience a seizure and need space to go with a safe person, allergic reaction, etc. a) mild, b) severe	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Long-term medical conditions
May get breathless, or panicked, and need assistance, or a rest. a) mild, b) severe	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Long-term medical conditions Mental health

Section C - Via DAS registration only	Learning environment	Disabilities
Adjustment	**Method**	**Helpful for**
Assistance animals	Via DAS registration only	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health See also 'allergies'
Shortened day where possible (limited to timetable restrictions)	Via DAS registration only	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments
Specialist equipment, furniture, or evacuation procedure needed in teaching venues (requires input from timetabling/estates)	Via DAS registration only	Hearing impaired
A human signer (BSL) in classes	Via DAS registration only	Hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Braille, or suitable alternative	Via DAS registration only	Visual impaired
Timetabled adjustments: Including neurodivergent students, wheelchair users, deaf and blind students, or other severe medical conditions	Via DAS registration only	Physical disabilities Wheelchair users Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Neurodevelopmental conditions
Fire safety or buildings adaptations needs including accommodation or travel: Including neurodivergent students, wheelchair users, deaf and blind students, or other severe medical conditions	Via DAS registration only	Physical disabilities Wheelchair users Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Neurodevelopmental conditions
NOT Near to another student (Cystic Fibrosis) *requires DAS registration, but do not delay in making adjustments	Via DAS registration only *make local changes immediately	Long-term medical condition See also 'allergies'
Viva/oral assessments: Examiners to be provided with information in advance on the nature of the disability to explain, for example, any significant communication or processing difficulties	Via DAS registration only	All 7 disability groups
Viva – rest breaks	Via DAS registration only	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health

6.2 Exams, tests, and assessments arrangements

A number of students across the University qualify for special examination and assessment arrangements, either due to disability, medical or personal issues, or religious observance. See the Special Examination Arrangements page for detailed information.

Depending on the student's needs, students should speak to either their Academic Tutor and/or School Disability Representative as soon as possible after starting their programme of study. Students should be encouraged to register with DAS as soon as possible (ideally before enrolment) to ensure their adjustments are in place in time for their first set of assessments.

Exams (in person & online), In-class Tests, other local assessments:

Section A	**Section B**	**Section C**
Without DAS input / DAS may also recommend via ILP	a) without DAS input **upfront** b) via DAS registration	Via DAS registration only
These adjustments are just inclusive practice, or are reasonable adjustments that can be easily applied without DAS registration first	*These reasonable adjustments may be implementable without DAS input first, but may require DAS input for more complex cases*	*These reasonable adjustments require DAS input*

Section A - Without DAS input / DAS may also recommend via ILP	**Exams, tests, or other assessments**	**Disabilities**
Adjustment	**Method**	**Helpful for**
Noise cancelling headphones/earbuds	Without DAS input	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Seating position in tests/exams*: away from/by door away from/by light away from/by window corner, front/back of room etc.	Without DAS input *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure preference noted on ILP.	All 7 disability groups

Section B - a) without DAS input upfront, b) via DAS registration	Exams, tests, or other assessments	Disabilities
Adjustment	**Method**	**Helpful for**
Fidget or comfort object Other object – e.g. cushion, fan, heat pack: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests/presentations) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Physical impairment Long-term health conditions
Blood phone/medication/other medical devices: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Long-term health conditions
May need to move around during breaks: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Neurodevelopmental conditions Physical impairment Mental health Long-term health conditions
Use of filters or overlays/coloured reading ruler: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	SpLD only
Permitted additional material in exams/tests: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	All 7 disability groups
Food permitted: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Long-term health conditions
Use of non-standard keyboard: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure noted on ILP	Physical impairment Long-term health conditions Visual or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions

Written copy of invigilator/test instructions: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	Without DAS input *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure student needs are noted on ILP	All 7 disability groups
Human prompt in exams: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	Without DAS input *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure noted on ILP	Visually or hearing impaired Physical impairment Long-term medical conditions Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Adapted Furniture required: a) Simple adaptations to furniture or layout locally/temporarily b) More complex needs, specialist equipment or furniture required, to include estates/timetabling/fire safety/accommodation (student may have mobility aids, crutches, or a wheelchair)	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure noted on ILP	Temporary injury Physical disabilities Visually impaired Long-term medical conditions
Font size, coloured paper, paper size: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure noted on ILP	Visually impaired General inclusive practice
May require monitoring and need assistance: may faint, may experience a seizure and need space to go with a safe person, allergic reaction, etc. a) mild, b) severe	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration	Long-term medical conditions
May need to take a break to administer medication: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure needs are noted on ILP	Long-term medical conditions
May get breathless, or panicked, and need assistance, or a rest: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will ensure this is noted on ILP	Long-term medical conditions Mental health

'Adjusted assessment' – e.g. alternative to presentations/flexible presentation styles as an option: a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (built into programme options, or ad hoc as exception) b) More complex needs, to include DAS	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups
Alternative Assessment	Via DAS registration or EC	All 7 disability groups
Student may request a visit to familiarise themselves with exam room in advance (noting that the room may not be set up as an exam venue): a) Simply accommodated locally/temporary (in class tests) b) More complex needs, to include DAS, centrally timetabled exams	a) without DAS input b) via DAS registration *for centrally timetabled exams DAS will arrange and ensure preference noted on ILP	All 7 disability groups

Section C1 - Via DAS registration only	**Central exams or tests**	**Disabilities**
Adjustment	**Method**	**Helpful for**
Extra time in exams (inc. online)	Via DAS registration only	All 7 disability groups
A smaller room in exams – not the main hall (this option might be limited)	Via DAS registration only	All 7 disability groups
Use of a computer in tests/exams (e.g. with SpLD software loaded)	Via DAS registration only	All 7 disability groups
Rest breaks during exams/tests	Via DAS registration only	All 7 disability groups
Toilet Breaks during exams/tests	Via DAS registration only	Physical impairment Long-term health conditions
Green stickers for exams	Via DAS registration only	SpLD only
Accompanied by a (human) carer	Via DAS registration only	Visually or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Long-term medical conditions Physical impairment
Accompanied by an assistance animal	Via DAS registration only	Visually or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Long-term medical conditions Physical impairment

NOTE: For centrally timetabled exams, the below adjustments cannot be guaranteed at short notice and must be arranged well in advance (at least 6-8 weeks).

