

# Reasonable Adjustment Policy

2024/2025

## Table of Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Aims of the Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Responsibilities and roles for implementing a reasonable adjustment request</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4. How to request a student reasonable adjustment</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5. Possible outcomes following a student reasonable adjustment request</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>6. Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7. Data Protection</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8. Reasonable adjustment appeals</b>	<b>14</b>

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Voice Study Centre is committed to providing an inclusive educational learning environment for all students.
- 1.2 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy provides a framework for the effective implementation of a reasonable adjustment and to ensure the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010 are met.
- 1.3 A person is considered *disabled* under section 6 of The Equality Act 2010 if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial and long-term adverse effect' on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities, for example a specific learning difficulty, mental ill health, a medical condition or other impairment that adversely affects their learning or ability otherwise to engage in University-related activities.
- 1.4 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy is in fulfilment of our very specific duty to make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities under sections 20 and 91 of the Equality Act.

## 2. Aims of the Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy

- 2.1 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy aims to:
  - inform students about how to access support for individual support needs and how to request a reasonable adjustment;
  - provide students with opportunities to participate in, positively engage with, and succeed in all aspects of their programme of study and research, benefit from being a member of the Voice Study Centre community and obtain the award for which they are registered;
  - support members of the Voice Study Centre staff to carry out their duties effectively and comply with legislation;
  - outline the steps for the effective implementation of reasonable adjustments; and
  - inform students about how to appeal a decision made in relation to a reasonable adjustment.
- 2.2 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy applies to all students **registered** on the MA Voice Pedagogy
- 2.3 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy has a particular relevance to students with:
  - disabilities;
  - physical and sensory impairments;
  - mental health conditions;

- specific learning differences;
- autism;
- long term medical conditions (defined as lasting for, or likely to last, at least 12 months or for the life span of person affected); and/or
- who are pregnant.

- 2.4 If a student has been in previous receipt of any reasonable adjustments at any Higher Education (HE) or Further Education (FE) provider, school, college or other previous educational institution, the student is required to declare their disability to the University as reasonable adjustments implemented from a previous institution are not automatically transferred to the Voice Study Centre. The Voice Study Centre will need to assess what adjustments may be reasonable in the context of the institution. Students are therefore required to inform the Voice Study Centre of their individual support need or disability for the implementation and recommendation of any individual reasonable adjustments.
- 2.5 If a student is waiting for a formal diagnosis or diagnostic assessment, short term reasonable adjustments may be implemented for a maximum of two terms on the basis of the student providing supporting evidence, for example a JCQ8 or equivalent from a previous school or college or evidence of previous reasonable adjustments from another HE or FE provider.
- 2.6 We are able to screen you for specific learning needs such as Autism Spectrum Condition, ADHD, Dyslexia and Dyscalculia and Dyspraxia via our do it profiler. We will make reasonable adjustments on this basis. You may wish to get a formal diagnosis to access other treatment services external to the Voice Study Centre.
- 2.7 Any reasonable adjustment implemented by the Voice Study Centre must still result in the student meeting, and fully engaging with, the learning outcomes of the programme of study and all competency standards. A competency standard is an 'academic medical or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether a person has a particular level of ability'. A competency standard must apply equally to all students. Reasonable adjustments can modify how competency standards are assessed but must not affect the validity of the assessment outcome.
- 2.8 If a student is experiencing a temporary medical condition, which may not therefore amount to a disability or long-term individual support need, it may be more appropriate to consider an alternative process of support. For example, PGT students may be able to submit a [Late Submission](#) or [Extenuating Circumstance](#) claim. Further advice and guidance can be sought from the student support team.
- 2.9 If a student has been allocated a reasonable adjustment, the adjustment will be implemented for the duration of their programme of study unless the student requests to remove the

adjustment. The student is **not required** to be reassessed each academic year of study **unless** there is a change in their condition where the Voice Study Centre would then encourage the student to inform the student support team.

