

Guidance for Disabled Students

Introduction

UGM Manchester is fully committed to the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion. This document outlines our approach to supporting disabled students, including those with diagnosed mental health conditions.

We are committed to taking proactive steps to eliminate discrimination within our policies, practices, and procedures by fostering an inclusive environment that promotes positive wellbeing, mental health, and equal opportunities for all students.

UGM Manchester strives to create a supportive and welcoming culture in which students feel comfortable disclosing disabilities, long-term health conditions, and mental health concerns. We recognise and respect every individual's right to privacy and will handle all information relating to a student's disability or long-term health condition with appropriate confidentiality and sensitivity, in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and related policies.

Definitions

Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on an individual's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This may include, but is not limited to, individuals who:

- Are D/deaf or have a hearing impairment;
- Are blind or have a visual impairment;
- Have a physical disability and/or mobility difficulties;
- Have a specific learning difficulty, such as dyslexia or dyspraxia;
- Have a neurodevelopmental condition, such as ADHD or Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC);
- Have a neurological condition, such as Multiple Sclerosis, epilepsy, Tourette syndrome, or a speech impairment;
- Have a long-term mental health condition, such as depression, an eating disorder, or schizophrenia;
- Have a long-term medical condition, such as chronic fatigue syndrome, asthma, diabetes, cancer, or HIV;
- Have a developmental condition affecting motor, cognitive, social, emotional, speech, or language skills, such as cerebral palsy or spina bifida; or

- Have multiple impairments, including a combination of any of the conditions listed above.

It is important to note that:

- Terminal illnesses are covered by this definition from the point of diagnosis, regardless of prognosis or life expectancy;
- Progressive conditions are protected from the point of diagnosis, irrespective of whether symptoms are currently present; and
- Conditions that are intermittent, fluctuating, or episodic remain protected under the Equality Act, even during periods of remission.

For the purposes of this policy, long-term means that a condition has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least 12 months, or for the remainder of an individual's life.

Reasonable Adjustments

A **reasonable adjustment** is a measure implemented by UGM Manchester to remove or reduce disadvantages experienced by disabled students and to enable equitable access to learning, assessment, services, and the wider student experience. In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, UGM Manchester has a duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to:

- Provisions, criteria, or practices, including teaching methods, assessment approaches, and standard procedures;
- Physical features, such as access to teaching spaces, laboratories, and libraries;
- Auxiliary aids and services, including accessible formats, hearing loop systems, and professional support workers.

A reasonable adjustment is one that effectively removes or minimises a substantial disadvantage experienced by a disabled student. This may include reducing:

- The additional time and effort required to participate;
- Any inconvenience, indignity, or discomfort experienced; and
- Loss of opportunity or barriers to academic progress.

The reasonableness of an adjustment is determined by legal principles rather than individual preference. Key considerations include:

- Whether the adjustment is effective in achieving its intended purpose; and
- Whether it is practical and feasible to implement.

When assessing reasonableness, UGM Manchester may also consider factors such as health and safety requirements, the impact on other students, available resources, and overall institutional costs. However, these considerations will not normally prevent the implementation of reasonable adjustments in assessment settings.

Declaring a Disability

Applicants are encouraged to disclose a disability, long-term health condition, or mental health condition at the earliest opportunity, ideally during the application process. Disclosures may also be made at enrolment or at any stage during a student's studies. Early disclosure enables UGM Manchester to consider and implement appropriate reasonable adjustments in a timely manner, helping to ensure that students can access their studies and wider university experience on an equitable basis.

UGM Manchester welcomes enquiries and applications from prospective students with disabilities, long-term health conditions, and mental health conditions. Admissions decisions are based solely on academic merit and suitability for the chosen programme of study. No applicant will be disadvantaged or treated less favourably on the grounds of disability.

Students who are enrolled at UGM Manchester may disclose a disability, update existing information, or notify UGM Manchester of a newly diagnosed condition at any point during their studies. Disclosures and updates should be made through the Self-Assessment Forms (SAF) available from the Admissions team, Disability and Wellbeing team or on the VLE. Students can seek advice by contacting the Disability and Wellbeing team Service, which will provide advice, guidance, and support regarding the assessment and implementation of reasonable adjustments. Students can seek advice and support by contacting the Disability and Wellbeing Service, which provides guidance on disability-related support, the assessment of needs, and the implementation of reasonable adjustments.

