



Inclusive Practice

EXAMINATION ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS POLICY

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1. About this document

- 1.1 This document is part of the suite of documents provided for students with access requirements. It outlines the processes for requesting access arrangements.
- 1.3 This document should be consulted alongside the Inclusive Practice Policy.

2. Definitions

2.1 Access Requirements

For the purpose of this document the term 'access requirements' is interpreted broadly. This term covers the access needs of any student arising from either a disability or particular conditions which arise during the course of your studies or when being assessed. These access needs can more generally be placed into two categories:

Disability

In line with the UK Equality Act 2010, the University defines disability as any physical or mental impairment which has a substantial adverse effect on the person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and is likely to last more than 12 months. Disability by this definition includes physical or mobility impairments, visual impairments, hearing impairments, learning difficulties (for example dyslexia, dyspraxia or dyscalculia), ADHD, mental health difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders, and unseen or progressive medical conditions (for example asthma, epilepsy, heart conditions, diabetes, cancer, HIV/AIDS and multiple sclerosis).

Specific Access Situations

The University recognises that in some situations applicants and students will require specific access arrangements in place, to be able to undertake assessment, usually time-constrained examinations. Often these needs are related to when and how you are able to undertake time-constrained examinations, rather than a disability. These may be related to personal circumstances, which may sometimes be temporary in nature. Examples of these situations include: those with legally imposed travel restrictions, armed forces personnel, workers on board ships, those in prison, and those with short-term medical difficulties not within the scope of disability, as described above.

2.2 Time Constrained Examinations

Time-constrained examinations are one of the key assessment methods for University of London. Where indicated in programme regulations and/or in assessment communications, these assessments are taken

within a set timeframe, usually over a number of minutes or hours. Time-constrained examinations are held on specified dates during the academic year. Time-Constrained Examinations may be delivered using an online examination platform or at authorised Examination Centres, or a combination of the two . The operation of rigorous examination procedures is central to the University.

2.3 Assessments

University of London programmes also use other forms of assessment, such as coursework, dissertations and group work activities. Any form of assessment that is not a time-constrained examination is covered under the term 'assessment' within this document.

3. Principles

- 3.2 We ensure that access arrangement requests are considered in a fair and transparent manner.
- 3.3 We consider access arrangement requests on a case-by-case basis, with particular reference to the evidence provided, the learning outcomes, assessment aims and logistics of each case.
- 3.4 The University will not modify the academic standard which it applies to determine whether or not students have a particular level of competence or ability.
- 3.5 Time-constrained examinations are held on specified dates during the academic year. The University is not usually able to amend the schedule of time-constrained examinations to accommodate access requirements.

4. Eligibility

- 4.1 Students with disabilities may request access arrangements/reasonable adjustments for time-constrained examinations and other forms of assessment.
- 4.2 Students with specific access situations may apply for access arrangements for time-constrained examinations. Requests relating to other forms of assessment will not usually be considered as other policies such as Mitigating Circumstances will usually be more appropriate.

5. Examples of Access Arrangements

5.1 Examples of the ways in which we have been able to assist students during the examinations include:

- special seating
- a private room in which to sit examinations
- extra time
- use of a scribe
- breaks during the examination
- permission to take food into the examination hall
- being able to take the examination in an alternative location, due to legally imposed travel restrictions.

5.2 Examples of the ways in which we have been able to assist students with disabilities for other forms of assessment include:

- Changing deadlines
- Providing alternative forms of assessment

6. How to apply for access arrangements and relevant deadlines

6.1 Applications for any access arrangements should be made by the student who requires them. Applications made by a third party will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

Making a request before you commence your studies

6.2 We strongly recommend that you make disclosure of your access requirement at the application stage to help us to facilitate you to sit examinations. You can do so by completing the Access Requirements Disclosure Form which is part of your Course Application Form.

6.3 It is important that you provide all evidence related to your access requirements at the same time that you submit your application form.

6.4 If you are eligible to study with us, we will then be able to tell you what access arrangements we can make as early as possible. We will contact you to discuss any arrangements you may need.