2.10 If a student has been allocated reasonable adjustments and progresses to a new course from their previous programme of study (for example, progressing from a postgraduate certificate to an MA), the Voice Study Centre recognises that different reasonable adjustments may need to be considered to remove barriers that may arise from their new course. Existing reasonable adjustments will continue for two terms; however, such students are required to contact the student support team to ensure that their reasonable adjustments are appropriate for the new programme of study. Students who have previously studied with the Voice Study Centre will be contacted by the student support team to discuss their individual support needs.

2.11 The Voice Study Centre is not able to provide social or personal care support.

### **3. Responsibilities and roles for implementing reasonable adjustment request**

3.1 The Voice Study Centre:

- has a legal obligation to implement reasonable adjustments to support students to access their learning and provide opportunities to reach their full academic potential;
- has a requirement to maintain academic and other core competency standards including those set by external professional bodies;
- as far as is possible, and at the earliest opportunity, will take steps to identify any likely barriers for students with individual support needs and aim to remove them at the earliest practicable opportunity;
- will review reasonable adjustment requests on a case-by-case basis and will:
  - consider how effective a reasonable adjustment would be in overcoming a disadvantage;
  - review the efficacy and/or practicability of the proposed adjustment;
  - evaluate the likely financial and other costs incurred through the implementation of the reasonable adjustment; and
  - assess the extent of any unreasonable disruption that implementing a reasonable adjustment could have;
- aims to implement the reasonable adjustment as far as is reasonably practicable, and will convene a Reasonable Adjustment Panel to support consideration of complex requests.

- has an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments and make advances to remove barriers for disabled students (See: [section 4.1](#));
- will take steps to remove, alter or provide means of avoiding physical barrier/s that place disabled students at a substantial disadvantage compared to students who are not disabled;
- where it is reasonable to do so, will provide auxiliary aids or services where, without such aids, students with individual support needs would be at a substantial disadvantage when compared to students who are not disabled;
- will consider adjustments to assessments or the provision of alternative assessments to ensure that students with support needs do not experience a substantial disadvantage in demonstrating that they have achieved the learning outcomes for their programme of study;
- is committed to meeting its statutory health and safety and fire safety responsibilities and to creating a culture that is proactive in supporting the health and safety of all its members;
- will comply with current data protection legislation including the General Data Protection regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (together UK GDPR). See: [Data Protection](#).

3.2 The roles and responsibilities for the implementation of a student reasonable adjustment are as follows:

- **The student support team** has primary responsibility for working in partnership with students and can advise on individual additional support needs and recommend appropriate reasonable adjustments. They may undertake assessments to find out the support and reasonable adjustment required to enable students to engage with their programme and wider University provision. The student support team will review any support evidence and the student's account of their needs. Where necessary, students may be allocated counselling via our counselling service provision. Support from the student support team will be available for the duration of the student's studies and whilst they are a registered student. The student support team holds the responsibility to inform the student's academic school or department on any reasonable adjustment recommendations.
- **The student support team** provides students with advice about the Voice Study Centre's specialist support services and acts as a departmental link between the student's Academic team and wider Voice Study Centre support.
- The technical team and academic team are responsible for ensuring inclusive online delivery.

- **Voice Study Centre members of staff** will not discriminate against any student and have a duty to follow this policy to support the Voice Study Centre in meeting its legal obligations. If a student discloses an individual support need or disability for the first time, the member of staff has an obligation to inform the student support team at the earliest opportunity as they are deemed to have received the information on behalf of the University and has a duty of care to report the student's disclosure.

### 3.3 The role and responsibilities of a **student** are to:

- notify and disclose any individual support need, at the earliest possible opportunity, to the Voice Study Centre. Please see the student hub for clear directions on how to contact the student support team.
- understand that a disclosure of an individual support need or disability to any member of staff engages the Voice Study Centre's anticipatory duty and information will be shared with the student support team;
- provide evidence to support the reasonable adjustment request and to complete the [Confidentiality Agreement](#) with the Voice Study Centre.
- recognise that if their individual support needs change at any time whilst being a registered student at the Voice Study Centre, that they are encouraged to contact the student support team at the earliest opportunity for further support and guidance;
- engage positively with the student support team and maintain good communication;
- if eligible, apply for [Disabled Students' Allowance](#) (DSA);
- liaise with their Local Authority and/or adult social services department, should they have a support requirement for personal care, to investigate how this support will be transferred to assist them at the Voice Study Centre;
- follow the steps outlined in this policy and support the Voice Study Centre in meeting its legal obligations;
- understand that submitting a false claim or false documentation is a serious matter and would be regarded as an attempt to gain unfair advantage and that this would be viewed as an Academic Offence under the [Academic Offences Procedures](#);
- recognise that the Voice Study Centre respects the student's right to choose not to inform the University about their individual support needs when they begin their studies, but understand that such non-disclosure may prevent the provision of reasonable adjustments and may restrict the Voice Study Centre in providing the student with the full range of support available.

