



University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER

# **Alternative and Modified Assessment Policy and Procedure for Disabled Students**

**Version Number 1.0**

**Effective from 13 November 2024**

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This Policy outlines requirements for an alternative and modified assessment strategy. The associated Procedure outlines the process for applying for alternative and modified assessments for disabled students.
- 1.2 The Policy and Procedure apply to all disabled students registered on University of Salford taught programmes, including students studying at partner institutions.

## 2. Definitions

- 2.1 **Inclusive assessment** focuses on the way in which assessment design can proactively minimise the likelihood of students being excluded, overlooked and/or disadvantaged through the ways in which they are assessed across their studies.
- 2.2 In the context of an assessment, a **reasonable adjustment** is a change to an assessment to ensure that a student has a fair and equitable opportunity to complete an assessment without disadvantage. Reasonable adjustments may include modified or alternative assessments.
- 2.3 A **modified assessment** is where a student undertakes the same assessment as their peers, but there is a modification to the assessment for disability related reasons. For example, additional time in an examination, or an individual room for a student to take an examination.
- 2.4 An **alternative assessment** is where a student, for disability related reasons, is unable to engage in the same assessment as their peers, so an alternative assessment is needed. For example, where a student is unable to engage in a presentation, even with modifications, it may be appropriate to permit the student to complete a piece of written coursework instead.

## 3. Policy

- 3.1 The following principles must inform assessment strategies:
  - All assessments must be inclusive by design, where possible.
  - Choice within the assessment strategy should be offered to all students, where possible, to limit ad-hoc changes to assessment strategies for disabled students.

- An appropriate modified assessment, or an appropriate alternative to the standard assessment, should be provided for students who are unable to undertake the standard assessment due a disability or long-term health condition to ensure that all students are able to engage with the assessment task fully.
- Assessments should also follow the inclusivity principles stated within the Assessment and Feedback Policy.
- The alternative or modified assessment must meet and assess equivalent learning outcomes as the original assessment.
- The alternative or modified assessment should be of an equivalent level and standard to the original assessment.
- The External Examiner should be involved in the approval of the alternative assessment or modified task.
- If the alternative or modified assessment is provided as a reasonable adjustment for a student with a disability, then it must be appropriate for that student's needs.
- Alternative or modified arrangements must not give a student an unfair advantage over other students or disadvantage them due to their disability or health condition.

3.2 There are very few circumstances when it would not be possible to offer an alternative or modified assessment. Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) accredited or regulated programmes may have prescribed assessment types. In these cases, the Programme Leader should contact the PSRB to establish whether an alternative is permitted. If an alternative is not permitted, then no further action can be taken in relation to a change to the assessment. Programme teams should, however, explore alternative support and modifications to enable the student to complete the original assessment if an alternative assessment is not permitted.

3.3 Where it is not possible to design inclusive assessments (e.g. due to requirements put in place by a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRBs), a rationale must be included on the module specification and approved in line with the Programme Validation Policy.

3.4 It is recognised that it is not possible to draw up a set of arrangements that are appropriate for every student as this will depend on individual circumstances. Appendix A offers examples of modified and alternative assessments.

#### **4. Procedure**

4.1 Students who disclose a disability or long-term health condition to the University (or their partner institution) will be invited to discuss their

needs with the Disability Inclusion Service (or equivalent at a partner institution). Where appropriate, a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) (or equivalent) will be created for the student.

- 4.2 A student must have a Reasonable Adjustment Plan (RAP) in place to enable consideration to be given to modified or alternative assessments. RAPs can be set up at any stage of study by the Disability Inclusion Service and can be updated or reviewed as needed.
- 4.3 A student can submit an application to request a modified or alternative assessment using the form which can be found here <https://www.salford.ac.uk/governance-and-management/academic-handbook> under Part C: Assessment. Strict deadlines apply to requests for an alternative or modified assessment. This is to enable the alternative assessment or modified assessment to be put in place prior to the assessment date/deadline. **Applications must be received no later than two weeks after the start of the relevant module.**
- 4.4 The Disability Inclusion Service will undertake an initial review of each application to:
  - Determine whether the request could be met within a RAP;
  - Seek further information or clarity from the student where needed;
  - Decide if the request can continue along the alternative assessment process.
- 4.5 When sufficient information is available, the Disability Inclusion Service will liaise with the student's Module Leader(s)/Programme Leader to discuss the application with final sign off by the Associate Dean (Academic).
- 4.6 It is the responsibility of the student's School to inform the student whether or not a modified or alternative assessment has been approved by completing the relevant section on the application form. This should be sent to the student using their University of Salford email account (copied to [disability@salford.ac.uk](mailto:disability@salford.ac.uk)) no later than 10 working days after receipt request of the request, or sooner where possible. Where it has not been possible to approve a request, a rationale should be provided on the application form.
- 4.7 If the request is rejected, a student may wish to discuss the outcome with their Programme Leader. If, after discussion, a student disagrees with the outcome of their request, the route of escalation is through the Student Complaints Procedure. Timescales associated with the

Student Complaints Procedure apply. Independent advice and guidance are available from the [Students' Union Advice Centre](#).

