CIT DSS Examination Supports (reasonable accommodations) in Online Timed Assessments/ Examinations for Semester 2 2019/20 Version 1.1 22 April 2020

Background:
Over 800 DSS students are entitled to a range of examination supports (reasonable accommodations) for timed assessments/ examinations. The supports are listed in their needs assessment documents that the DSS student receives after completing their application for DSS supports. In the typical timed assessment/examination scenario on campus, some DSS students would use some or all of their exam support entitlements, whereas others may only use extra time. We anticipate that this may also be the case for online timed assessments/ examinations. The DSS have listed the different exam supports entitlements in the table below and mapped how these may be facilitated in the current remote/ online learning and assessment environment.

Requesting Supports:
- DSS students have been informed to contact their lecturer directly to request exam supports where appropriate in advance of the timed assessment/ exam.
- The Heads of Departments received a list of DSS students with their exam support entitlements (typically held by the Exams Office/staff) on 8 April 2020 to support lecturers around students' requests where needed.
- A list of resources is included at the end of the document to support students and staff including creating online accessible content and how to use assistive technologies. The DSS has also listed relevant information and resources at: www.mycit.ie/exam-supports-online
- Any queries on exam supports should be emailed to the DSS at dss@cit.ie

Recommendations on accessing supports:
- The majority of students may request extra time in online timed assessments/ exams, and this should be relatively straightforward to accommodate once the lecturer is notified in advance (see table below).
- DSS students who require exams supports beyond extra time will be expected to use existing technologies available to them to access their timed assessments/ exams (see table below). Training videos on using assistive technology software in Canvas have been developed.
- There may be a need for increased flexibility around extra time to allow DSS students additional extra time for: new online timed assessments/ exam formats/ assistive technology software use.
- If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, students should alert their lecturer /DSS as soon as possible in advance of the timed assessment/exam. Academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the same module learning outcomes, for example a submitted assessment or open book exam. Where the department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible, a student can complete the online IEC form. The IEC policy and information is found here: www.mycit.ie/extenuatingcircumstances

1

Exam Support	Comment on support and Student access	Suggestions for lecturers to implement in online timed assessments/ examinations	Recommended Contingency
Extra time	**The standard allocation of extra time is 10 minutes per hour,** but some individual students may have more than 10 minutes. Extra time allowance is stated under Exams Supports on the student's needs assessment document / extra time letter. In **open book exams**, an additional time allowance should be allowed, e.g. 10 minutes per hour = 4 hrs added to 24hrs, or 8 hrs added to 48 hrs, and so on. Students should request extra time directly from lecturers for each timed assessment/ exam in advance and include a copy of their needs assessment PDF or letter in the email. The DSS may also email the lecturers on request if a student is not comfortable sharing the details of their needs assessment.	The Moderate option in **Canvas New Quizzes** allows lecturers to allocate time allowance for individual students. **Canvas Assignments** allows a lecturer to run the same timed assessment/ exam for a different time period for a student or group of students. **See TEL Help Pages on how to implement this:** https://telhelp.eu.helpdocs.com/ There may be a need for increased flexibility around extra time to allow DSS students to use new online exam formats / assistive technology.	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.
Rest breaks	**Rest breaks are pauses where the exam time is stopped when a student takes a rest break without being penalised. They are not allowed work on the timed assessment/exam during this time.** Rest breaks are typically are granted to students who may not physically be able to sit, write, type or concentrate for long periods of time. Students should request rest breaks and/or extra time directly from lecturers for each timed assessment/ exam in advance.	Canvas does not have the facility to allow for rest breaks - only extra time. Allowing extra time instead of rest breaks might be suitable in individual student cases. (See *Extra time* above)	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.

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Reading Software	The majority of DSS students entitled to reading support would use reading software (TextHelp Read Write Gold) in end-of semester exams. For shorter tests some students may choose to only use Extra time. **If students require reading support for online timed assessments/ exams the DSS recommends students use Read Write Gold software.** Information on how to download this software and training videos is available at: https://tinyurl.com/CITReadingsoftwareOnline https://www.youtube.com/user/AccessATS www.mycit.ie/exam-supports-online Students should familiarise themselves with the software, training videos and use with any practice tests and Canvas* content available before using with any timed assessments/ exams. Students should inform their lecturer of their intention to use the software.	**Lecturers do not need to provide access to reading software in Canvas for timed assessments/ exams.** Reading software is usually a separate piece of software or embedded on the student's computer that would read out the screen or text to the student. See "Creating accessible online content and documents FAQs" below.	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.
Reader	A small number of DSS students are entitled to a reader in exams (a person who reads out the exam paper aloud). **Providing a reader remotely is not currently feasible. Students should use the *Reading software* solution (above) where possible.**	See *Reading Software* above	See *Reading Software* above