Section C2 - Via DAS registration only	Central exams	Disabilities
Adjustment	**Method**	**Helpful for**
Morning exams (where possible) afternoon exams (where possible)	Via DAS registration only	Visually or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairment
Dragon Dictate, Read & Write Gold or other software requiring computer	Via DAS registration only	SpLD Visually or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health Long-term medical conditions Physical impairment
Music / white noise (Individual room only)	Via DAS registration only	Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Reader (human) needed (Individual room only)	Via DAS registration only Exams setup	Visually impaired
Scribe (human) needed (Individual room only)	Via DAS registration only Exams setup	Visually impaired Physical impairment
Oral Language Modifier (human) (Individual room only)	Via DAS registration only	Visually impaired
Talktype (Individual room only)	Via DAS registration only	Visually impaired
Accompanied by a (human) carer	Via DAS registration only	Visually or hearing impaired Neurodevelopmental conditions Long-term medical conditions Physical impairment
A human signer in exams/tests	Via DAS registration only	Hearing impaired General inclusive practice
Braille, or suitable alternative	Via DAS registration only	Visual impaired
NOT Near to another student (Cystic Fibrosis)	Via DAS registration only	Long-term medical conditions

6.3 Placements, inc. travel to and from (other off campus activities)

Adjustment	Method	Helpful for
Support to consider disability and health-related needs by supervisors/colleagues responsible for off-campus activity associated with the course/research (e.g. placements, fieldwork, conferences)	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	All 7 disability groups General inclusive practice
Wheelchair accessibility	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	Physical impairment
Parking on site	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	Physical impairment
Adjustments to working hours (discuss with student and placement coordinator)	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Placement travel time may need adjustments	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Preference of a local placement to reduce travel	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Accessible toilet facilities on site	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments

6.4 Travel / Parking on site

Some students will require specific arrangements related to travel or parking on site.

- DAS support students with advice on travel and funding.
- DAS support students' applications for parking on site, though this is managed by Estates.
- Timetabling/Exams may need to be involved with arranging access to certain buildings on specific days.

Car Parking

Students with mobility difficulties or some other extenuating circumstances may be able to apply for a parking permit via the Estates student parking pages.

- Blue badge holders can apply for a free parking permit and then park in disabled parking bays
- Other disabled students can apply in exceptional circumstances to be considered for:
  - Halls parking only
  - Parking on campus

Adjustment	Method	Helpful for
Requires a campus parking permit. Signpost the student to the Estates pages for student parking	Without DAS input. DAS can be consulted for advice/support	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Requires a disabled parking bay. Signpost the student to the Estates pages for student parking	Without DAS input. DAS can be consulted for advice/support	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Requires specific access to certain buildings on certain days	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice (may include Estates team & timetabling)	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
May/will arrive in a taxi	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice.	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Will be commuting	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health

6.5 Library

Adjustment	Method	Helpful for
Resources in non-standard media. Signpost the student to the library	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Individual library induction	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice	All 7 disability groups
Extended library loans	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP	All 7 disability groups
Collection service	Without DAS input	All 7 disability groups
Study Advice	Without DAS input	Available to all students

6.6 Loan Equipment

Adjustment	Method	Helpful for
Loan equipment: Wheelchair (events only – events team)	Without DAS input	Physical impairments Long-term medical conditions
Loan equipment: Laptop	Without DAS input	Available to all students
Loan equipment: Other (course or fieldwork related, overlays, Dictaphones)	Without DAS input. DAS will also recommend via ILP and can be consulted for advice	All 7 disability groups

6.7 Other Services or Facilitated Groups

Service	Type	Notes
Disability Representatives (Dis Reps)	University wide support	Available for all colleagues/students
Wellbeing Services: Welfare, Counselling, Wellbeing Advisers, Disability Advisers, Halls Wardens/Mentors, 24h helpline.	Self-referral	Available to all students
Financial Advice	Self-referral	Available to all students
Student Partners	Self-referral	All 7 disability groups
Careers Service	Self-referral	
STaR Mentors	Self-referral	Available to all students
Peer support (paid): Social or Academic Mentors Lab Assistants Notetakers Scribes / readers	Via DAS registration only Exams setup	Visual or hearing impaired Long-term medical conditions Physical impairments Neurodevelopmental conditions Mental health
Life Tools	Self-referral	Available to all students
Study Advice (see library)	Self-referral	Available to all students
Inclusion Consultants	Self-referral	All 7 disability groups and other under-represented groups

6.8 Student Union

Adjustment	Adjustment Type	Notes
Quiet sensory space	n/a	All 7 disability groups
Advice and support service	Self-referral	Available to all students
Fidget toys, free handouts, overlays	n/a	Available to all students
Disability / Diversity Rep	n/a	All 7 disability groups
Facilitated student network(s) - Autism	Self-referral	Autism

7.0 Section seven – Case examples for reasonable adjustments

7.1 Standard reasonable adjustment examples

In some cases, the Disability Advisory Service will suggest adjustments appropriate for the student's disability, but colleagues may need to adapt them to ensure they:

- meet the student's needs
- meet the learning outcomes
- are reasonable and practical to implement

Sometimes simple adjustments may be all that a student needs to progress successfully. An example of this may be a student who usually has low-level well-managed anxiety but is having a flare up which is causing distressing and debilitating effects. Adjusting one element of their learning might be enough to support them to progress (for example, allowing them to present to a smaller group).

Sometimes a student may have more complex needs, and adjustments may just provide enough temporary support whilst the student gets more permanent arrangements in place, via DAS, thus avoiding delays.

