

# REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS POLICY & PROCEDURE



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Ymddiriedolaeth GIG  
Prifysgol Felindre  
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**Executive Sponsor & Function: Nicola Williams, Executive Director of Nursing, AHPs and Clinical Scientists**

**Document Author: Head of Velindre Oncology Academy, Business Support Manager, Lecturer Practitioner**

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Inform students about how to access support,
- Support the Velindre Oncology Academy in complying with the requirements of relevant legislation,
- Clarify where responsibility lies for the identification and implementation of reasonable adjustments,
- Outline the necessary steps for the effective implementation of reasonable adjustments,
- Inform students how to appeal a decision made in relation to a reasonable adjustment.

## **SCOPE**

The Velindre Oncology Academy (VOA) seeks to provide equal access for its disabled students through inclusive design where possible and, otherwise, through reasonable adjustments. This commitment builds upon the foundation of equality legislation and anti-discrimination guidance. The Reasonable Adjustment Procedure provides a framework for the effective implementation of reasonable adjustments for all disabled students at the VOA.

## **AUTHORISED PERSONNEL**

Head of Velindre Oncology Academy

## **REFERENCES/RELATED DOCUMENTS**

- Admissions Policy
- Plagiarism and Collusion
- Submission of Work for Assessment Policy
- Personal Tutor Policy
- Anonymity and Confidentiality Guidelines

## **PROCEDURE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Equality Act (2010) provides protection against discrimination, harassment, and victimisation on the grounds of disability and other protected characteristics.

A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This encompasses individuals with physical or sensory impairments, mental ill health, specific learning difficulties, and a range of chronic or fluctuating conditions.

It is unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person in relation to the provision of education and related services. However, it is lawful to treat a disabled person more favourably because of their disability.

Inclusive design of curriculum content can ensure that accessibility is embedded in activities for all students' learning, teaching, and assessment.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments is anticipatory: it requires the VOA to plan ahead and anticipate the likely needs of disabled students, rather than waiting until adjustments are proposed. The VOA should therefore ensure, where possible, that adjustments to policies, practices, and procedures have been made in advance to reduce or remove the barriers to disabled students.

The duty requires that only adjustments that are reasonable are made. What is reasonable will usually depend on the individual circumstances of the case. In assessing what is reasonable, the VOA should take the following into account:

- The effect of the disability on the individual student;
- The effectiveness of the particular steps in removing or overcoming the relevant disadvantage;
- The relevant interests of other people, e.g. whether an adjustment would result in a significant disadvantage for other students;
- The practicality of the changes;
- Any potential health and safety issues;
- The financial and other costs of making the adjustment;
- The extent to which aids and services will otherwise be provided to disabled students (e.g. local authority support)

Reasonable adjustments should not compromise the academic standards of programmes or modules, as the Equality Act places no duty to make a reasonable adjustment to a competence standard.

A competence standard is 'an academic, medical, or other standard, applied for the purpose of determining whether a person has a particular level of competence or ability'. A competence standard must apply equally to all students, be genuinely relevant to the programme, and be a proportionate means to achieving a legitimate aim.

There is however a duty to make reasonable adjustments to the way in which a competence standard is assessed so that disabled students are not disadvantaged as a result of their disability. Reasonable adjustments must not affect the validity or reliability of the assessment outcomes. However, they may involve, for example, changing the usual assessment arrangements or method, adapting assessment materials, providing a scribe or reader in the assessment, and re-organising the assessment environment.

The VOA online learning platform provides resources for staff in the design and assessment of learning alongside supporting students.

The VOA is required to undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA) on all new and existing policies and practices. These are helpful in identifying whether any policies or practices would disproportionately disadvantage certain groups of users and enable the VOA to consider anticipatory adjustments.

## **PROCEDURE FOR IMPLEMENTING REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS**

Applicants who have disclosed a disability and have accepted an offer are asked to provide more information about their disability together with supporting evidence, and to work with the programme lead to ensure that reasonable adjustments are in place as soon as possible.

You should also disclose a disability whilst on your programme as soon as you become aware of it or its impact on your ability to access your programme or other student service.

If you want your disability information to remain confidential, you will be advised if this will restrict the adjustments that can be made for you. This would be the case if circumstances are such that staff would need to know who you are in order to make the relevant adjustment.

The VOA will consider whether the standardised VOA adjustments meet your specific needs, and will then consider whether individual adjustments are also required. In determining individual reasonable adjustments, the VOA will take into account the following:

Your individual circumstances and the programme;

The effectiveness of the adjustment;

Your previous experience of the adjustment, and the time and resource required to implement the adjustment.

The module lead will liaise with the VOA where there are concerns that it may not be possible to put an adjustment in place, e.g. because it may relate to a competence standard.

The VOA is not obliged to offer the student their preferred adjustment when an alternative reasonable adjustment would be equally effective.

Once reasonable adjustments have been agreed, the reasonable adjustments will be detailed in a confidential, password protected file, held by relevant members of the VOA.

## **REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS**

All reasonable adjustments are recorded on your student record and made available to only to relevant staff in the VOA as is necessary to put in place reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments will be considered on an individual basis, which means that a broad and diverse range of adjustments may be recommended. However, there are a number of standardised reasonable adjustments that are put in place to help to overcome common barriers. Standardised adjustments include:

Learning and teaching:

- Providing electronic copies of lecture material in advance electronically (e.g. lecture slides, handouts, or lecture notes provided in advance via Moodle);

- Providing a recording of lectures or, where this is not possible, an equally effective reasonable alternative,
- Provide directed reading lists which differentiate between essential or core texts and desirable texts.

Reasonable Adjustments in Assessments:

- Reasonable adjustments in respect of marking and the identification of work from students with disabilities affecting written expression.
- Alternative forms of assessments and standardised adjustments in written examinations.

Where the mode of assessment puts a disabled student at a substantial disadvantage when compared with students who do not have that disability and the standardised adjustments to examinations are not effective in preventing the disadvantage, the VOA will consider other alternative modes of assessment, where it does not impact on the competency standards.

Requests for consideration of an alternative mode of assessment will be for exceptional cases and will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the VOA who will liaise with the course lead to assess what is possible and does not compromise competency standards.

In deciding on the appropriateness of an alternative mode of assessment the VOA will need to be guided by the competence standards for the programme.

It may not always be possible to provide an alternative mode of assessment, for example, where the mode of examination and the competence standard are inextricably linked. However, where a request is declined, the reasons for this decision will be stated with reference to the key competencies of the programme.

## **REQUEST FOR REVIEW**

If you believe the decision on your reasonable adjustments is incorrect, unfair, or unreasonable, and that it has not been resolved by the VOA, you have the right to challenge the decision. You will be asked to provide evidence to support your reasons for challenging the decision.

## **DEFINITIONS / ABBREVIATIONS**

Velindre Oncology Academy – VOA

“Student” - any person enrolled or registered to follow a Programme of Study or module(s) offered by the VOA and persons who have been students of the VOA for up to 3 months after they have left the VOA.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

As a student, you are responsible for:

- Disclosing a disability at the earliest opportunity;

- Providing evidence to support the disability (such as a diagnostic assessment for learning impairments, medical or GP's letters/reports for physical or mental health conditions, or existing DSA needs assessment);
- Attending meetings as requested to discuss your needs;
- Disclosing any changes such as increased impairment (e.g. because of a deteriorating condition) requiring new adjustments or a modification of existing adjustments
- Providing documentation to support the recommended adjustments.