Making a request after you have commenced your studies

- 6.5 If you did not request access arrangements for examinations at the application stage, but feel you need them, please write to the Inclusive Practice Manager at special.arrangements@london.ac.uk as soon as possible, and no later than:
- 15 February for the May-June examination session
 - 1 August for the September-October examination session
 - 1 September for the LLB October resit
 - 8 weeks before the examination session starts for all other examination sessions during the year
- 6.6 If an access arrangement requirement arises from a sudden accident or illness, candidates must apply not later than:
- 1 April for the May-June examination session
 - 1 September for the September-October examination session
 - 4 weeks before the examination session starts for any other examination sessions during the year
- 6.7 If an access arrangement requirement arises from a sudden accident or illness after the dates given in paragraphs 6.5 and 6.6, and you believe that this will affect your examination performance, an application for mitigating circumstances can be submitted via the mitigating circumstances process <https://my.london.ac.uk/web/guest/mitigating-circumstances>. Applications should be made no later than three weeks after the date of your assessment. However, before you take your exam, you should check your programme regulations. Programmes Regulations may additionally detail fit to sit policies which may mean that by sitting the assessment, you are declaring yourself well enough to do so and so may be ineligible for mitigation.

7. Supporting evidence you need to provide for access arrangements relating to disability and Medical Difficulties

- 7.1 If you are making a request for access arrangements due to a disability/learning difficulty or specific access situation, you need to submit supporting evidence for your access request for examinations to enable us to consider any arrangements to be made. The evidence must describe how your condition is affecting you. Examples of supporting evidence include:
- medical certificate for your condition
 - letter from a healthcare professional or specialist
- 7.2 Any evidence you provide must be relevant, accurate and as recent as necessary and possible. It must be on headed paper with the specialist's or health professional's contact details.

- 7.3 Normally we would expect that your evidence is written in English. We may consider medical evidence written in another language but this should always be accompanied by a certified translation.
- 7.4 The University reserves the right to query some or all medical advice or other professional submissions. You may be asked to provide additional or alternative supporting documentation. Please note that in line with the UK General Medical Council's guidance, we would not normally accept evidence that is produced by a close relative, friend or work colleague even if he/she has the relevant medical or professional qualifications.

Disability, mental health or other health needs:

- 7.5 Medical evidence is expected to cover the following key points:
- Name of the health condition or impairment
 - Date of diagnosis
 - Period of time that you have been seeing the practitioner for this condition/impairment
 - Length of time that the practitioner expects the condition/impairment to last
 - Main symptoms of this condition which could impact on studies/exams (for example mobility impairment, loss of concentration)
 - Current treatment and/or medication being undertaken
 - Side effects of any treatments or medication

It is possible that not all of the points mentioned above will be relevant to your condition/impairment. However, it is important that your medical evidence provides as much information as possible. In order to help your medical practitioner to produce medical evidence which is as accurate as possible, you may wish to share this information with them.

Learning difficulties and neurodiversity

- 7.6 We usually require a full diagnostic assessment report as evidence. The diagnostic assessment must be carried out:
- after you were 16 years old, if possible ; and
 - by a chartered psychologist or equivalent, an educational psychologist, or a specialist teacher holding an assessment practicing certificate.

The report must include:

- the date of assessment;
- all tests carried out to assess your specific learning difficulty; and
- a summary of recommendations.

8. Supporting evidence you need to provide for access arrangements relating to Specific Access Situations

- 8.1 We recognise that in some situations applicants and students will require specific access arrangements in place, to be able to complete their studies. Often these needs are related to when and how the applicant is able to study rather than a disability or other specific personal circumstances.
- 8.2 Specific access situations can emerge from serving a prison sentence, legally imposed travel restrictions, serving in the armed forces, working on board ships, oil platforms and rigs, and work that demands that they travel extensively. We would try our best to make arrangements to enable you to successfully complete your studies.
- 8.3 All applicants and students wishing to be considered for access requirements must submit a completed Access Requirements Disclosure Form as described in section 5.
- 8.4 In all cases, please contact us if you require further information or clarifications. We will be able to send a copy of the University's instructions for the conduct of our examinations to you and the relevant authorities to assist you to make arrangements to sit examinations under approved access arrangements.