Some examples of common reasonable adjustments which can be implemented easily, and ought to be built into module design are:

a) allowing a student to deliver a presentation in written form, or pre-recorded, where their anxiety to deliver an in-person presentation would greatly impede their performance, or impact their mental health negatively;
b) working in a smaller group with a buddy or peer mentor, where group work is particularly difficult;
c) changes to the room (lighting, seating arrangements, using another room, or moving to another floor – where possible), for example, where a student has sensory difficulties, or has mobility difficulties.

7.2 Examples of more complex reasonable adjustments

In some cases, a student may have higher or more complex needs, and you may be concerned about how to support them. Certain reasonable adjustments may be more complicated to implement and may require more discussion with the student and relevant colleagues (including Module Convenor, DAT, Dis Rep, or DAS) to design a support plan that is appropriate.

Some examples:

Severe mental health or anxiety – you are not expected to have all the answers.

Do what is reasonable, and if you feel the student requires more intensive support, then;

- discuss with your Department and your DAT/Dis Rep what support/adaptations you could implement;
- liaise with DAS to see if there is any additional support available (e.g. mentoring)
- occasionally you may need to consider a fitness to study plan to support a student to engage.

Complex adjustments during placements or field work:

What alternatives are there which provide the same or similar experience, whilst meeting learning objectives?

Competency Standards:

Competency standards are exempt from the requirement to make reasonable adjustments in achieving the standard. However, reasonable adjustments should be considered and implemented (as appropriate) when implementing or assessing a competency standard.

Some more complex examples of interpreting students' adjustments:

Example one
An example of a more complex student situation might be a student who has **not yet disclosed** their condition or registered with DAS, who has a diagnosis of Autism, and is masking or self-managing well. Mid-way through their second year they start to have a flare up of symptoms which affects their ability to engage.

The course team notice the change in behaviour and performance and invite them to discuss what their needs are to be able to re-engage and progress. The discussion outcome is that the student would benefit from changes to the way they work in a group, and a different way to do presentations.

The course team can implement these standard reasonable adjustments immediately and inform DAS of the student and their needs (via the SOI form), whilst referring the student directly to register with DAS, so that the student can apply to access exam arrangements, blanket extensions, and get assistance with applying for DSA. They may also be able to get access to an academic mentor, who will help them stay on track for the remainder of their study.

Example two
A second example may be a student who is showing clear indications of undiagnosed ADHD (with Anxiety), which have flared up during their time at university. The course team notice ongoing issues with the student's behaviour and performance and try to discuss the student's needs with them, but the student does not engage or disclose.

With enough clear indicators of disability, the course team can decide to implement standard reasonable adjustments, for example, to address the student's anxiety in presentations, and an alternative way to gather data from a planned field trip, as long as they inform the student of the plan, and the student does not disagree.

The course team would also report this to DAS via the SOI form, to help the student with further advice and guidance in accessing a diagnosis, mentoring, and further support. If the student contacts their GP they can get a working diagnosis (referral for a diagnosis), which will allow DAS to put funded support in place.

7.3 Examples of ad hoc reasonable adjustments

Some reasonable adjustments, which should usually be applied via DAS registration only, may become apparent without the time for the student to register with/contact DAS first.

Example three
The Department becomes aware over a period of weeks or months, that a student is showing indications of disability related struggles. The student keeps using the EC process for extensions for ill health, which get approved.

Their Academic Tutor speaks to them about registering with DAS, but they are reluctant. The Department are aware that they will continue to struggle with extensions and submit ECs and should really have an ILP in place.

Example four
Just before a local test, presentation, or a coursework deadline, a student – who is not registered with DAS, or does not have extensions/extra time on their ILP - tells the module convenor that they are really struggling, have been struggling for some time, and they believe they have ADHD, and/or are being treated for anxiety.

In these cases, the Module Convenor is able to act in a temporary way and make an ad hoc temporary reasonable adjustment (where reasonable and practical to do so), such as extra time for the test or an ad hoc extension on the coursework.

Staff should follow up by recording their actions and ensuring that DAS is informed via the SOI form, so that the student can have the adjustments applied to a new or existing ILP.

Completing the SOI form creates a central record of the actions taken, and other colleagues who need to know will become aware of the student's needs via the Disability Report on RISIS.

Be aware there may be a delay in DAS creating an ILP (sometimes several weeks). Where students have immediate deadlines, staff should alert the DAT, and inform other relevant colleagues, such as their Programme Admin (to avoid any late penalties).

7.4 Other more challenging case examples

7.4.1 What if I think the student has a disability, but they do not disclose / do not seem aware they may have a disability? *(This is likely to be rare)*

What to do:

- Approach the student sensitively to ask if they feel they may benefit from additional support or adjustments. Suggest things you could do and ask them what they think may help. *You don't have to ask them directly if they have a condition, you can just say you notice they struggle with xyz and offer some things that you think may help.*
- If the student is reluctant to discuss their struggles, you can still make reasonable adjustments. Refer to the main list of reasonable adjustments for examples.
- It doesn't matter if you don't know what their disability is. If you can see they are struggling, let your intuition guide you, and tell DAS via the SOI form.
- Utilise the training and guidance available on implementing reasonable adjustments, and/or ask your Dis Rep, DAT, or DAS for support.
- Some students are not ready to accept help if they are independent, or they may not be ready to accept that they have a condition and need adjustments. They may also not want to be a burden. Often students do not realise what reasonable adjustments are available to them until you describe what is possible.

7.4.2 What if I put in an adjustment that the student later does not receive in an ILP/ was deemed a temporary need and not disability related? *(This is likely to be rare)*

- Most adjustments simply meet a student's needs in an inclusive way, so if the need has been identified, it is unlikely to be giving them any advantage over other students.
- For exceptions, like ad hoc coursework extensions or extra time in a class test, although ideally the student would register with DAS first, it is still preferable for academic colleagues to act in a temporary way than the alternative (e.g. a student going without an adjustment to which they are entitled). Provided colleagues complete the SOI form, the student will be assessed for an ILP.

