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**Purpose**

This document outlines the procedures in place to ensure the effective assessment of students who have a disability or specific learning difficulties. The University aims to ensure that all students have equal opportunity and will make reasonable adjustments to examination arrangements, appropriate to individual needs. Individual examination arrangements include both centrally managed examinations and Faculty managed in-class tests.

**Overview**

Coventry University is committed to providing an accessible environment for its diverse student population. The objective is to ensure that students with disabilities are provided with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate academic achievement without any unfair disadvantage as a result of a disability. This policy is in relation to examination arrangements only and does not relate to any other forms of academic assessment.

This is written in line with the QAA Code of Practice 2010 and adheres to the Equality Act 2010.

**Scope**

These guidelines aim to support all Coventry University students who have declared a disability and provided evidence in support of their request for individual examination arrangements. They apply to all students studying within the Coventry University Group. They do not apply to the Group’s collaborative institutions.

*Note*: The standard deferral procedures apply if a student is experiencing extenuating circumstances which are unforeseen and outside their control and which have a direct and substantial impact on their academic studies.

The remaining principle is that students who sign the examinations attendance slip are declaring themselves fit to be assessed and no subsequent claim for extenuating circumstances shall normally be accepted.

1. **Guidance**

1.1 One of the key assessment methods for Coventry University is by written examination. Examinations are carried out in line with the Academic Regulations sections 6, 7, and 8 and Appendix 1 of the General Regulations. The operation of a rigorous examination procedure is central to the University.

1.2 These guidelines are in place to ensure that procedures are fair and clear and should be adhered to by all staff and students. The provision of individual examination arrangements should not give an unfair advantage over other students.

1.3 The University is responsible for publicising the deadline dates for individual examination arrangement applications. The dates will be published in student handbooks and on the Student Portal.

1.4 The Health and Wellbeing team will contact all students who have registered a disability through the enrolment process via their University email address. They will provide details of how to register for individual examination arrangements and details of the deadline dates.

1.5 The Health and Wellbeing team will consider all applications received **prior** to the deadline date,

* subject to the provision of acceptable supporting evidence (written in English) and
* a signed and dated Data Protection agreement.

Students are strongly encouraged to meet with a Disability Advisor to discuss their learning and examination requirements.

1.6 When an application is approved and verified, this will be for the duration of your course.

This is excepting temporary disabilities, as requests of this nature are considered on a case by case basis. The time of their review will be subject to the initial medical evidence received and individual circumstances.

1.7 The University reserves the right to request further medical evidence or clarification of the medical evidence provided.

1.8 It is the student’s responsibility to notify Health and Wellbeing of any change to requirements if individual examination conditions are already in place.

The University will review any reasonable request for change, if this is due to a change in disability and supported by additional evidence.

1.9 When an application is verified and approved by the Health and Wellbeing team details are passed on to:

* Academic Registry for examinations (excluding in-class tests)
* please liaise with your Faculty regarding in-class tests

1.10 The Faculty and Academic Registry will contact the student via their University email address to notify the details of the individual examination arrangements.

1. **Eligibility and Definition of Disability**

Students with a permanent or temporary disability can apply for individual examination arrangements if they are unable to sit examinations under standard conditions. The requests providing reasonable adjustments to examination conditions will be considered in line with the following:

2.1 **Definition of disability under the Equality Act 2010**

* You are disabled under the [Equality Act 2010](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/6) if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a ‘substantial’ and ‘long-term’ negative effect on your ability to carry out normal daily activities.

## 2.2 What ‘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 12 months or more - e.g. a breathing condition that develops as a result of a lung infection.

For the purposes of this policy the above definition of disability will be applied for reasonable examination arrangements to be implemented, provided appropriate supporting evidence is submitted within the agreed deadline.

2.3 **Temporary disability**

* The policy will also be applied in the case of any temporary disabling illness, condition, injury or unforeseen event that is likely to affect the ability to be fairly assessed. This will be considered when the temporary disability is sufficiently documented and supported by evidence from a medical professional.

1. **Definition of Reasonable Adjustment**

* Reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty that places the candidate at a substantial disadvantage in the assessment/ examination situation.
* Whether the adjustment is reasonable will depend on a number of factors including the needs of the disabled student. An adjustment may not be considered if it involves unreasonable costs, timeframes or affects the security or integrity of the assessment/examination.