Supporting evidence you need to provide for access arrangements relating to serving as Military personnel

- 8.5 Alongside the Access Requirements Disclosure Form, please submit to us:
- (a) A letter from your commanding officer to confirm your inability to leave the base; and
 - (b) Contact details for the Education Officer, or similar at the base who will be administering the examinations for you.

Considerations, including access arrangements relating to those studying in a prison environment

- 8.6 Before you submit your application to study with us, you should check with your prison authorities (for example the Head of Learning and Skills, your Education Co-ordinator or the equivalent post-holder) if you can have internet access and if they will make arrangements for you to sit examinations in prison on the scheduled dates.
- 8.7 It is a requirement for all of our students to have internet access. The significant majority of our study materials are available online. You should

check with your prison authorities if you can have regular internet access. If not, you are advised to check if a friend or relative can go online and print out the materials for you. Even where a friend or relative can assist, it may prove difficult for you to complete your studies without the benefit of regular internet access.

- 8.8 If the requirements can be satisfied, you can complete an application form. You must complete the Access Requirements Disclosure Form as per section 5 above.
- 8.9 Upon receipt of your completed Access Requirements Disclosure Form, our Inclusive Practice Office will email you a further form. You need to ask your prison authorities to complete this form and return it to us as soon as possible and before you register with us. The form will require the prison authorities to provide the following information:
- contact details of the prison authorities;
 - confirmation that they are willing to let you study for the programme of your choice; and
 - confirmation that they are willing to make arrangements for you to sit the examination in prison.
- 8.10 If you are moved to another prison while you are studying, you will need to repeat the steps outlined above.
- 8.11 For the duration of the programme, you must maintain your registration with the University on an annual basis.
- 8.12 You should consider whether there is an Examination Centre near your home in the event that you are released prior to completing your studies.

9. Consideration of access requests

- 9.1 Applications for examination access arrangements are considered by our Inclusive Practice Arrangements Panel.

The Panel will take into account:

- a) An applicant's particular circumstances using the medical and other supporting evidence provided
- b) The length of time of the time-constrained examinations.
- c) The examination format (the exam online platform used, exams at exam centres)

- d) The assessment methodology of the programme.
- e) Assurance that learning outcomes and objectives of the programme can be met with appropriate adjustments made.
- f) The practical implications of the suggested arrangements.
- g) Additional aids or specific arrangements, not requested by the applicant that may be of assistance.
- h) The possibilities for alternative forms of assessment.

- 9.2 You will be informed of the University's decision and any access arrangements approved, in writing and usually via email.
- 9.3 When you are informed of your examination access arrangements, you will also be advised if the granted arrangements are applicable only for one assessment period or if they will be applied for all assessments during your studies. We may need to review your arrangements for any future assessments and request updated medical evidence.
- 9.4 You will be provided with an explanation for decisions made about your access arrangements by the Inclusive Practice Arrangements Panel. This will take into account both initial decisions made by IPAPs about students' access, and decisions reached about Examination Access Arrangement Appeals.
- 9.5 You will also be informed of your right to appeal in accordance with section 12 -Appeals, within this policy.

10. Informing Examination Centres of access arrangements

- 10.1 If you are required to take your assessment in an Examination Centre, you should check with your local Examination Centre whether they can accommodate these examination access arrangements, as soon as you are informed of any examination access arrangements approved by the University. Where possible, you should do this before you return the examination entry form and fee to the University of London. If the Examination Centre is not able to make the access arrangements that you have had approved, please contact the Inclusive Practice Manager immediately, so that alternatives can be considered.

Please also check whether the Examination Centre would charge an additional fee for any adjustments it makes to enable you to sit examinations there.

- 10.2 We will also confirm your access arrangements for examinations with your Examination Centre.