7.4.3 What if the student is taking a group assignment and needs adjustments for the assignment format?

A student who needs adjustments for assignments cannot easily have their adjustments applied to a group assignment, as while this is removing the barriers they face, it may also confer the adjustments to their peers.

There is no hard and fast rule to handling this situation, as the student's adjustments and disabilities, plus the assessment structure, can vary. Any adjustments must also be considered through the lens of what is 'reasonable'.

Depending on the assessment type, options could include:

- The student with adjustments can complete their aspects of the assignment on their own, while collaborating on other parts - e.g., generating a lab report by themselves based on results from a practical completed in a group.
- The student with adjustments can complete the assignment on their own outside of a group.
- An adjusted assessment of a different type entirely can be created.

7.5 Further reminders

Exceptional Circumstances (EC) process

It is important not to conflate reasonable adjustments with the Exceptional Circumstances (EC) process. The EC process is for one-off exceptional circumstances that are out of the ordinary and out of the student's control, for example, bereavement, accident, sudden illness, or for worsening of an existing condition.

Reasonable adjustments are ongoing adaptations to support the student's learning. These are only for disability related needs and are available throughout the entirety of their course.

Competency standards

Competency standards are exempt from the requirement to make reasonable adjustments in achieving the standard. However, reasonable adjustments should be considered and implemented (as appropriate) when implementing or assessing a competency standard (this may include creative assessment methods to demonstrate the learning outcomes).

8.0 Section eight – links to further wellbeing guidance and resources

8.1 Other resources and wellbeing support services

Staff should refer to the following UoR resources and guidance:

- The DAS SLA for further clarity on roles and responsibilities for supporting students with Disabilities.
- The Disability Resources Teams area.
- The library of 'Condition Information Leaflets' (CIL) to support you in understanding students' needs. These also provide example reasonable adjustments for each disability or condition. These are located in the Disability resources Teams area.
- Disability information and guidance for staff including information for Dis Reps and Module Convenors.
- Student wellbeing services
- The 'concerned about a student' information poster, where there are immediate concerns.
- The Notification of Concern (NoC) process should still be followed, as necessary.
- Student Services Reception Team. Contact on x5555 or studenthelp@reading.ac.uk

Students can also seek support from the following UoR teams

For immediate wellbeing support or financial advice - students can access University of Reading's 24/7 Confidential Student Helpline by calling: 0800 023 2466

For concerns about mental health

- Text the word '**SHOUT'** to 85258 (https://giveusashout.org/) free, confidential, 24/7 mental health text service.
- For The Samaritans, email jo@samaritans.org or for their free 24-hour helpline call: **116 123**
- NHS Counselling Service: https://www.talkingtherapies.berkshire.nhs.uk/
- Suicide prevention: http://www.papyrus-uk.org/
- Free Counselling (age 10-25): http://no5.org.uk/what-we-do
- For Berkshire NHS Mental Health Crisis Team (emergency contact for mental health, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week), call: **0800 129 9999** or go to I need help now!

For concerns about health

- For NHS Direct (24hr support for other non-urgent medical advice) call: 111
- For medical emergencies only, dial 999 on your phone, and ask for ambulance
- Ring your GP for other urgent medical issues. If you are registered with the University Medical Practice, call: 0118 987 4551
- In an **emergency**, call University Security Service: +44 (0)118 378 6300

Some other support we offer includes

- Look After Yourself at University Guide – covering all aspects of life at University
- Wellness checker – our online self-help tool.
- Wellbeing guides - Topics include anxiety, depression & low mood, alcohol, stress, sleeping problems, social anxiety, panic, self-harm, bereavement and others.
- Life Tools is a programme of talks designed to help students with university life and manage the normal stresses and strains encountered in life.
- Student Space – is run by the Charity Student Minds and provides one-to-one support specifically to students by phone, email, text or webchat.
- Harassment, bullying, sexual misconduct, racism, hate crimes, and other problematic behaviours. In response to the findings of the Sexual Violence and Harassment Review and the Race Review we have launched Report & Support, which is an online tool for staff and students to report issues of harassment, bullying, sexual misconduct, racism, hate crimes, and other problematic behaviours. Users can report with their name and details to receive support from the University, or they can report anonymously.
- Wellbeing videos - We have worked with students to create a series of themed videos around looking after yourself and covering a common range of topics students may be facing.

Student loneliness

We know that students sometimes need a helping hand with settling into university and sometimes reach out to academic staff for guidance, so here is some useful signposting:

- StarMentors All new UG students are automatically allocated a STaR mentor usually from their own School. New International PG students can request one.
- The Student Life Events programme is designed to help students meet like-minded others. It is bursting with all sorts of events so encourage your students to make the most of these sessions.
- RSU Student Activities (sport, dance, societies, volunteering, events etc.)
- Building a network at university Guidance from Student Minds.
- How to cope with student life Guidance from the charity Mind.

Students can also seek support from the following UoR teams

- The Halls Welfare team can be contacted for any issues relating to life in Halls (by email, phone or in-person). This is a new team of dedicated Wardens and Hall Mentors to facilitate community building as well as provide pastoral support and discipline in Halls.
- The Student Welfare Team for issues impacting on student lives which they would like some guidance on (by email, phone or in-person, daily drop-in or appointment).
- The Counselling and Wellbeing Team if students need the support of a professional Counsellor (in-person by appointment only, following initial assessment).
- The Disability Advisory Service, for support with reasonable adjustments

Student Support Coordinators
For any question related to a course, such as your modules, essay submissions, or extenuating circumstances, please contact the Student Support Co-ordinator.

Cost of Living

- Please find information and guidance to students on our focus on cost of living webpage.
- The digital Support fund introduced during Covid continues and is specifically for students who many struggle to fund essential IT costs of university.
- The Student Financial Support Team are available to guide and support students with all money matters, by phone, email or in-person.
- Blackbullion offers courses and advice on how students can manage their money when at university.

