Guidelines for Staff on Reasonable Accommodations for Students with a Disability in UCD
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1. Introduction

Reasonable Accommodations are intended to alleviate disadvantage caused by a person’s disability. Students may require Reasonable Accommodations in both the classroom and exam setting.

These guidelines describe Classroom Accommodations which are commonly required by students with a disability in UCD.

Classroom Accommodations are based on individual need and are determined with each student when they attend for a Needs Assessment.

Students are encouraged to review their accommodations regularly as the accommodations available are continually reviewed and updated. However, it should be noted that accommodations cannot be applied retrospectively.

Please note that guidelines for Reasonable Accommodations in timed exams are explained in a separate document:

Guidelines for Students and Staff on Alternative Exam Arrangements for Students with a Disability in UCD.

2. Procedure for students who wish to register with Access & Lifelong Learning (ALL) for disability support

Students can register with ALL at any time during their course of study. However, it is recommended that students register as early as possible as some accommodations can take time to organise.

The procedure for all students who wish to register with ALL for disability support is as follows:

- Students must request a Needs Assessment with a member of ALL staff where a support plan will be agreed.

- All students must provide evidence of their disability before Reasonable Accommodations can be arranged. This may be a letter from a consultant for those with a medical condition, an educational psychologist’s report for those with a specific learning difficulty, or a report from a psychiatrist for those with mental health difficulties. GP letters cannot be accepted as evidence of a disability.

- Students sign the UCD Code of Practice for Students with a Disability which includes permission to disclose information relating to their Classroom and
Exam Accommodations to appropriate academic staff and support units.

- The student is given a Registration Certificate which outlines the accommodations they require. It is explained to the student that it is their responsibility to inform relevant lecturers/tutors of their accommodations. The student may use their Registration Certificate to communicate this information.

- Students are encouraged to review their accommodations regularly and can make an appointment to discuss their accommodations with the Disability Adviser at any time.

3. Communicating the Exam and Classroom Accommodations required by students with a disability to academic staff

All Classroom and Exam Accommodations are recorded on the student record system and made available to Module Coordinators through Infohub Class Lists.

Follow these steps to view the report:

- Login to UCD Connect
- Click on Infohub
- Click on School Class Lists

The number of students with a disability will appear in the “Students with Disability” column. Click on the digit to see the list of students with a disability and their classroom and exam accommodations.

It is recommended that this information is disseminated to all staff involved in teaching the student. We appreciate that individual departments will have their own procedures for communicating information. The information should be treated on a “need to know” basis. Thus only those staff who teach the student should receive information, rather than all staff.

It is the student’s responsibility to make lecturers/tutors aware of any reasonable accommodations they require. However, as some students are reluctant to approach academic staff, it is recommended that staff actively seek this information e.g. by contacting students individually where possible, or by encouraging students to make contact with them via email or during their office hours.

Documents supplied by students as evidence of a disability are held by ALL and are not disclosed to any third party, without the written permission of the student.

For general guidelines on how academic staff can support students with particular disabilities please refer to:

DAWN Handbook - Teaching Students with Disabilities: Guidelines for Academic
Staff

UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets - [http://www.ucd.ie/all](http://www.ucd.ie/all)

If you have a specific query on how to support a student with a disability either ask the student themselves or email disability@ucd.ie.
4. Classroom Accommodations commonly required by students with disabilities in UCD

Classroom accommodations are tailored to meet individual requirements and may include the following:

i. Disability Awareness

A number of disability awareness flags are used to alert academic staff to the nature of a student’s disability. The student will have consented that academic staff are informed of the nature of their disability.

For general guidelines on how academic staff can support students with particular disabilities please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD & Lifelong Learning (ALL) Disability Fact Sheets. If you have a specific query on how to support a student with a disability either ask the student themselves or contact ALL for advice (telephone: disability@ucd.ie).

a. Autism Awareness

The student may experience difficulties with social communication and interaction.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

For a useful insight into how Autistic Spectrum Disorders can affect students in Higher Education we recommend the following video developed by Artevelde University College Ghent:

http://www.studerenmetautisme.be/site_eng/

b. Cystic Fibrosis Awareness

Students with significant on-going illnesses, such as Cystic Fibrosis, may be absent from time-to-time due to appointments or ill health. A degree of flexibility at a local level, with regards to absences and deadlines, may be helpful to prevent the student from continually applying for extenuating circumstances.

