

The University has a [Code of Practice: Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Students](#). Unless otherwise stated, this applies to all matriculated students studying at the University.

Your college is familiar with this Code, which outlines a number of adjustments permitted in respect of assessment, including adjustments to the length, timing and place of examination, and use of a computer. In exceptional circumstances, consideration of an alternative mode of assessment is possible.

The Board of Examinations is responsible for approving examination arrangements.

University examination regulations apply to all students including those who have examination arrangements.

This document attempts to describe:

1. Reasons for adjustment
2. Making a request for an adjustment: the role of your college and you
3. Provision: examples of adjustments to examination arrangements
4. Making a request for an alternative mode of assessment
5. Procedure: who approves the request?

Checklist:

1.	<b>Speak with your college</b> , in Michaelmas Term, to consider examination adjustments or alternative mode of assessment.
2.	<b>Request examination arrangement</b> before deadline (division of Lent Term), 12 February 2016
3.	<b>Practice with the approved adjustment</b> in advance of your examinations
4.	<b>Review the adjustment</b> , after the examinations, with your college

Further sources of information

[Code of Practice: Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Students](#).

[Disability Resource Centre: Exam access arrangements](#)

[Examination arrangements; Student Advice Service](#)

## **1. Reasons for adjustment**

- 1.1. Most Cambridge Tripos and taught Masters are examined by formal 3-hour examinations. Saturdays and Bank Holidays are considered to be normal examination days. You may have up to two examinations per day(s). This is standard and is not in itself grounds for examination arrangements.
- 1.2. Most of the examination sites are large and you can expect an “examination atmosphere”; most students feel nervous about examinations and this in itself is not grounds for examination arrangements.
- 1.3. Applications for adjustments may be made if you:
  - 1.3.1. have declared a disability and hold a Student Support Document (SSD) (issued by the University’s Disability Resource Centre (DRC) or other documentary evidence supporting an adjustment
  - 1.3.2. have not disclosed your disability to the DRC (and so do not hold a SSD), but hold medical evidence, or a full diagnostic report written by an Educational Psychologist or Specialist Teacher detailing recommended adjustments to examinations.

## **2. Making a request for an adjustment: the role of the college and you**

- 2.1. If you hold a Student Support Document (SSD), your college should discuss this with you as soon as you take up your place at Cambridge, and in any Michaelmas Term thereafter. Your discussion should determine what examination arrangements (if any) you seek in the forthcoming academic year.
- 2.2. If you do not hold an SSD but believe you require examination arrangements, speak with your college who might refer you to the DRC. If you are not referred, the college will ask the Board of Examinations to determine what documentation is required to support the request. Without this documentation, the Board will not consider your request.
- 2.3. Your college must request examination arrangements on your behalf, and submit any required supporting documentation, by the division of Lent term (which for 2015 / 16 is **Friday 12 February 2016**).

The deadline applies to allow you time to practise with the approved adjustment before the examination(s). Consequently, it may not be possible to accommodate all aspects of the request if it is received after the deadline.

Where supporting documentation is required, but not available at this date, this must be submitted no later than, the final Friday of Lent Full term (i.e. **Friday 11 March 2016**).

The Board understands that some circumstances, which might require adjustments to an examination, may not become known until later in the Lent Term and that your college may therefore only be able to notify the Board of Examinations at that point. The Board will consider the case but it may not be possible to accommodate the request, especially where it requires an adjustment that you must practise.

2.4. After the examination(s), you should review the examination arrangement with your college and discuss whether to apply for the same in the coming academic year or to seek alternative arrangements or an alternative mode of assessment.

2.5. Without a specific request, requests do not carry over from year to year. Your colleges must review the adjustment(s) and agree whether to seek the same or a different adjustment (if any).

### 3. Provision: examples of adjustments to examination arrangements

3.1. The following is not exhaustive, nor should it be taken to imply that, given a particular set of circumstances, the Board would automatically reach a particular decision. Each case is considered individually and draws on the SSD and medical evidence/full-diagnostic report.

- **Physical adjustments to conditions in the exam site:** e.g. use of a specific chair, table, lighting; allowance to take medicine or food/drink into exam venue
- **Alternative format of how examination question paper is presented:** e.g. in braille or on coloured paper or use low vision aids or sign language in aural examinations.
- **Amanuensis:** which allows dictation of answers
- **Use of pc:** if you are permitted to use a pc, you will sit your exam in a central site provided for students using a pc. In advance of the exam, you are required to attend a training and registration session at the central site, on a date fixed each year by the site organiser.
- **Additional writing time:** allows extra writing time at the end of an exam, normally up to an overall maximum of 25%. Students with this extra time sit the exam with other students permitted extra time. Allowances in excess of 25% are unusual in the UK. Therefore, if you submit evidence, obtained either from the UK or overseas, that indicates a recommendation for an allowance in excess of 25%, the Board will consult the DRC to determine your needs, taking into account normal practice in the UK. If you are not satisfied with the decision, the Board will refer the case for independent adjudication by a relevant expert external to the University.
- **Rest breaks:** provide time to rest, whilst remaining under exam conditions.

### 4. Making a request for an alternative mode of assessment

4.1. Where the standard examination adjustments would not alleviate the substantial disadvantage experienced because of the disability, the Board of Examinations will consider any specific request to be assessed by an alternative means. This might, for example, be to substitute submitted work in place of written papers, for alternative shorter unseen papers to be set, to allow you to take examination papers over a longer time period, or to take the examination over more than one year.

- 4.2. First, you must discuss your requirement with your College Tutor. The tutor knows of the procedure to follow, which will include consultations with appropriate academic representatives from the Faculty / Department (to include the Chair or Senior Examiner) and the Disability Adviser to discuss possible options. It might be necessary to hold a case conference involving you.

In considering the request, all parties will be guided by the competence standards for the award. There is no legal requirement to adjust competence standards on the grounds of disability. The decision of the Board of Examinations will be final.

- 4.3. To ensure that appropriate teaching can be put in place and that alternative modes can be discussed with the Faculty / Department concerned and suitable arrangements put in place, requests must be made in a timely fashion, as early in the academic year as possible. It might not be possible to accommodate requests made after the end of the Michaelmas term.

- 4.4. The request will then be considered by the Education Committee, which will in turn advise the Board of Examinations.

## **5. Procedure: who approves the request?**

- 5.1. The Board of Examinations is authorised to adjust the arrangements or conditions under which an examination is sat such as the length, timing and place of examination, and the use of a computer. The Board may also consider requests for an alternative mode of assessment. No other body, including colleges and the DRC, may authorise examination arrangements.

- 5.2. The Board considers requests for examination arrangements from colleges on behalf of their students. You may not apply directly to the Board. Where another body (such as faculty, department, or student union) presents a case for you, the Board will direct you to your college.

- 5.3. The Board considers each request on an individual basis and the adjustments are determined on a case-by-case basis, based on the evidence provided, and for all students are judged against normal practice in the UK.

- 5.4. To reach a decision, discussion may take place between the college, the DRC and the Board of Examinations and these parties may advise each other in order to ascertain what arrangements will meet the principles of the Board. If necessary, the Secretary of the Board may arrange for the matter to be reviewed by a medically qualified member of staff and / or a Senior Tutor.