RSU Advice
RSU Advice Centre is open10am-4pm and runs a daily drop-in. Email advice@rusu.co.uk

Study Advice
Students can also seek advice on developing their academic skills (including time management, preparing for presentations, working in groups etc) by looking at our guides and videos or booking an appointment. https://www.reading.ac.uk/library/study-advice

9.0 Section nine - Appendices

Appendix 1

A1.1. Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Acute versus Chronic	Most conditions and illnesses can be identified as either acute or chronic. Acute generally implies the condition is short-term often with a sudden onset, whereas chronic refers to conditions which are long-term, or even lifelong.
Ad hoc extensions/ adjustments	Ad hoc extensions or ad hoc adjustments are when Departments/academic colleagues decide to grant an exceptional extension/adjustment (usually outside of standard remit) where it is not written into the ILP/the student does not yet have an ILP. This action is a temporary measure, and usually by exception only, prior to the student registering with DAS and getting an ILP in place. Colleagues should always tell DAS via the SOI form.
Adjusted assessment	This term refers to flexible authentic assessments which are built into programme module design, providing students with more choice and flexibility, as well as addressing many reasonable adjustments through this inclusive design approach. An adjusted assessment might also be done on an ad hoc basis, to support a student where the option isn't already built in, but they require another alternative as a reasonable adjustment. *(essentially an alternative assessment but has been called an 'adjusted assessment' to help colleagues differentiate this from the term already used through the EC process).*
Alternative assessment	Alternative assessments are those which are being taken in place of a centrally organised examination as a reasonable adjustment recommended by Disability Advisory Services or because of an exceptional circumstance. Policy on and procedures relating to exceptional circumstances (reading.ac.uk)
Blanket extensions	For some disabled students, blanket extensions are an important reasonable adjustment option, to provide them with more time to manage their deadlines. The standard are +5 days, but on exception these may be up to +10 days. DAS will include this in the student ILP. These may vary and some may be tailored to the individual student or the Department. Always check the ILP.
Extra time	Extra time refers to additional time in tests or exams to sit the paper (applicable to all in class, online, in person exams). The standard is 25% extra time.

Rest breaks	Rest breaks refer to additional time needed in tests or exams to use toilet facilities or move around/take a break (applicable to all in class, online, in person exams). The standard is: 10 minutes rest break per hour (for all tests 60mins or over*) 10 minutes toilet break per hour (for all tests 60mins or over*) *Standard adjustment, which may be adapted by exception.
Stickers	Typically for those with SpLDs, so they are not penalised for grammar and spelling issues in their written work. Yellow stickers are for coursework, and green stickers are for exams. See section 4 for further details.

A1.2. Document Key

CIL – Condition Information Leaflets	IRAP - Implementing Reasonable Adjustments Project
DAS – Disability Advisory Service	MC – Module Convenor
DAT – Director of Academic Tutoring	RA - Reasonable Adjustment(s)
DSA - Disabled Students Allowance	RASWG – Reasonable Adjustments Schools Working Group
EC - Exceptional Circumstances	SWS – Student Wellbeing Services
IAG - Information, Advice, and Guidance	SLA - Service Level Agreement
ILP - Individual Learning Plan	
IRA – Implementing Reasonable Adjustments	

Appendix 2: DAS information updates and links

DAS information shared October 2023

The Disability Advisory Service made a few changes in 2023, which mean students will have easier access to reasonable adjustments than before. We have widened our remit of what are acceptable forms of 'evidence' of a disability, and students can be directed to our 'supporting documents checker' form, to find out what they need to do.

The core of the message is letting students know that we have a more **holistic** way of looking at their needs, and so if they feel they may need support, to get in touch.

- Information on Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) is accessible from our Essentials pages.

- We have also created a step by step checklist to the disability process at Reading, which includes FAQs that students regularly get confused about. This can be found on our declaring your disability pages and will be attached to our regular welcome reminders.

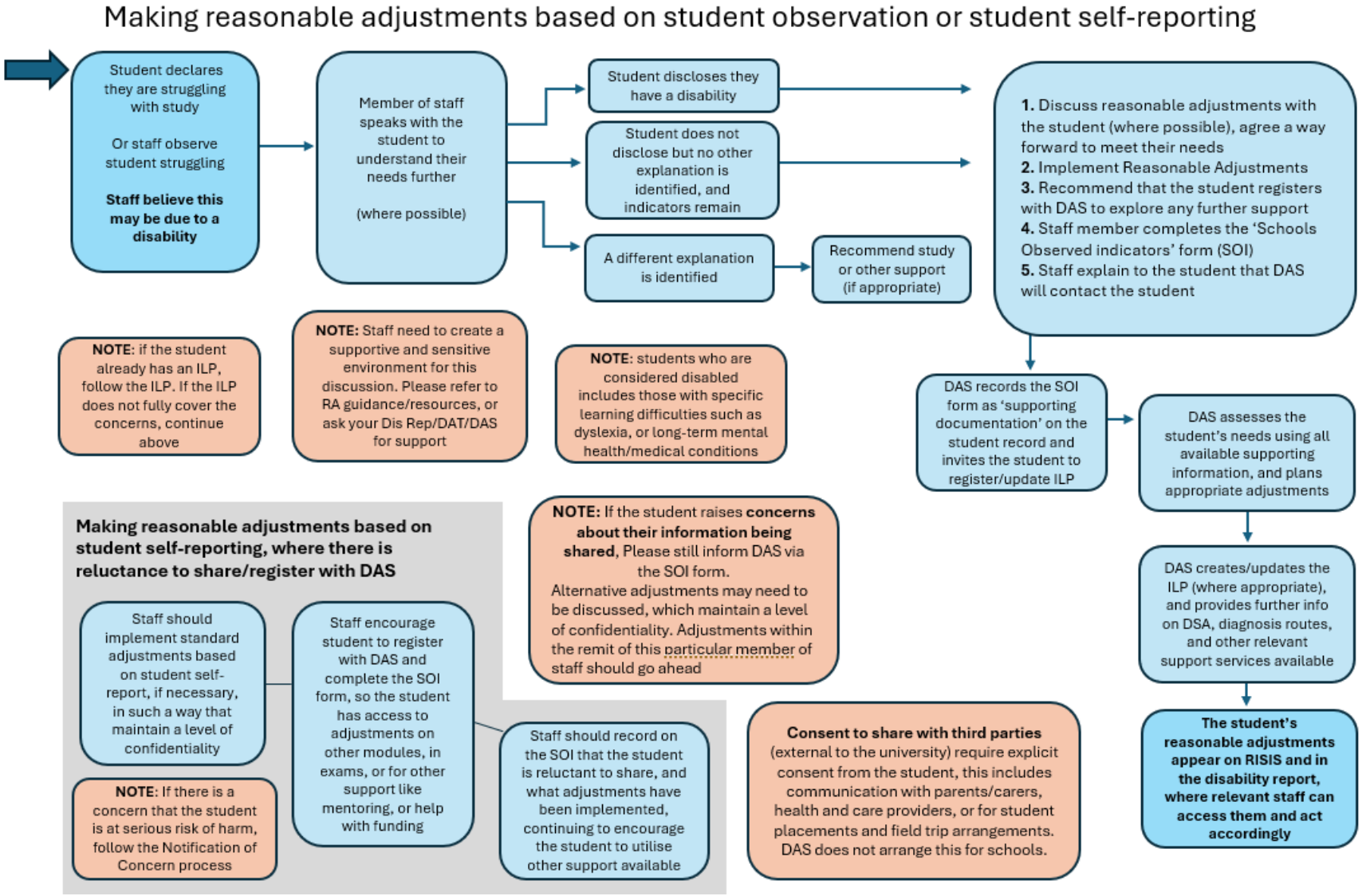
- We also recently developed a completely new PEEP process, which is centrally monitored with DAS and Fire Safety, thus creating a more robust process. Staff should make themselves aware of this, and know that students can be directly signposted, as we will only communicate with students known to DAS.