- 10.3 You should inform your Examination Centre about your access arrangements for examinations every time you submit an examination entry.
- 10.4 A list of examination centres can be found on our website:
<https://london.ac.uk/current-students/examinations/examination-centres>

11 Changing access requirements for examinations

- 11.1 You should inform us if you require any change to previously agreed access arrangements for examinations. You need to provide relevant evidence to support the change in arrangements when informing the University.
- 11.2 You must inform the University of any access arrangements for examinations no longer required. Failure to do this will be considered as a false claim, as described in Section 14 -False Claims.

12. Appeals

- 12.1 You can appeal against the Inclusive Practice Arrangements Panel's decision by emailing the Inclusive Practice Manager at special.arrangements@london.ac.uk. Appeals must be received within 14 days of you receiving the Inclusive Practice Arrangements Panel's decision.
- 12.2 You must state which of the following grounds your appeal is made on and provide evidence or clear explanation to support your submission:
- a) That there have been procedural or administrative irregularities in the handling of your original application.
 - b) That the Inclusive Practice Arrangements Panel's decision was unreasonable based on the evidence that was available to it and the reasons it presented for the decision.

Your appeal may be rejected if you do not clearly indicate the grounds on which you are appealing and provide explanation and, where relevant, evidence to support your appeal.

- 12.2 The Access Arrangements Appeals Panel will comprise of the Chair of the Inclusive Practice Panel (or other person designated by them), a member of the Inclusive Practice Panel who was not a member of the panel that took the decision, and the Chair of the relevant Board of Examiners.
- 12.3 Your appeal will usually be considered within 14 days of receipt of your appeal. Where your assessment falls within this timeframe, you should indicate this clearly within your appeal, so that consideration may be expedited.
- 12.4 You will be informed in writing of the outcome of your appeal, within 7

days of the consideration of your appeal and a Completion of Procedures letter will be issued.

- 12.5 If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the appeal then, you may be able to take a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) for Higher Education.
- 12.6 For more information on the OIA, including how to make a submission, please refer to their website [Can you complain to us? - OIA](#) and [How to complain to us - OIA](#).
- 12.7 Please note that the OIA will normally only accept your complaint (a) if you have a Completion of Procedures letter from us and (b) if you submit the complaint within one year of the decision you are complaining about.

13. Confidentiality

- 13.1 Any information disclosed as part of the request for access arrangements, along with supporting evidence, will be retained by our Inclusive Practice Office and the University of London database and records system. This is in accordance with the University of London's Data Protection Policy:
<https://www.london.ac.uk/sites/default/files/governance/data-protection-policy.pdf>.
- 13.2 Your information will be shared for the purpose of the access arrangements with your consent and on a 'need-to-know' basis. We will share details of arrangements that have been agreed with you without revealing information about the disability or specific access situation for which the arrangements have been made.
- 13.3 Information may need to be shared with other University staff members and offices in order to make access arrangements for you. We may also need to seek independent medical advice, or advice from an Examination Centre or from the Board of Examiners for your programme of study about the support that they may be able to provide. Where your doctor or educational psychologist has supplied medical evidence about you, we may need to contact them to ask for further information. However, we will ask for your consent before we contact them.
- 13.4 We may share information about the nature of your disability or specific access situation where:
 - There is a serious and imminent risk to your own or to others' safety.
 - There is a legal requirement to disclose the information (for example, for the prevention or detection of crime).

- 13.5 If a third party contacts us with information about you – for example, if your doctor sends us a medical report about you – then we will check that information with you.
- 13.6 We will retain information about your access requirements for as long as it may be relevant. This will usually be for the length of your registration on the programme of study plus a further period of time.
- 13.7 Once this maximum retention period has expired, we will either delete the information from our system or anonymise it. ‘Anonymising’ the information means that we keep some form of record on our system, but remove any information that could identify the person to whom it relates. We retain anonymised records to generate statistical reports about our services so that we can monitor and improve them.

14. False claims

- 14.1 Submitting a false claim for an access arrangement may be regarded as an attempt to gain an unfair advantage.
- 14.2 An attempt to gain unfair advantage is an academic offence that would be dealt with under the University of London’s Code of Student Discipline.

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