1. **Student Code of Practice**

It is the responsibility of the student to advise the University of their disability. This can be pre-application, during online or manual enrolment or by contacting the Health and Wellbeing team at the University.

To enable the University to consider applications for Individual Examination Arrangements students are required to provide the following supporting information to the Health and Wellbeing team prior **to the publicised deadline dates**:

* + A Student Contract including a signed Data Protection Agreement
  + An online request form for Individual Examination Arrangements
  + Up to date dyslexia report (if applicable)
  + Current medical evidence
  + Any other relevant supporting evidence
  + The request form can be submitted online via the [Exam Support](https://students.coventry.ac.uk/Disabilities/Pages/ExamSupport.aspx) page:

1. **Late Applications**

All students who have disclosed a disability at enrolment will be contacted by the Health and Wellbeing team, advising them of the deadline dates for submission. If the application is received after this time there is no guarantee that individual examination conditions can be put in place.

If there is evidence to show that circumstances have prevented a student from applying within the deadline dates, this information together with the application and evidence provided will be considered on a case by case basis.

1. **False Claims**

Any false claim for an individual examination arrangement will be regarded as an attempt to gain an unfair advantage and will be considered as Academic Misconduct and reported to the Academic Conduct Officer for further investigation.

1. **Examples of Individual Examination Arrangements**

* Examinations take place in rooms away from the main exam hall. The room will usually accommodate up to 20 students, unless a separate room is required.
* The start time is usually 30 minutes before the start of the main exam.

Examples of Individual Arrangements include (see Appendix 1 for guidance on these individual arrangements):

1. **Extra time**

Candidates may be granted additional time if they have a condition or disability which would prevent them from completing the examination in the specified time. The amount of time given depends on the nature and severity of the illness or disability. This will be confirmed by the Health and Wellbeing Team.

1. **Rest Breaks - to compensate for breaks taken where approved**

This only allows extra time for breaks taken during the examination. The duration of the exam, i.e. the time permitted for reading and writing the examination, is as published for that examination.

*Rest breaks should normally be no more than 10 minutes per hour. In a 3 hour exam this can be taken as 10 minutes per hour or two 15 minute breaks, for a maximum of 30 minutes per examination.*

1. **Dyslexic Markers**

Students who have been diagnosed with dyslexia will have a letter to the marker included in their examination pack. This advises the marker not to penalise errors of spelling, grammar or punctuation unless accuracy is of vital importance in the subject being assessed and constitutes part of the learning outcomes (e.g. in an English Language module where accurate written English is taught and examined).

1. **Scribes, Readers and Prompters**

This examination will take place in a room on a one to one basis. A Scribe, Reader or Prompter will be provided by Academic Registry.

**Scribes**

A scribe writes down a student’s dictated answers to questions in an examination. In some cases a scribe can act as a reader as well.

**Readers**

A reader reads aloud to a student any exam papers, any instructions, and any answers that the student has dictated.

**Prompters**

A student may be granted a prompter in examinations if they lose concentration or need to be prompted to move on to the next question in exams. Any student permitted a prompter should discuss their preferred prompt requirements with the invigilator when they enter the examination room.

1. **Computer**

If a student has use of a computer, the exam answers will be typed on to a word document. A student will be provided with either a PC or laptop.

A student provided with a computer will not be entitled to a scribe.

A computer room will be shared with other students using computers. A student may wish to bring earplugs if the noise of people typing might disturb.

1. **Use of Individualist software**

If approved, a student can have use of individualist software. The student must have had training and experience in using this software prior to the examination. Details of the software must be notified and accessible to Academic Registry prior to the examination.

1. **Alternative Formats**

Coloured overlays if recommended these should be provided by the student.

Coloured paper exam papers and exam answer booklets can be provided in coloured paper if this is available at the University. If a specific colour is not available the student will be asked to supply the paper in advance of the examination.

Enlarged Font for visually impaired students, question papers may be enlarged.

Braille to be requested as soon as possible for this to be produced.

1. **Food and Drink**

Students may be permitted to bring food and drink into the examination room if a medical condition requires a student to consume food or drink at regular intervals.