Our Disability web pages have had a refresh, so that we now have a central disability at Reading landing page for staff, students and their families, and external agencies.

In the staff pages of our site, we have updated our information, including adding:

- The DAS SLA for colleagues
- How students register with DAS
- Information about 8 hour exams
- 2 pieces of accompanying guidance for academics on 'When to know an adjustment is reasonable, and how to navigate competency standards and PCPs'.

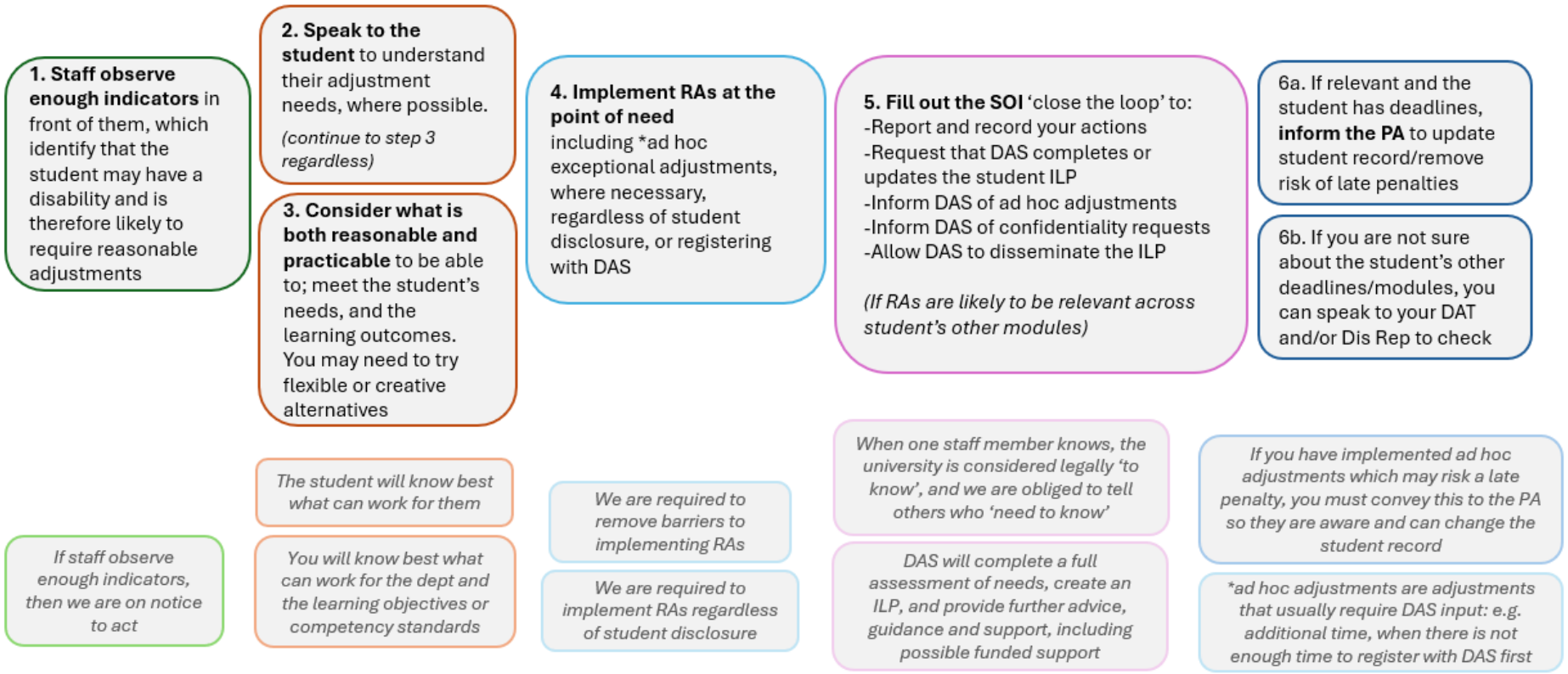
Appendix 3: End-to-end process of implementing reasonable adjustments



Appendix 4: Quick overview - Guiding principles for implementing reasonable adjustments