UGM Manchester: disabilityandinclusion@manchester.ugm.ac.uk

Process for the Consideration of Reasonable Adjustments

Following the disclosure of a disability, long-term health condition, or mental health condition, the Disability and Wellbeing team will undertake an assessment of the student's support needs. As part of this process, students may be asked to provide relevant evidence, such as medical documentation, diagnostic reports, or other appropriate supporting information. Additional information may also be considered to inform the assessment and determination of reasonable adjustments. This may include, where relevant, Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) Needs Assessment reports,

professional recommendations, and information obtained through consultation with the student. The assessment process is intended to ensure that reasonable adjustments are tailored to the individual needs of the student and are effective in supporting their engagement, participation, and academic success.

Where the Disability and Wellbeing Service identifies that a student may require enhanced or complex support arrangements, these requirements will be reviewed in consultation with the student. Where appropriate, relevant academic staff and other professional services may contribute to discussions to ensure that reasonable adjustments are appropriate, practicable, and effectively implemented.

All of the information obtained through this process will be used to draft a Summary of Reasonable Adjustments, the purpose of which is to inform wider staff within UGM Manchester, where consent has been given, on what reasonable adjustments should be made. The student will be given a copy and afforded a period of time to review this before it is disseminated. Responsibility for implementation of any reasonable adjustments lies with teaching and learning related staff.

Students who are in receipt of a Summary of Reasonable Adjustments are required to inform the Disability and Wellbeing team if they are not satisfied with how these adjustments are being implemented, they can do this through making an appointment with the Wellbeing Advisor or the Director of Studies. These teams will endeavour to work with the relevant academic department to address any concerns and support the effective implementation of agreed adjustments.

Roles and Responsibilities of Students

Students are responsible for communicating their support needs and engaging with relevant services to enable appropriate support and reasonable adjustments to be considered and implemented.

Students are encouraged to take reasonable steps to manage their health and wellbeing, including accessing appropriate medical, therapeutic, or support services where required.

Students have the right to disclose a disability and to request that information relating to their disability is treated confidentially. However, where consent to share information is withheld, UGM Manchester may be limited in its ability to implement effective reasonable adjustments.

Students are responsible for notifying the Disability and Wellbeing Team if their reasonable adjustments or examination arrangements are not meeting their needs, and for requesting a review where appropriate.

Students are expected to engage with the Disability and Wellbeing Team, academic staff, and other relevant support services in a timely and constructive manner. UGM Manchester cannot support students who don't engage, are discharged because of non-engagement or who have sporadic engagement.

Students must provide appropriate evidence where required to enable the assessment and implementation of reasonable adjustments. Students experiencing difficulties obtaining evidence should seek advice from the Disability and Wellbeing Team.

All students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that respects the rights, safety, and wellbeing of others. Behaviour that is disruptive, offensive, or adversely affects fellow students or staff may be addressed through disciplinary procedures.

Health, Wellbeing and Supported Study

UGM Manchester recognises the importance of health and wellbeing in supporting academic success and a positive student experience. We are committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that enables all students to engage fully in their studies and achieve their potential.

The Health, Wellbeing and Supported Study Plans may be implemented where a student's health or wellbeing is affecting their ability to engage with or progress on their programme of study. The primary aim of the procedure is to support students to continue their studies wherever possible through appropriate interventions and support.

Mitigating Circumstances

Disabled students remain entitled to submit a claim for mitigating circumstances where their disability, health condition, or related circumstances have adversely affected their academic performance or ability to complete an assessment, even where reasonable adjustments are in place.

Students who have not previously disclosed a disability or long-term health condition may be required to provide appropriate supporting evidence from a suitably qualified healthcare professional as part of the mitigating circumstances process.

Interruption of Study



UGM Manchester will consider requests for an interruption of studies on health or disability-related grounds in a supportive and flexible manner. A temporary break from study may provide an opportunity for recovery and should be discussed with the student's academic department and relevant support services.

UGM Manchester may request appropriate medical or professional evidence to support a request for an interruption of studies and, where necessary, before a student returns to their programme. This is to ensure that appropriate support can be considered and that the student is able to engage successfully with the academic requirements of their course. Students considering an interruption of studies are encouraged to seek advice on the potential academic, financial, and funding implications before making a decision.

Financial support for disabled students

Details of financial support from UGM Manchester available to disabled students can be found on our website or by emailing;

UGM Manchester: finance@manchester.ugm.ac.uk