

## GUIDANCE TO FACULTY:

### REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS FOR COURSEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

Under the Equality Act (2010), the University is required to implement reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities, neurodivergent diagnoses (e.g. Dyslexia, ADHD and autism), or severe/chronic illnesses (including mental health conditions). By 'reasonable adjustment', the legislation refers to controlled measures to support equity of opportunity for learners who may face disadvantage. Neurodiverse students, for example, may not fully understand verbal assessment briefs and are also less likely to seek clarification, whilst students with mental health challenges may experience acute physiological responses to some forms of assessment.

In addition to our obligations under the Equality Act, regulatory oversight from the Office for Students and Competition and Markets Authority requires that the University provide accurate information and appropriate implementation of adjustments to students. To fulfil these obligations, Student Affairs invite all students to share any personal challenges with us, and can provide 1:1 support to manage any conditions or identify reasonable adjustments that are implemented in conjunction with Registry.

### KEY SERVICES

In order to ensure that any ongoing support needs can be met and that any adjustments are appropriate to an individual's circumstances, any students seeking a reasonable adjustment should discuss their circumstances with Student Affairs. This could include, for example:

- adjustments to assessments,
- provision of specialist software,
- ensuring physical access needs are met,
- regular meetings.

The main point of contact is Katherine Lytle on [lytlek@richmond.ac.uk](mailto:lytlek@richmond.ac.uk) and students can book a meeting with Katherine by visiting [students.richmond.ac.uk/sen](https://students.richmond.ac.uk/sen).

Student Affairs works with two forms of peer-led support: Peer Mentors and Peer Tutors. Both roles can be assigned to students on a 1:1 basis to provide low-level support in a way that may be more accessible than from permanent staff. Peer Mentors are responsible for pastoral support adjusting to University life in London or soft skills such as time management. Peer Tutors can assist with comprehension of a particular academic topic, and may provide some support in academic skills such as academic writing or developing a

literature review. Both services can be accessed by contacting Student Affairs or visiting [students.richmond.ac.uk](https://students.richmond.ac.uk).

The University also offers a Writing Center and Maths Center to all students. The Writing Center can provide time-limited skills development in relation to the articulation of an academic argument, and can provide a differentiated service to students with disabilities that may help to identify repeated proofreading errors that result from a diagnosis such as dyslexia. Similarly, the Maths Center provides guided developmental support for any students who make use of mathematical or quantitative techniques.

## RECOMMENDED REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Faculty will be notified of any students eligible for reasonable adjustments prior to assessments. In the sections below, we detail some recommended adjustments that may be appropriate for different forms of personal challenges. Note that this list is not exhaustive; for further advice, please liaise with Student Affairs on [studentaffairs@richmond.ac.uk](mailto:studentaffairs@richmond.ac.uk).

### Essay assignments

In general, it is best practice to:

- Provide a written assessment brief that includes marking criteria and whether/to what extent AI tools may be used.
- Signpost student to the Writing Centre or Maths Centre well in advance of deadline.
- When marking, ensure that grammatical errors, word confusion, and/or incoherent paragraphing structure are comprehensively highlighted with sensitive constructive feedback that can support future assignments.

Adjustment listed	Recommended Approach
Extra time or negotiable extensions	1 week extension
Enlarged font or handouts required in colour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure assignment can be completed satisfactorily without the use of visually-demanding software (e.g. SPSS) or ensure that appropriate display screen equipment is available.</li><li>• If presentation is integral to the format, recommend accessing formative feedback from a relevant Peer Tutor.</li><li>• Provide any handouts on a <u>minimum</u> font size 13, Calibri. Set spacing between lines to 1.5.</li><li>• Consider making teaching materials or instructions available in a text format so that it could be customised by AI for improved comprehension by the student</li></ul>
Clear Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recommend that the student book a short 1:1 meeting to relay the brief verbally if the student feels any clarifications are needed – this will support students</li></ul>

	whose diagnoses will hinder their ability to seek timely support independently
Any	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider subject-appropriate alternative assessments, including authentic assessments.</li> </ul>

### Poster Presentations

In general, it is best practice to:

- Allow submissions in any general file-types (e.g. JPG, PNG, .docx, .pptx, PDF...) to ensure students are able to use appropriate software for their circumstances.
- Consider the space used for a presentation; picking a relatively quiet space and/or giving students choice of where to give their presentation may help neurodiverse students to focus better

Adjustment Listed	Recommended Approach
Alternative assessments for oral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allow submission of poster file only, <b>or</b>;</li> <li>allow presentation to smaller group, <b>or</b>;</li> <li>allow submission of <i>recorded</i> presentation</li> </ul> <p>If a Q&amp;A is required, consider providing questions to the student a short time in advance and asking them to record responses.</p>
Not put on the spot	If practical, review poster content prior to presentation and provide questions to the student 24hrs in advance
Enlarged font or handouts required in colour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommend accessing formative feedback from a relevant Peer Tutor, <b>and</b>;</li> <li>Clearly explain whether any other types of visual cues can be used in place of text passages in the context of the assessment</li> <li>Consider making teaching materials or instructions available in a text format so that it could be customised by AI for improved comprehension by the student</li> </ul>

### Oral Presentations

To be clear: it is best practice to have groups of mixed needs and abilities; if placing students into groups, one should not purposefully combine multiple students requiring reasonable adjustments unless they are believed to be a good academic fit for one-another. In general, it can support student with disabilities to assign students to groups (rather than students self-selecting), but to liaise *in advance* to ensure that their needs are understood.

Adjustment listed	Solo Presentation	Group Presentation
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Extra time or negotiable extensions	Up to 1 week additional preparation time	1 week extension on any supplementary materials from the student with an adjustment.
Clear Instructions	Recommend that the student book a short 1:1 meeting to relay the brief verbally if the student feels any clarifications are needed – this will support students whose diagnoses will hinder their ability to seek timely support independently	
Alternative assessments for oral	<p><b>Either:</b> assess student via a slide deck and written script without live delivery (if appropriate to the learning outcomes of the class);</p> <p><b>Or:</b> ask the student to submit a recording of their presentation;</p> <p><b>Or:</b> allow the student to present to a smaller audience or via Teams/Zoom with cameras on/off depending on their needs</p>	<p><b>Either:</b> assess student based on their contribution to the presentation <i>content</i> or preparation (which could include a reflective written commentary) if appropriate to the learning outcomes of the class;</p> <p><b>Or:</b> ask the student to pre-record a segment that can be played within the wider group's live presentation;</p> <p><b>Or:</b> allow the group to present to a smaller audience or via Teams/Zoom with cameras on/off depending on students' needs</p>
Not put on the spot	Avoid directing questions to the student <b>or;</b> provide questions 24hrs in advance	

#### Portfolio projects

Adjustment listed	Approach
Extra time or negotiable extensions	1 week extension
Clear Instructions	Recommend that the student book a short 1:1 meeting to relay the brief verbally if the student feels any clarifications are needed – this will support students whose diagnoses will hinder their ability to seek timely support independently
Any	Offer flexibility of file-types or mode of submission (e.g. .ppt, .doc, .pdf, .jpg)

#### Event Planning

Adjustment listed	
Extra time or negotiable extensions	Minimum of 1 week or additional preparation time (if practical)
Clear Instructions	Recommend that the student book a short 1:1 meeting to relay the brief verbally if the student feels any clarifications

	are needed – this will support students whose diagnoses will hinder their ability to seek timely support independently
Any	Consider whether the student can be assessed based on their personal contribution to relevant aspect(s) rather than the event in its entirety (e.g. planning, communications, event management on-the-day etc )