## 4. How to request a student reasonable adjustment

- 4.1 A student's reasonable adjustments can only be implemented once the Voice Study Centre has knowledge of the student's individual support need; this engages the Voice Study Centre's anticipatory duty. This anticipatory duty can arise from a student's disclosure of their disability or where there is an individual circumstance with obvious physical indications that a student experiences a disability. For hidden disabilities, it may be difficult for the Voice Study Centre to gain knowledge of the disability without the student engaging with the process of support to request a reasonable adjustment
- 4.2 **PGT** applicants who have disclosed an individual support need or a disability during the [Admissions Process](#), and who have accepted an offer to study at the Voice Study Centre, will be contacted by the student support team at the earliest opportunity and will be asked to provide information and supporting evidence to ensure any reasonable adjustments that may be agreed can be in place as soon as reasonably possible.
- 4.3 Students can also email [Shanie@voicestudycentre.com](mailto:Shanie@voicestudycentre.com) at any time to disclose their individual support. the student support team will contact the student at the earliest opportunity.
- 4.4 If a student discloses their individual support need to any member of Voice Study Centre staff, the staff member is then deemed to have received the information on behalf of the Voice Study Centre and has a duty of care and subsequent responsibility to report the student's sharing of an individual support need or disability to the student support team as soon as possible. The member of staff can contact the student support team for further support and guidance.
- 4.5 If a student requests that their information or disclosure should remain confidential, this will be recognised and implemented. The student will be informed by the student support team that, while this does not remove the Voice Study Centre's duty to provide reasonable adjustments, it may restrict the adjustments that can be implemented. Students are encouraged to contact the student support team to request a reasonable adjustment and are encouraged to attend an appointment with the team who will respond to any requests by email.
- 4.6 A student reasonable adjustment cannot be implemented without supporting evidence. Students are required to provide supporting evidence to enable the student support team to make appropriate reasonable adjustment recommendation/s, and if applicable, to enable the Voice Study Centre to take steps to put adjustments in place as soon as reasonably possible.
- 4.7 If a student is awaiting a formal diagnostic assessment, the Voice Study Centre may be able to put in place short term measures based on information contained in a JCQ8 or and other substantial supporting evidence.
- 4.8 Supportive evidence and other evidence considered to be appropriate by the Voice Study Centre



is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The following documents below are examples of evidence that may be submitted in support of any reasonable adjustment request and are required to be dated within the last three years, **unless** the disability is lifelong. Students may also submit other information which they feel would assist the student support team with their reasonable adjustment request:

- medical evidence - a letter provided by a medically qualified doctor, or another registered medical practitioner registered with the UK General Medical Council, stating a clear diagnosis, symptoms including the impact of the student's disability on their ability to study
- Disabled Student's Allowance (DSA) assessment report
- educational or Clinical Psychologist report
- diagnostic evidence - a letter provided by a specialist teacher with a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) assessment qualification and certification
- JCQ8 for interim reasonable adjustments (carried out by a qualified professional (e.g. a school SENCo/exams access assessor) including the student's College or School name)
- Doitprofiler diagnostic assessment

4.9 It is the student's responsibility to provide the Voice Study Centre with all supporting evidence, written in English. If any document is presented in any language other than English, then official English translations produced by an accredited translator will be required and will need to be supported by a statement of truth.

4.10 If a student is eligible for external funding they are encouraged to apply for this, for example [Disabled Students' Allowance](#) (DSA). The student support team can offer guidance for this process and students are encouraged to engage with the support available.