Overview of Implementing Reasonable Adjustments - the Steps to take

*No matter how complex your student case is, or the 'what if?' you are concerned about, if you follow these **guiding principles**, you will have done what you are responsible for doing...*

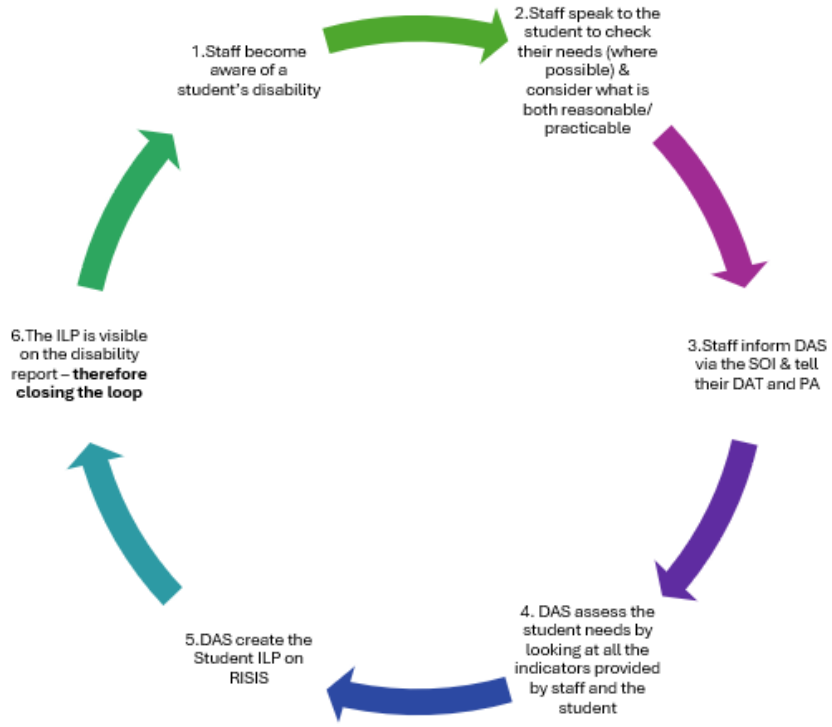


Appendix 5: Closing the loop: Ensuring colleagues who need to know, know

Closing the loop!

This means ensuring that all colleagues who need to know, know!

*The way we do this is by '**informing DAS**' via the SOI, so that DAS can create an ILP, and the information can then be distributed as usual via the Disability Report.*



Appendix 6: How to understand if a student is disabled

You know this if:

- The student is registered with DAS and appears on the Disability report on RISIS
- The student notifies you of their disability
- You are aware, or you become aware, or should reasonably be aware from observing the student and/or their behaviour, that the student is disabled
- The student has declared on their UCAS application – they have an asterisk next to their name on module reports

In all cases, the impairment will need to meet the Equality Act definition of a disability.

*The **Equality Act 2010 definition of a disability**: a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, which has a **substantial** and **long-term** adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*

Questions to ask the student:

1. How long have you been feeling this way/found this hard/struggled with this?
2. Have you told anyone else or had any professional help from anyone/your GP/a therapist?
3. Did you get any extra help in school or college? (if so, what sort of help?)
4. What do you think could most help you right now/for this piece of work?

These questions help determine if the condition is long-term, if they've had support before, and what they think could help.

Observations to be aware of (indicators of possible disability)

The student:

- repeatedly presents as struggling to one or more colleagues
- mentions a diagnosis, or need for one, for a long-term condition
- mentions medication for a long-term condition
- mentions regularly feeling depressed/anxious/panicked/unwell/unable to cope
- says they've been referred to a specialist for a long-term condition
- mentions seeing a therapist or other clinical professional, regularly
- is clearly struggling with learning compared to their peers
- engagement is affected by their health condition
- behaviour is erratic, out of character, concerning, changeable
- is clearly struggling (significantly) in other ways (e.g.; understanding concepts, processing information, reading or writing, eye contact, social interaction, concentration, keeping up, emotional regulation, certain fears or phobias)

Recommended reading: Check if you're disabled under the Equality Act - Citizens Advice

Appendix 3 (pp 221) in the Technical Guidance: Equality Act 2010 Technical Guidance on Further and Higher Education (equalityhumanrights.com)

Questions to ask yourself:

1. Does the student have a disability (is it long-term and substantial)?
2. What can be done to alleviate the disadvantage they face?
3. What is reasonable and practicable to do (within the time/resources available)?
4. If you are struggling to make an adjustment requested due the practicality of implementing it, what else could you do?
5. Have you spoken to your DAT/Dis Rep/DAS?

Appendix 7: Handling student requests for confidentiality

Refer to the guidance for staff on 'Sharing student's data':

- Guidance for Staff Information for staff (reading.ac.uk)
- Guidance for Students Privacy Notices (reading.ac.uk)
-

In Summary:

- Students can only request total confidentiality with third parties (those outside of the University)
- The University does need to process student disability data for the purposes of meeting our obligation to put reasonable adjustments in place
- Confidentiality with third parties can only be broken when there is serious risk of harm identified
- Requests for confidentiality can be met with due regard for the request, by considering alternative reasonable adjustments

Please ask for support from DAS, your Dis Rep, or DAT.

How to explain disability data sharing to students:

- If the student asks for the information provided to the staff member to be kept confidential or for the information provided not to be disclosed any further, explain that the information will only be shared with those who need to know (within the University) in accordance with the student privacy notice and for the purposes of complying with the Equality Act and putting in place reasonable adjustments.

- If the student specifically requests that DAS do not contact them further, you need to explain that DAS will usually routinely contact every student identified with a disability to offer support, and therefore DAS may contact them to discuss their disability and adjustments.

- If the student does not want anyone outside of the University to be made aware of any adjustments, again, refer to the student privacy notice. However, ordinarily, the University would not make such a disclosure (e.g. to their parents), but in the case of RAs which are going to be visible to others (such as students), the University must give due regard to such requests for confidentiality and consider what it can do to preserve such confidentiality. Where the student has raised the issue of confidentiality, DAS will contact the student.

