
REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

ORGANISATION: FALMOUTH UNIVERSITY

APPLIES TO: STAFF & STUDENTS

POLICY OWNED BY: DIRECTOR OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

REQUIRED CONSULTEES: ACADEMIC DIRECTORS; DIRECTOR OF STUDENT AND ACADMEIC SERVICES; ACCESSIBILITY TEAM; QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ENHACEMENT; STUDENTS UNION REPRESENTATIVE.

APPROVED BY: ACADEMIC BOARD.

DATE APPROVED: WEDNESDAY, 08 JUNE 2022

REVIEW DATE: THURSDAY, 01 JUNE 2023

REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY

1. Key contacts

For enquiries about this policy please email: accessibility@fxplus.ac.uk or gae@falmouth.ac.uk

2. Key facts

- 2.1 You should familiarise yourself with the entirety of the Policy and we would particularly draw your attention to the following elements:

Clause(s)	Description
4.1	The policy provides for both students with long term disabilities (as per the Equality Act) and short-term difficulties and other protected circumstances impacting upon the student's studies.
6.3	Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes,
10.4	It is accepted that there may be circumstances that warrant both the use of reasonable adjustments and the Extenuating Circumstance policy.

3. Introduction

- 3.1 The University values the diversity of its student population and is strongly committed to creating and sustaining a positive learning experience for all. The adoption of inclusive teaching, learning and assessment methods does not negate the need for universities to make reasonable adjustments for individual students.
- 3.2 This document provides both students and staff with information about the University's approach to making Reasonable adjustments to Learning, Teaching and Assessment for students.

4 Scope

- 4.1 The policy covers reasonable adjustments related to disability and to other significant circumstances such as, but not exclusive to, those listed below.
- Student pregnancy/adoption
 - New parents
 - Change of gender identity
- 4.2 The University extends reasonable adjustments beyond the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) to also include short-term impairment(s) that cannot solely be covered by the Extenuating Circumstance policy.
- 4.3 All students and applicants are protected in relation to:

- Admissions
- The provision of education
- Access to any benefit, facility or service
- Disciplinary proceedings
- Transfer requests

4.4 For the purpose of this policy the definition of disability is that which is stated in the Equality Act 2010 namely that 'a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'

4.5 This includes chronic medical conditions which might be variable in effect, or which might recur. For example, a student who has cancer, HIV, multiple sclerosis or mental health difficulties would also be entitled to reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act.

4.6 The University understands that compliance with this obligation means supporting people according to their needs. The Act also provides protection against discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of a protected characteristic.

4.7 All staff are expected to adhere to this policy. Any reference to a particular role should be read to include its appropriate equivalent (e.g. in the case of partner organisations or subsequent absence/change of roles within the university).

5 Statement of Principles

5.1 The University applies the following principles in considering Reasonable Adjustments:

- (a) Equality and inclusion underpins the University's core values.
- (b) Students requiring reasonable adjustments will not be unreasonably prevented from applying for, registering upon, or successfully completing a course of study.
- (c) Reasonable Adjustments must not undermine confidence in academic standards or modules as demonstrated in the attainment of learning outcomes.
- (d) Determination of what is reasonable may vary between course of study as a result of differing academic requirements.

6 Reasonable Adjustments

6.1 The duty to make Reasonable Adjustments arises where persons are placed at a substantial disadvantage, compared with people who are not disabled or who are not experiencing extreme circumstances, in relation to:

- (a) A provision, criterion or practice applied by (or on behalf of) the University;
- (b) any physical feature of premises occupied by the University.

6.2 A reasonable adjustment helps to reduce the effect of an impairment, medical condition or relevant circumstance that places the person at a substantial disadvantage in their learning, teaching or assessment situation.

6.3 Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of assessment outcomes, but may involve, for example: changes to the way or place that teaching is delivered or materials supporting learning, changing assessment arrangements; adapting assessment

materials; providing assistance during assessment; re-organising the physical environment and using assistive technology.

7 Determining Reasonable Adjustments – legal context

7.1 The University shall consider the facts of each individual case and make individual adjustments if appropriate. There are three main factors to address when considering Reasonable Adjustments:

- (a) Whether the student is disadvantaged by the method of teaching or assessment.
- (b) Whether the suggested adjustments would help overcome the disadvantage.
- (c) Whether the adjustments are reasonable both in terms of proportionality and practicality/implementation.

8 Does a disadvantage exist?

In considering individual cases the University will consider how the student's impairment or circumstance interacts with the method of teaching or assessment to ensure that the adjustment requested is in fact a reasonable ask, and not just an expression of preference.

9 Is the adjustment reasonable?

9.1 There is no clear indication in law about exactly what a reasonable adjustment is. Factors to consider include:

- Effectiveness
- Practicality of the changes
- Health and safety
- Confidentiality
- Potential impact on other staff, students, and visitors

9.2 It is noted that, when considering whether the cost of an adjustment is reasonable, the resources of the university, not the individual service or school, are considered.

9.3 It is not acceptable to consider the student's potential to gain eventual employment when making reasonable adjustments (i.e. to refuse a reasonable adjustment because of customary industry practice) unless these are clearly prescribed competence standards from a recognised body (such as fitness to practice standards issued by a PSRB).

10 Implementation

10.1 The University's processes for determining reasonable adjustments and who is responsible for putting those adjustments in place can be found within the Reasonable Adjustments staff procedure.

10.2 Reasonable adjustments may vary from relatively standard adjustments, to non-standard adjustments which need consideration in relation to individual course requirements and/or other local context.

10.3 The Accessibility Service or Learning and Teaching (for non-disability related requests) will consider eligibility and proportionality of requests. Agreed reasonable adjustments will be recorded in accordance with the procedure.

10.4 It is accepted that there may be circumstances that warrant both the use of reasonable adjustments and the Extenuating Circumstance policy.

- 10.5 There is a nominated escalation route within school and professional services which can be brought into the discussion when determining what is reasonable and/or resolving any issues. This will normally be via the Department Director (or nominee) to the Director of Learning and Teaching (or nominee).
- 11 Individual Student Responsibilities**
- 11.1 Students are encouraged to disclose a disability or barrier to learning at the earliest opportunity. The student facing document outlining individual responsibilities can be found on the University's website.
- 12 Review of adjustments**
- 12.1 Where concerns arise such as; multiple requests to vary adjustments, inconsistent application of agreed adjustments or student academic performance or engagement suggesting adjustments are ineffective, a review of the arrangements must take place.
- 13 Placements / Professional practice/ field visits / study abroad**
- 13.1 Placements and visits might require different adjustments to those made for academic study.
- 14 Disclosure**
- 14.1 In most circumstances, only members of staff responsible for agreeing or implementing appropriate reasonable adjustments will be informed. However, where serious and valid concerns for the health and wellbeing of a student arise in consideration of their request for reasonable adjustments then others may be informed.
- 15 Evidence of Need**
- 15.1 Any request for reasonable adjustments must be supported by clear evidence or diagnosis – for example, an educational psychologist's report; study needs assessment or a letter from a GP or psychiatrist.
- 16 Policy Review**
- 16.1 The Head of QAE will ensure this Policy is reviewed after the first year of operation and subsequently every three years or sooner if there are legal or institutional changes which impact upon it.
- 16.2 Queries or concerns about this Policy or about Reasonable adjustments, either generally or in relation to an individual case, please contact accessibility@fxplus.ac.uk or QAE@Falmouth.ac.uk.