If there is more than one student with Cystic Fibrosis in the class it may be necessary to ensure that they are placed in separate tutorial groups due to the risk of cross contamination. Similarly they may need to sit apart from each other in lectures.

If you notice that there is more than one student with Cystic Fibrosis in your class, please alert the Disability Adviser who will liaise with the students regarding appropriate arrangements.
For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Significant On-going Illness please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

For more information on Cystic Fibrosis please refer to the Cystic Fibrosis Ireland website:

https://www.cfireland.ie/

c. Diabetes Awareness

Students with significant on-going illnesses, such as Diabetes, may be absent from time-to-time due to appointments or ill health. A degree of flexibility at a local level, with regards to absences and deadlines, may be helpful to prevent the student from continually applying for extenuating circumstances.

The student may need to take breaks during lectures and tutorials.

If the student becomes unwell during your class or lecture you should inform the first aider that the student has Diabetes.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Significant On-going Illness please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

d. Epilepsy Awareness

Students with significant on-going illnesses, such as Epilepsy, may be absent from time-to-time due to appointments or ill health. A degree of flexibility at a local level, with regards to absences and deadlines, may be helpful to prevent the student from continually applying for extenuating circumstances.

If the student becomes unwell during your class or lecture you should inform the first aider that the student has Epilepsy.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Significant On-going Illness please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

e. Fatigue Awareness

The student may experience fatigue due to the effects of their disability or the effects of medication used to control a medical condition.

The student may have difficulties with concentration and completion of tasks or assignments due to exhaustion. A degree of flexibility at a local level, with regards to absences and deadlines, may be helpful to prevent the student from continually applying for extenuating circumstances.
Academic staff should be conscious that the student tires easily and may require a rest period or break during lectures and tutorials.

f. Hearing Difficulty Awareness

The effects of a hearing impairment can vary widely. Academics should consult the student who will inform them of any assistance they need.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who is Deaf or Hard of Hearing please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

g. Learning Disability Awareness

Specific Learning Difficulties refer to a number of conditions that affect a person’s ability to learn. The student will have particular difficulties with one or more of the processes required for fluent reading, writing and number work. They might include difficulties with memory, organization and co-ordination. Examples of Specific Learning Difficulties include dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia.

Academics should be sensitive of possible self-consciousness by the student about speaking or reading aloud in lectures and tutorials.

Written material should be provided using printed text rather than handwritten notes. The layout should be clear and simple and a clear font should be used such as Arial rather than a serif font such as Times Roman.

Constructive and substantive feedback on draft assignments (submitted to you in advance of the deadline) is the most useful accommodation you can provide to students with Specific Learning Difficulties, particularly in relation to the structure of the work, the order of ideas, layout and presentation.

Students are encouraged to use literacy software and to proof-read their written work prior to submission. UCD ALL has purchased a site licence for Texthelp which is available in all UCD IT Services computer labs.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Specific Learning Difficulty please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

h. Mental Health Awareness

Mental health difficulties include anxiety, obsessions, phobias, depression, eating disorders and schizophrenia.

For many students, a condition may be variable and they may experience periods of particular difficulty. This may require some understanding and flexibility.
The combined effects of medication and disturbed sleeping patterns of many people with mental health difficulties can affect a student’s ability to participate and keep up with college work. Flexibility around deadlines may be helpful.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Mental Health Difficulty please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

i. **Migraine Awareness**

The student may experience severe migraines.

If the student becomes unwell during your class or lecture you should inform the first aider that the student experiences severe migraines.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Significant Ongoing Illness please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

j. **Mobility Difficulty Awareness**

The student may experience difficulty with mobility due to a disability, most often a physical or neurological condition. This may mean that the student uses a mobility aid such as a cane or frame. Ease of access/movement should be considered when planning any activities for classes or trips outside of the classroom/lecture theatre.

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Visual Impairment please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

k. **Visual Impairment Awareness**

The effects of a visual impairment can vary widely. Academics should consult the student who will inform them of any assistance they need.

These students may also require materials in Alternative Format (please see accommodation xvi below).