## 5. Possible outcomes following a student reasonable adjustment request

- 5.1 Following a reasonable adjustment request, the student support team will review the student's submitted supporting evidence, which will be considered on a case by case basis.
- 5.2 Owing to the individual nature of reasonable adjustments, if the student's supporting evidence is **not accepted**, the student support team will provide the student with the reasons and will liaise directly with the student to ask for further supporting information.
- 5.3 If the reasonable adjustment request is complex, then a Reasonable Adjustment Panel may be convened to collaborate with stakeholders to review the circumstances of the case.
- 5.4 If the student's supporting evidence is **accepted** and the reasonable adjustment request can be

supported, the student will be allocated an advisor from the student support team. The advisor will contact the student and confirm that reasonable adjustments can be implemented, will consider whether the standardised Voice Study Centre adjustments (see: [Section 5.6](#)) will meet the student's requirements and needs, and consider whether any other individual adjustments are required.

5.5 The student support advisor will inform the student's Academic School or Department of any recommended reasonable adjustments and will liaise with the student if any reasonable adjustments cannot be applied (for example, where a reasonable adjustment would affect the achievement of any competency standards). It is the responsibility of the student's Academic School or Department to ensure that the reasonable adjustments are implemented. Information regarding the reasonable adjustments will be made available only to relevant members of staff in the student's Academic School or Department where this is necessary for the reasonable adjustment to be implemented.

5.6 The most common and standardised recommendations from a student reasonable adjustment application might include:

**For all students:**

- alternative assessment ([see: Section 5.7](#))
- adapted assessment ([see: Section 5.8](#))

5.7 An *alternative assessment* is where a different assessment task is created specifically for the student requiring reasonable adjustments. The alternative assessment may not be available to any other student and must enable the student to meet the same learning outcomes and be marked against the same or equivalent marking criteria. Examples might include an oral presentation (viva voce) instead of a written assignment, or an essay plus viva voce instead of an examination. Such reasonable adjustments are implemented when the standard mode of assessment would place a disabled student at a substantial disadvantage when compared to students who do not experience the disability. Requests for consideration of an alternative mode of assessment will be considered on a case by case basis. In deciding on the appropriateness of the alternative mode of assessment, the Academic School or Department will need to be guided by the competency standards for the programme of study. It may not always be possible to provide an alternative assessment where the mode of examination and the competency standards are linked. If a request is declined, the reasons will be stated with key reference to the competency standards.

5.8 An *adapted assessment* is where the assessment task remains the same for all students, but the conditions within which it is undertaken may be changed specifically for students who require

reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments may include the modification of:

- the arrangements for the examinations (known as Individual Exam Arrangements (IEAs)), through:
  - ensuring accessibility to online teaching materials and documentation
  - facilitation of the use of assistive technology;
  - use of a computer where a DSA has been granted;
  - provision of separate accommodation;
- the length of examination or assessment, through:
  - extending examination durations; and/or
  - the provision of rest breaks;
- the timing of assessment;
- sensitive marking guidance and use of a cover sheet ([see: Section 5.10](#));
- examinations material with reference to accessibility, by means of:
  - coloured paper;
  - language modification;
  - a reader;
  - assistive software;
  - an examination scribe;
  - adaptations to software; and/or
  - a combination of the above.

5.9 The Examinations Office provides students with their examination timetable and key communications about IEAs, if applicable. Any IEA will apply to all future examinations on a student's current programme of study unless the student requests to cancel this. It is not possible for a student to opt out of any reasonable adjustments for an individual examination (with the exception, as described below, of the completion of a coversheet).

5.10 **PGT** student has a registered a Specific Learning Difference (for example, dyslexia, another neurodiverse condition or autistic spectrum condition (ASC)), they will automatically be assigned a coversheet provided by the student support team. Students will not receive extra marks by using a coversheet, but it provides guidance to the assessor about the type of difficulties the student may experience in their written expression to prevent penalisation on issues with style or written expression. The assessor may continue to provide feedback on structure, spelling, and grammar of the assignment. If, for any reason, the student prefers not to have the coversheet in place then they have the option to do so.

