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*This guidance relates to standard examinations only.
Following the emergency changes made to the format of assessments in Easter term 2020, any changes regarding the 2020/21 academic year will be communicated.*

1. Rationale

The University has a [Code of Practice: Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Students](#) and the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee is responsible for approving any adjustments which are referred to as '[examination arrangements](#)'. Unless otherwise stated, the Code applies to all matriculated students studying at the University and University examination regulations still apply to all students including those who have examination arrangements.

Colleges are familiar with the Code, which outlines a number of adjustments permitted in respect of assessment, including adjustments to the length, timing and location of examinations and the use of computers.

The guidance outlined below has been developed to describe:

1. the reasons for adjustment;
2. making a request for an adjustment: you and your College's roles;
3. provision: examples of adjustments to examination arrangements;
4. making a request for an adjusted mode of assessment;
5. the procedure and who approves the request.

Checklist:

1.	Speak with your College , in Michaelmas Term, to consider examination adjustments or adjusted modes of assessment.
2.	Request examination arrangement , your college must apply before the deadline (division of Lent Term), 13th February 2021
3.	Practice with the approved adjustment in advance of your examinations
4.	Review the adjustment , after the examinations, with your college and consider if any changes are required for the next academic year

2. Reasons for adjustment

Applications for adjustments may be made if you:

- 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;
- have not disclosed your disability/medical/psychological condition to the DRC (and so do not hold a SSD) but hold medical or psychological evidence or a full diagnostic report written by an educational psychologist, psychiatrist or specialist teacher detailing recommended adjustments to examinations. The Code of Practice includes mental health issues but it is up to you to check whether an issue, such as severe anxiety, is classified as a disability within its remit.
- Evidence from your Secondary School or 6th Form College is not accepted unless from a specialist teacher.

2.1 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. This is standard and is not in itself grounds for examination arrangements. Where the mode of assessment has changed to online assessments this will negate the need for many specific examination arrangements, for example the need to use a computer, or food and medication requirements.

2.2 Many examinations 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.

2.3 The DRC experience a large number of students seeking their help and advice, trying to obtain a last minute appointment in order to get an SSD is not advised. Please make an appointment in Michaelmas Term, well before the deadline for exam arrangement applications.

3. Making a request for an adjustment: you and your College's roles

3.1 If you hold a Student Support Document (SSD), your College should discuss it with you as soon as you take up your place at Cambridge, and in every Michaelmas Term thereafter. Your discussion should determine what examination arrangements (if any) you seek in the forthcoming academic year.

3.2 If you do not hold an SSD but believe you require examination arrangements, speak with your College who might refer you to the DRC or University Counselling Service (UCS). If you are not referred, the College will ask the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee to determine what documentation is required. Without this documentation, the Committee will not consider your request.

3.3 Your College must request examination arrangements on your behalf, and submit any required supporting documentation by the division of Lent Term (which for 2020-21 is **13 February 2021**).

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

Where supporting documentation is required, but not available by the above date, it must be submitted no later than the final Friday of Lent Full Term (**13 March 2021**).

The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee 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 Committee at that point. The Committee will consider the case but it may not be possible to accommodate the request, especially where it requires an adjustment that you must practice.

3.4 After the examination(s), you should review the examination arrangement(s) with your College and discuss whether to apply for the same one(s) in the coming academic year or to seek different arrangements or an [adjusted mode of assessment \(see below\)](#).

3.5 At present, requests do not carry over from year to year. Your College must review the adjustment(s) and agree whether to seek the same one(s) or a different adjustment (if any).

4. Provision: examples of adjustments to examination arrangements

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

- **Physical adjustments to conditions in the examination site:** e.g. use of a specific chair, table, lighting; allowance to take medicine or food/drink into examination 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:** allows dictation of answers.

- **Use of pc:** if you are permitted to use a pc, you will sit your examination in a central site provided for students using a computer. In advance of the examination, you are encouraged 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 examination, normally up to an overall maximum of 25%. Students with this extra time sit the examination 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 Committee 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 Committee will refer the case for independent adjudication by a relevant expert external to the University.
- **Rest breaks:** provide time to rest, whilst remaining under examination conditions.

5. Making a request for an [adjusted mode of assessment](#)

5.1 Where the standard examination adjustments would not alleviate the substantial disadvantage experienced because of the disability, the Committee will consider any specific request to be assessed by adjusted means. This might, for example, be to substitute submitted work in place of written papers; for adjusted 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.

5.2 First, you must discuss your requirement with your College Tutor. The Tutor knows the procedure to follow, which will include submitting an application, accompanied by medical evidence and / or an assessment from an appropriate expert, to the Secretary of the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee – examarrangements@admin.cam.ac.uk

5.3 The request must be submitted before the end of **Michaelmas Term** to ensure that any appropriate teaching and support can be put in place, and that adjusted modes can be discussed with the Faculty/Department concerned and suitable arrangements provided. It might not be possible to accommodate requests made after the end of the Michaelmas Term and such accommodation will usually be limited to cases where there is a late diagnosis, or where the adjustments relate to the next academic year.

The Secretary will consider the request and arrange a case conference involving you, the College, appropriate academic representatives from the Department / Faculty (to include the Chair or Senior Examiner), and the Disability Advisor. Discussion at this case conference would usually include detail of the disability and how it affects you, the adjusted mode of assessment requested, standard programme and assessment requirements, and other adjusted modes that might be suitable. 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.

5.4 The request will be considered then by the relevant authority and a decision made. In the case of the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee, that decision will be final.

6. Procedure: who approves the request?

6.1 The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee is authorised to adjust the arrangements or conditions under which an examination is taken such as the length, timing and place of examination, and the use of a computer. The Committee may also consider requests for an adjusted mode of assessment. No other body, including Colleges and the DRC, may authorise examination arrangements.

6.2 The Committee considers requests for examination arrangements from Colleges on behalf of their students. You may not apply directly to the Committee. Where another body (such as Faculty, Department or Student Union) presents a case for you, the Committee will direct you to your College.

6.3 The Committee considers each request on an individual basis and the adjustments are determined case by case based on the evidence provided, and all students are gauged against normal practice in the UK.

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

Further links

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

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

[Student Advice Service](#)