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| **Responsibility of** | *Academic Registry: in consultation with Student Services* |
| **Approval date** | Not required |
| **Date of commencement** | September 2015 |
| **Approved by** | *No approval required – codification of process* |
| **Review date** | *August 2016* |
| **Related Policies, Procedures, Guidance, Forms or Templates** | Appendix 1 of General Regulations  [Individual Examination Arrangements](https://share.coventry.ac.uk/students/Registry/Pages/ShelteredConditions.aspx) |

**Appendix 1**

**Guidance on Individual Arrangements**

1. **Rest Breaks**

**This only allows extra time for breaks taken during the examination. The duration of the exam, i.e. the time permitted for reading and writing the examination, is as published for that examination.**

Rest breaks should normally be no more than 10 minutes per hour, for a maximum of 30 minutes per examination. In a 3 hour examination this can be taken as 10 minutes per hour or two 15 minute breaks.

When a student wants to take a break they must raise their hand and inform the invigilator. The break will then be timed. During breaks candidates are not permitted to access either their question paper or answer script. The paper must be turned over and not accessed during the break.

A student can request to leave the room but must be supervised by an invigilator at all times. When a student completes their break, they must inform the invigilator. They may then return to their paper and the time taken will be added on at the end of the examination.

1. **Duties of a Scribe**

**Before the examination a scribe:** must familiarise him/herself of the full requirements of the examination

**During the examination a scribe:**

* must neither give factual help to the student nor offer any suggestions;
* must not advise the student regarding which questions to answer, when to move on, nor the order in which the questions should be answered;
* must write down the answers exactly as they are dictated by the student;
* must draw or add to maps, diagrams and graphs exactly in accordance with the candidate’s instructions;
* must ask the student to check the dictated answers;
* a scribe should find out whether the student can read the answers back unaided or needs them to be read aloud;
* the student must initial the exam script to confirm that the answers have been checked and properly represent the intended answers;
* must immediately refer any concerns during the examination to Academic Registry.

1. **Duties of a Reader**

**Before the examination a reader:** must familiarise him/herself with the full requirements of the examination.

**During the examination a reader:**

* must read accurately;
* only read the instructions listed and the questions without explanation or clarification;
* must neither give factual help to the student nor offer any suggestions;
* must not advise the student regarding which questions to answer, when to move on, nor the order in which the questions should be answered;
* instructions given on the question paper can be repeated only when the reader is specifically requested to do so by the student;
* read as often as requested, the questions and the answers already recorded;
* if asked, give information regarding time elapsed and time remaining;
* if requested, give the spelling of a word which occurs in the question paper – otherwise spellings must not be given;
* immediately refer any concerns during the examination to Academic Registry.

1. **Duties of a Prompter**

A student permitted a prompter should discuss their preferred prompt requirements with the invigilator when they enter the examination room. To keep the student focused on the paper, the prompter may:

* Tap on the table or the student’s arm to encourage them to regain concentration.
* Remind the student of how much time is left.

The prompter may not:

* Advise the student on which questions to answer.
* Tell the student in which order to do the questions

**.5 Use of a computer**

A student will be provided with either a PC or laptop. If a computer is provided, a scribe will not also be provided.

* The work should be saved to a memory stick.
* The student is responsible for ensuring that their work is saved.
* Instructions are provided to both the student and the invigilator on how to save the work.
* When saved, the Invigilator will print this and the student should check and initial this to indicate that this is the work completed during the examination.
* Internet access will be disabled.

A computer room will be shared by other students using computers, a student may wish to bring earplugs if the noise of people typing might disturb.

**Appendix 2**

# Instructions to Students at the End of an Examination

1. Hand your pink attendance slip to the invigilator if it has not already been collected.
2. Ensure that you have fully completed the information required on the front of your script and then seal the top right hand corner.
3. If you require a letter for dyslexia please submit the one enclosed in the envelope. If you do not require this letter, please hand it to the invigilator.
4. Remember, examinations are subject to anonymous marking, make sure your name is not on any extra papers in your envelope.
5. If you are using a PC or laptop please do not add your name to your work. At completion save it onto the USB stick, with your Student ID number only. Once your work has been printed out, please check and initial this before you leave the examination. Place the USB stick in the envelope with your exam script.
6. Seal the envelope. It is your responsibility to make sure all paperwork is included. As exam papers are marked anonymously your name will be removed from the front of the envelope.
7. If you are using a scribe to write your answers, you must sign/mark the blue slip and give it to the scribe/invigilator.