For general guidelines on how you can support a student who has a Visual Impairment please refer to the DAWN Handbook and UCD ALL Disability Fact Sheets.

l. **Speech & Language Difficulty Awareness**

The student has a diagnosed speech and language difficulty.

Academic staff should be aware that the student may find it difficult to participate orally in class and should discuss this with the student.

Oral presentations and/or assessments should be discussed with the student well in advance.
For advice on assisting the student in class participation or oral presentations contact the ALL Disability Adviser on 01 716 7179 or email julie.tonge@ucd.ie

ii. Provide Lecture Notes

Lecture notes must be provided to the student, ideally in advance of the class, if not already available on Blackboard.

This accommodation is recommended for students who have a substantial difficulty in taking notes in class as a direct result of their disability.

The notes may include abbreviated lecture notes and PowerPoint slides. Handouts should also be provided in advance.

Notes should be provided in electronic format where possible to allow the student to use Assistive Technology, such as text-to-speech software or magnification, if required.

All course materials provided are for the student’s own personal use and should not be shared.

iii. Use of Recording Device (Livescribe, Digital Dictaphone Recorder, Audionote)

Permission to record lectures is a reasonable accommodation which enables some students with a disability to get the most from lectures, which might otherwise be inaccessible to them.

Reasons why a student may require the use of a recording device include:
- when handwriting is painful or causes discomfort due to a chronic medical condition or physical disability;
- when a student with a Specific Learning Disability, such as Dyslexia, is unable to listen and write at the same time.

Students who require information in an audio-format should be permitted to record lectures, unless there are justifiable reasons why this might not be possible in an individual situation.

All students receiving recording devices from ALL agree that the recording will be used exclusively for the purposes of private study and will not be disseminated or shared with any third party under any circumstances.

If it is not possible for a student to record a particular class, the student should be informed of this well in advance so an alternative method can be arranged to ensure that the student has full access to the lecture content. An alternative method should be discussed by the lecturer, student and the Disability Adviser. All parties should be clear on what provisions are being made well in advance of the class itself.
iv. Extended Deadlines when Agreed by Department

ALL encourages all students to submit their work on time. Extended deadlines are recommended as an accommodation for students who may find it difficult to submit assignments on time, due to the impact of their disability.

Extended deadlines are only approved in exceptional circumstances and this is not an accommodation which is usually allocated to students at their initial Needs Assessment.

Students are informed by ALL that they need to contact the member of staff concerned for any extensions prior to the existing deadline for the work.

Students are aware that they are not in receipt of a blanket extension for the academic year and that this is an accommodation not to be abused.

ALL recommends a maximum extension of 5 working days. However, the length of the extension will depend on the individual student’s circumstances and this may be extended in exceptional circumstances. On occasion, it may not be possible to provide students with an extension e.g. work must be submitted before the exam board meeting. However, where possible, staff and students should agree a suitable submission date.

After the agreed submission date the piece of work should be treated as overdue in accordance with the department’s procedures.

v. Use of Notetaker

This accommodation is recommended for students who have a substantial difficulty in taking notes in class on account of their disability e.g. if the student is hard of hearing or has a physical disability which affects their handwriting. Note-taking is only provided in exceptional circumstances and when the student is unable to use Assistive Technology.

Some students may choose not to sit beside their note-taker in class and it may not be apparent who the note-taker is.

All note-takers are encouraged to make themselves known to the lecturer.

The role of the note-taker is to take notes only. They should not participate in class discussions or interact with other students. A typed copy of the notes is sent to the student by email after the class.

Note-takers should not attend a class if the student is not there. However, in exceptional circumstances, note-takers have been arranged to take notes for students who are sick and cannot attend, for reasons related to their disability. Note-takers are asked to report to ALL if a student habitually fails to attend classes.
vi. **Extra Academic Tuition**

Extra academic tuition is occasionally provided to undergraduate students who have missed part of their course due to absence.

Extra academic tuition is funded by ALL and is provided by tutors (often postgraduate students) that have been recommended by the appropriate school.

Extra tuition is intended to address a particular difficulty or aspect of the course. ALL does not provide grinds or tuition aimed purely at enhancing grades. Extra tuition will only be provided after the student has discussed their difficulties with the relevant academic and when a suitable tutor is available.

vii. **Use of Laptop**

Academic staff should allow the student to use a computer to take notes or use assistive software during the class.