5.11 In some cases, reasonable adjustments may already be embedded at the student's Academic School

or Department through inclusive curriculum design and Universal Design for Learning practices.

Examples may include:

- the design and delivery of teaching;
- tutorial and feedback processes;
- provision of advanced materials for lectures, such as lectures notes, copies of presentation slides or reading materials prior to the lecture;
- provision of reading lists in advance of the lecture; and/or
- consideration of late submission of coursework.

5.12 The Voice Study Centre is not obliged to offer the student their preferred reasonable adjustment if an alternative adjustment would be equally effective.

5.13 Students are able to discuss their reasonable adjustments with their named student support advisor.

## **6. Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel**

6.1 The purpose of a Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel is to consider more complex adjustments when they are required. The requirement to convene a Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel will be determined by the student support team. The Panels are convened to collaborate with stakeholders on:

- funding or costs involved to support a reasonable adjustment;
- the complexity of reasonable adjustments; and
- the number or scale of the adjustments that would make the total package reasonable.

6.2 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel will review the evidence available and the reasonable adjustment requested by the student. Where necessary, the Reasonable Adjustment Panel will request further expert advice and will seek guidance from relevant professionals. The Reasonable Adjustment Panel may refer to the student for further information, if required.

6.3 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel will support the Voice Study Centre to ensure that every necessary reasonable adjustment has been identified and will liaise with the student's allocated student support advisor.

6.4 The Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel will comprise at least four members of staff, with representation from both the student's Academic School or Department and Professional Services. Information will be shared only with members of the Panel for the purpose of decision-making and will be treated in confidence and with sensitivity. Panel members may be drawn from amongst the groups of staff listed below, or their nominees:

### **For PGT Students:**

- Head of student support
- Student support advisor
- Managing Director
- Senior Lecturer
- Module leader

6.5 After the completion of the Student Reasonable Adjustment Panel, the student support team will contact the student with details of any recommendations.

## **7. Data Protection**

- 7.1 The Voice Study Centre complies with current data protection legislation including the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#) and the [Data Protection Act 2018](#) (together UKGDPR).
- 7.2 For information on the lawful bases used by the Voice Study Centre to process students' data, please visit the [Student Privacy Notice](#) for further information.

## **8. Reasonable adjustment appeals**

- 8.1 If a student believes the decision on their reasonable adjustment is incorrect, unfair, or unreasonable, and it has not been resolved, the student has the right to appeal.
- 8.2 Support and guidance is available to students studying at the Voice Study Centre from the [student support team](#) or independently from [SU Advice](#).
- 8.3 A student may appeal against a reasonable adjustment decision. Appeals must be in writing and addressed to Managing Director, [Debbie@voicestudycentre.com](mailto:Debbie@voicestudycentre.com). Appeals should be submitted within 10 working days of the official notice of a decision. In the event that a student requests an extension to this deadline as a result of an impairment, this would be considered. The student must explain the grounds for appeal and provide supporting evidence. In choosing to appeal the decision, students are encouraged to contact [SU Advice](#) for advice and guidance.
- 8.4 A student may appeal a decision on the following grounds:
- if there is new evidence, which, for good reason, the student was unable to provide at the time a reasonable adjustment decision was being taken, meaning that the action would then be disproportionate under the Student Reasonable Adjustment Policy;
  - where there is evidence of procedural irregularity; or
  - where there is evidence of bias in the process.

- 8.5 The Managing Director (or nominee) will carry out an assessment to decide whether the grounds set out in the appeal have met the published criteria.
- 8.6 The student will be informed of the Managing Director's (or nominee's) decision within 10 working days from the receipt of the appeal and informed that the decision taken as a result will be implemented at the next earliest opportunity.
- 8.7 Students who remain dissatisfied may follow the [Students Concerns and Complaints procedure](#).
- 8.8 Following this, should a student still remain dissatisfied they may refer their case within 12 months of the date of their outcome letter, to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#).
- 8.9 With reference to the Voice Study Centre's academic appeals procedures, a student may not retrospectively appeal a decision of the Board of Examiners where the student has been subsequently diagnosed with a support need after the period for appeals has passed.