## Appendix A Examples of Modified and Alternative Assessments

Barrier	Rationale for Approval	Examples of Assessment Modifications	Examples of Alternative Assessments
Recall	<p>Where the ability to recall specific information due to a disability, particularly where time constraint increases stress and the ability to recall.</p> <p>Where the effect of medication impacts upon recall.</p>	<p>Glossary of terms to be provided for the exam</p> <p>Crib sheets to be taken into the exam under agreed constraints</p> <p>Open book exam</p>	<p>An assessment strategy which does not rely on recall, for example an assignment or presentation.</p>
Duration of exam	<p>Where the duration of the exam will have a detrimental impact on the student due to concentration/fatigue levels, excessive pain or general health if expected to undertake an exam of a significant length.</p> <p>Consideration in incidences where the nominal ten minutes per hour rest breaks would not be sufficient adjustment. Or where the rest breaks and extra time extend the overall duration of the exam, prolonging the impact that the access arrangements are designed to mitigate against.</p>	<p>Exam split into two exams of shorter duration to be undertaken within the same day, with an extended rest break (with supervision) between the two papers.</p> <p>Exam paper split into two exams of shorter duration which may be undertaken on different dates.</p> <p>To ensure academic integrity a second paper will be required.</p>	<p>An assessment strategy which permits the student to demonstrate their competence with no time constraints and which allows rest breaks and the environment to be controlled by the student for example by delivery of a presentation or take away exam paper.</p>

Barrier	Rationale for Approval	Examples of Assessment Modifications	Examples of Alternative Assessments
Exam Environment and Conditions	Where there are levels of stress which are outside of the normal expected levels which students sitting an exam may experience, which may be detrimental to the student's health, which cannot be reduced to acceptable levels with the implementation of a separate room and/or rest breaks.	Paper completed away from exam venue as a takeaway paper	An assessment strategy which does not rely on an exam environment or which does not impose exam conditions for example an assignment, presentation, seen paper, online test or exam paper completed outside of exam room conditions.
Presentation delivered in front of an audience	The student experiences levels of anxiety/stress <b>prior to or potentially during a presentation</b> which are outside of the normal expected levels which students delivering a presentation may experience and which may therefore have a detrimental impact upon their health.	Permit student to submit a pre-recorded presentation.	An alternative assessment may only be considered where the actual delivery of a presentation is not a PSRB requirement/core competence /ILO.
Group work	Where individual characteristics make it extremely difficult (outside of the norm) when enforced to work with peers in a collaborative manner without increasing the level of anxiety to such an impact it may become detrimental to the student's wellbeing.	After the initial negotiation of topics and assignments of tasks for the student to conduct their own individual aspect of research and to deliver their own section of the presentation without the requirements to collaborate with peers with regards content, timeframes and final presentation.	Alternative assessment may only be considered where group work and collaboration is not a PSRB requirement/core competence/ILO.

Barrier	Rationale for Approval	Examples of Assessment Modifications	Examples of Alternative Assessments
Timed Practical Assessment	Where individuals can demonstrate their competence but would be unable to demonstrate the competence under time constraints.	<p>Additional time for demonstration of skills or rest breaks between stations.</p> <p>Allow reading time prior to the assessment under quarantine conditions of brief/questions.</p>	Allow student to instruct a third party to undertake the demonstrate of the skills (where not restricted under PSRB requirements/core competences/ILOs. For example, giving an instruction to a third party to carry out a particular procedure or task.



<b>Document Control Information</b>			
<b>Revision History incl. Authorisation: (most recent first)</b>			
<b>Author</b>	<b>Summary of changes</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Authorised &amp; Date</b>
Annette Cooke	<i>Development of Policy</i>	V1.0	Quality and Standards Committee 13 Nov 2024
<b>Policy Management and Responsibilities:</b>			
Owner:	This Policy is issued by the Quality Management Office supported by the who has the authority to issue and communicate policy on alternative and modified assessments, and has delegated day to day management and communication of the policy to the Disability Inclusion Office.		
Others with responsibilities (please specify):	All subjects of the Policy will be responsible for engaging with and adhering to this policy.		
<b>Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:</b>			
Equality Analysis (E&D, HR) <u><a href="#">Equality Assessment form</a></u>	1. EIA approved on 29 October 2024, EIA-2024-49		
Legal implications (LPG)	2. N/A		
Information Governance (LPG)	3. N/A		
Student facing procedures (QMO)	4. Policy developed by QMO and DIS		
UKVI Compliance (Student Admin)	5. N/A		
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Staff Trades Unions via HR Students via USSU Relevant external bodies (specify)	1. N/A		
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<b>The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.</b>			