This accommodation is often recommended for students who have a substantial difficulty in taking notes due to their disability.

viii. **Proofreading software**

The student has been provided with software to assist with proofreading of their continuous assessment submissions. In addition, students have been made aware that literacy software (Texthelp) is available on all university networked computers.

The student may use a proofreading tool (Grammarly) to analyze their essays and identify grammar errors. Grammarly is provided to students by ALL.

For more information on Assistive Technology (AT) used by students in UCD please see our AT webpage:

http://www.ucdat.wordpress.com

OR:

Contact our AT Officer, Pauric Holleran, on 01 716 7671 or email pauric.holleran@ucd.ie

ix. **Wheelchair Access**

ALL liaises with Buildings and Services to ensure that lectures are scheduled in an accessible venue when there is a wheelchair user registered to take the module.

Academic staff should ensure that all other aspects of the module take place in an accessible location.

Details of field trips should be provided well in advance to allow the student to make
appropriate travel arrangements. Staff must consider the accessibility of the field trip location.

x. Transport

ALL allocates funding for college-related transport costs for students who have physical or mobility difficulties or who have a visual impairment.

Funding for transport is only allocated when ALL is satisfied that the need to avail of alternative transport arrangements, and incur additional expenses in order for the student to participate equitably, is supported by the diagnosis in the assessment of disability.

Details of field trips should be provided well in advance to allow the student to make appropriate travel arrangements. Staff must consider the accessibility of the field trip location.

xi. Use of Personal Assistant

This accommodation indicates that the student may be accompanied to classes by a Personal Assistant (PA).

The PA is there to assist the student and should not contribute to the class unless they are assisting the student to make their contribution.

The PA may take notes for the student and assist them in travelling between classes.

xii. Irish Sign Language (ISL)

This accommodation indicates that the student is deaf or hard of hearing and a sign language interpreter may accompany them to lectures and/or tutorials.

Please ensure that the interpreter receives a copy of any handouts or materials to be used.

Often the interpreter and the student will encounter new words during a lecture that have no corresponding sign in ISL. The interpreter must either finger spell the word or agree a new sign with the student, which can interrupt the flow of the lecture. It is helpful to provide a list of new technical terms so that new signs can be agreed in advance of lectures.

During lectures the interpreter will sit at the top of the class and the student will be seated in the front row.

Avoid walking between the interpreter and the student.

When communicating speak and look directly at the deaf person. The interpreter will convey the message in the first person and will communicate the meaning and content of what you are saying.
The interpreter may contribute to the class on the student’s behalf or may seek clarification on a particular point in order to explain it more clearly to the student.

ISL interpreters are provided by ALL.

xiii. Live Captioning

This accommodation indicates that the student is deaf or hard of hearing and will be provided with live captioning. This captioning service is online so the student requires a good internet connection for this to work effectively.

The captioner will type the content of the lecture in real time and the student will follow the lecture on their own computer screen. The student is provided with a transcript of the lecture.

Live Captioning is provided by ALL.

xiv. Use of Radio Aid

This accommodation indicates that the student is deaf or hard of hearing and requires the use of a radio aid in lectures and tutorials.

ALL provides the student with the radio aid and training in how to use it.

Most radio aids require the lecturer to wear a clip on microphone. The student will usually wear the receiver around their neck. The student will ask the lecturer to use the microphone at the beginning of the class.

xv. Alternative Format for Books

This accommodation is provided to students who are blind or vision impaired and who are unable to use printed materials.

Academics can assist in assuring that blind or visually impaired students receive their reading material in a timely manner by providing the student with details of the required reading as early as possible.

Academics should ensure that handouts are available in an electronic format and that readings provided on Blackboard or by other means are accessible.

If you need advice on how to make your documents accessible, or need material to be converted to an accessible format, contact ALL - email disability@ucd.ie.

xvi. No Ongoing Supports

It has been decided at the student’s Needs Assessment that no classroom accommodations are required at present.

Students who are registered with ALL are advised to review their accommodations regularly and may discuss their accommodations with the Disability Adviser at any
xvii. Other

Additional accommodations which are not covered here will be considered by the Disability Adviser on a case-by-case basis.