Appendix 8: Summary of the guidance for academics on deciding when an adjustment is reasonable

How do I know what is reasonable and practicable?

You know this if:

The following are factors to be considered when deciding whether an adjustment is reasonable:

a. Will the adjustment alleviate the disadvantage identified? If the adjustment will have little impact on the disadvantage identified, it is unlikely to be reasonable.
b. Is the adjustment practicable? Will the adjustment detrimentally impact on your ability to deliver the educational services to other students? Or are there cost, time, or resource implications which are unreasonable?
c. Are there justifiable pedagogic reasons why the adjustment is not reasonable?
d. Are there alternative adjustments which would have the same or similar effect as the adjustment requested? If this is the case, it may be reasonable to put in place these alternative adjustments rather than the adjustment requested.

If there is not enough evidence of disability, then we are not on notice to put reasonable adjustments in place. In addition, where an adjustment requested or proposed is not reasonable, the University is not required, under the Equality Act, to implement the adjustment

Academic role = interpret the ILP in line with modules, Learning Objectives/Competency Standards, communicate with the student about their needs, ensure students understand the demands expected of them

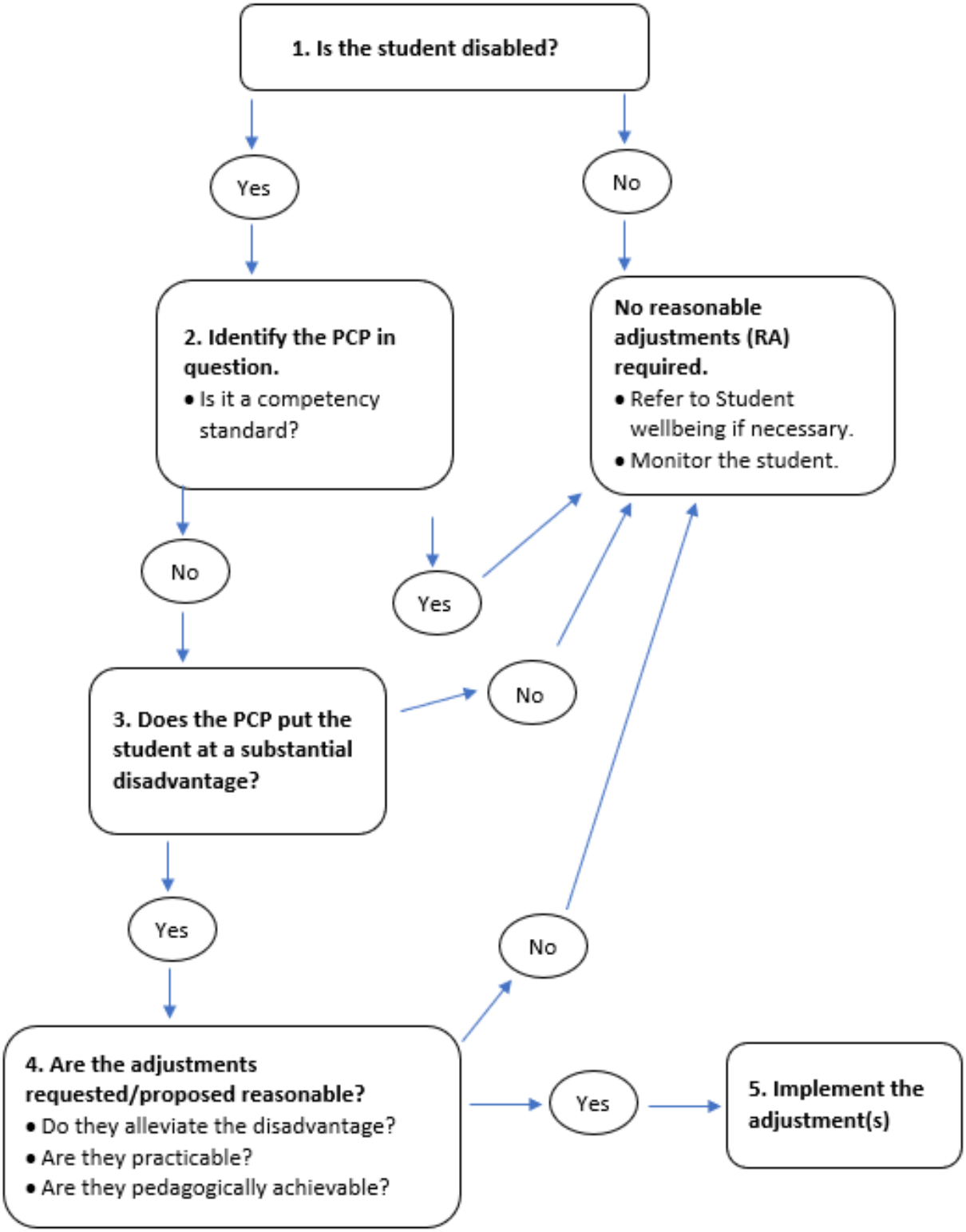
Always speak to the student (where possible) to understand their needs:

- Understand the '**problem**' and agree a '**solution**'
- Agree what is both **reasonable** and **practicable?**
- Consider alternatives - what else *could* you do to be more inclusive, and find an adjustment that is both reasonable and practicable

Questions to ask yourself:

1. Have I read the full guidance on deciding when an adjustment is reasonable?
2. What can be done to alleviate the disadvantage they face?
3. What is reasonable and practicable to do (within the time/resources available)?
4. If you are struggling to make an adjustment requested due the practicality of implementing it, what else could you do?
5. Have you spoken to your DAT/Dis Rep/DAS?

Appendix 9: Understanding competency standards and reasonable adjustments flowchart (decision tree)



Refer to the full guidance on the Disability information web pages.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are extended to everyone involved in contributing to this guidance and the associated resources, in particular from members of the Reasonable Adjustments Schools Working Group (RASWG), and the many other colleagues who continue to give up their time and expertise in ensuring the University keeps improving our inclusive practice.