



Hull York Medical School

Policy on Disability and Reasonable Adjustments in Assessments

Approval Process:	
Committee	Outcome/ Date of approval
HYMS Board of Studies	Minor amendments approved via Chair's Action on 9 th May 2017
HYMS Joint Senate Committee	3 rd February 2015. Approval not required for the minor amendments made in May 2017
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Responsibility to update:	Associate Dean for Assessment and Progression

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To obtain this Policy in an alternative format:

Contact governance@hyms.ac.uk

Definitions:**Reasonable adjustments**

practical changes to the planned delivery of an assessment or examination which mitigate the effect of particular characteristics or circumstances (e.g. a disability, health condition or impairment) on a student's ability to undertake the assessment or examination, without changing the demands of the assessment.

Abbreviations:**GMC**

General Medical Council

HYMS

Hull York Medical School

OSCE

Objective Structured Clinical Examination

QAA

Quality Assurance Agency

SpLD

Specific Learning Disability

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. HYMS Policy on Disability and Reasonable Adjustments in Assessments draws on guidance from the University of York, the University of Hull, *Promoting Excellence: standards for medical education and training (2016)* and the General Medical Council (GMC). HYMS aligns its key policies with its parent Universities to avoid duplication and to ensure that we consistently meet the standard set out in the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education. Adjustments in line with the University of York and University of Hull Policies are made to ensure that this Policy meets the specific requirements of academic programmes and governance processes in HYMS.
- 1.2. This Policy applies to all students, both Undergraduate and Postgraduate and is reviewed on an annual basis to remain in line with current accepted policies and procedures.

2. Overview

- 2.1. HYMS is responsible for ensuring all assessments taken across each academic programme are compliant with the Equality Act (2010) and the regulations as laid out by the two parent Universities. For students taking the MB BS Programme there is an additional responsibility to ensure assessments are compliant with the specific GMC guidance outlined in the Appendix A. All students will be offered a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate competence through the assessment procedures. HYMS students are supported through the HYMS Student Support Office, and the Wellbeing and Disability Service offices at each parent university. These services provide a confidential opportunity to disclose any impairment of health condition. Further information and contact details for these services are available through the relevant student handbooks, the virtual learning environment and the links in the Appendix B
- 2.2. Information relating to a student's statement of needs is communicated through the relevant University Wellbeing and Disability Service to the HYMS Student Support Office. A copy of each statement of needs is held by the HYMS Student Support Office.

3. Guidelines

- 3.1. An adjustment may not be considered reasonable if it involves unreasonable costs or timeframes, or affects the security or integrity of the assessment.
- 3.2. Reasonable Adjustments are recommended to departments on the basis of an 'assessment of needs', to be carried out by the relevant University Wellbeing and Disability Service. This process may differ slightly between University sites, but in general is an informal interview which is usually on a one-to-one basis between the student and a qualified assessor in which support requirements are identified and learning strategies are recommended.
- 3.3. Should HYMS Student Support Office be informed by the relevant University Wellbeing and Disability Service that a student is undergoing an 'assessment of needs'

for a specific learning disability (SpLD), that student will initially be granted the 'standard' reasonable adjustment for all summative written examinations (15 minutes additional time per hour) until the full report is received. This ensures that no student is disadvantaged due to the relative timing of the 'assessment of needs' and any forthcoming written examination.

- 3.4. The University Wellbeing and Disability Services will inform HYMS Student Support Office or HYMS Postgraduate Office upon completion of the 'assessment of needs' and provide a full report and student support plan, outlining specific recommendations for assessment arrangements and adjustments, on a case by case basis.
- 3.5. HYMS works closely with the Wellbeing and Disability Services of both parent Universities to ensure students receive consistent information with regard to their reasonable adjustments.
- 3.6. In practical assessments, such as the Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), which directly replicate clinical practice, additional time is not permitted. Where instructions to students are provided, they are brief and succinct. Sufficient time is provided to allow students with a SpLD to read the instructions, while remaining part of the main exam. Disability officers from parent Universities are openly invited to attend HYMS practical assessments, to ensure they are compliant with current regulations.

3.7. In reference to the **HYMS Policy on Student Welfare and Support:**

3.2. However under the law, while adjustments can be made to the course of studies, they cannot be made to any competence standards that must be demonstrated for successful progression or graduation. In particular, and in line with advice from the General Medical Council and the Medical Schools Council, the ability of medical students to carry out on the appropriate timescale tasks required for assessment of practical clinical skills (including all aspects of patient consultation and examination, as well as procedural skills) are competence standards required for qualification for the profession of medicine and cannot be adjusted. This differs from assessment of clinical knowledge through written examinations where it is the demonstration of knowledge which is the competence standard and adjustments may be made to the assessment (e.g. providing additional time in line with a needs assessment).

- 3.8. Students with permanent or temporary physical impairments that may affect performance in the clinical examinations are actively encouraged to arrange a meeting with HYMS Student Support Office, to discuss any reasonable adjustments, such as the use of an amplified stethoscope or alterations to the layout of a station to facilitate performance. Examiners will be notified of such adjustments on the morning of the assessment.
- 3.9. Whilst HYMS recognises that pregnancy is not a disability, it will work with pregnant students to ensure they receive appropriate reasonable adjustments which will support them in demonstrating competence throughout the assessments.

Appendix A: Guidance and Policy Documents

This policy draws on guidance from the following sources:

Promoting Excellence (GMC)

<http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/27394.asp>

Theme 5: Developing and implementing curricula and assessments

Reasonable adjustments

R5.12 Organisations must make reasonable adjustments to help disabled learners meet the standards of competence in line with the *Equality Act 2010*, although the standards of competence themselves cannot be changed. Reasonable adjustments may be made to the way that the standards are assessed or performed (except where the method of performance is part of the competence to be attained), and to how curricula and clinical placements are delivered.

Health and disability in education and training

<http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/12680.asp>

Gateways to the professions

http://www.gmc-uk.org/education/undergraduate/gateways_guidance.asp

HYMS Policy on Student Welfare and Support

<http://www.hyms.ac.uk/about-us/regulations-policies-and-codes-of-practice/policies>

University of Hull Disability Services Policy Documents

<http://www2.hull.ac.uk/student/disability/policydocuments.aspx>

University of York Disability Services Policy Documents

<https://www.york.ac.uk/students/support/disability/policies/>

Appendix B: Links to relevant University Support Services

- University of Hull Student Wellbeing, Learning and Welfare Support: www2.hull.ac.uk/student/disability.aspx
- University of York Disability Services: www.york.ac.uk/students/support/disability/