Exam Support	Comment on support and Student access	Suggestions for lecturers to implement in online timed assessments/ examinations	Recommended Contingency
Use of a computer to type	Students whose ability to write is significantly impacted by a disability are allowed to type their timed assessments/ exams rather than handwrite. Students are recommended to improve their typing skills if needed. Free Typing training is available here: http://typing.com	Students should be allowed to type their timed assessments/ exams instead of handwriting where possible. Use of Spellcheck should be allowed.	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.
Scribe	A small number of DSS students are entitled to a scribe in an exam (a person who writes or types the exam answers as the student speaks them out loud). **Providing a scribe remotely is not currently feasible. Students should establish if they can use a computer to type** instead (see *Use of a computer to type* above). Or if **students who already <u>regularly use and are familiar</u> with dictation/ speech-to-text software** (e.g. Dragon or Windows MS Dictate) **may find this is suitable for the online timed assessment/ exam.** Students should familiarise themselves with the training advice on www.mycit.ie/exam-supports-online. They should use the dictation software with any practice tests and Canvas* content available before using with any timed assessments/ exams. Students should contact the lecturer /DSS to inform them if they are planning to use this software.	See *Use of a computer to type* above. There may be a need for increased flexibility around extra time to allow students to access their assistive technology software or to take a slower typing speed into account (see *Extra time* above).	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.

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Enlarged Paper	Students with visual impairments may be entitled to enlarged exam papers. **Students who already <u>regularly use and are familiar</u> with magnification software should be able to use this in their online timed assessments /exams**. Students should practice using the software with any practice tests and Canvas* content available before using with any timed assessments/ exams.	Lecturers do not need to provide access to magnification software in Canvas for timed assessments/ exams. There may be a need for increased flexibility around extra time to allow additional time in addition to extra time to allow students to access their assistive technology software. (see *Extra time* above) See "Creating accessible online content and documents FAQs" below.	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.
Coloured Paper	CIT exam papers are printed on cream paper. Some DSS students would have their exam papers printed on coloured paper. Students can change the colour of their screens either through the accessibility features on their own computer or browser. They should check that any changes in screen colour they have made on their computer works with any practice tests and Canvas content before using with any online timed assessments/ exams.	Lecturers do not need to provide access to magnification software in Canvas for timed assessments/ exams.	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.

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Shared separate centre or individual separate centre	Students can have the entitlement of either a smaller shared or separate (not shared) centre – this is a smaller or individual venue typically separate to the physical large main examination venue but run under the same procedures. Students may not require this support in their current circumstances while studying at home. Tips on creating a low distraction exam venue at home is on the DSS website: www.mycit.ie/exam-supports-online	Flexibility around the timings of timed assessments/exams could be considered to allow students to access a quieter space in their home environment where possible.	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.
ISL Interpreter/ Speedtext	Students with hearing impairments may be entitled to use an ISL (Irish Sign Language) interpreter and/or Speedtext (who transcribes the answers) in timed assessments/ exams. Students would typically have additional extra time using these supports stated on their needs assessment. **Providing ISL and Speedtext simultaneously remotely is not currently feasible.**		If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.

Exam Support	Comment on support and Student access	Suggestions for lecturers to implement in online timed assessments/ examinations	Recommended Contingency
Marking guidelines	DSS students with students with reading, writing or spelling difficulties can refer their lecturers to the marking guidelines for timed assessments/ exams. This is stated on their needs assessment under Exams Supports. The guidelines are available here: www.mycit.ie/access_disability/disability-support-service/exams1	Marking guidelines can apply to any timed assessments/ exam including open book exams (depending on the format).	No alternative needed
Equipment	Students sitting exams on campus can access equipment such as Height Adjustable Desks; Special Chairs; Back Supports; Soft Keyboards, etc., which is provided by the Exams Office. Students may already have access to these supports at home. **Facilitating such equipment for remote use is not currently feasible** for online timed assessments/ exams in the home environment.	There may be a need for increased flexibility around extra time to allow students to take this into account. (See *Extra time above*)	If a DSS student cannot access their supports for their timed assessment/ exam, academic staff are asked to consider providing an alternative method of assessment that meets the given module learning outcomes. Where the academic department deems an alternative method of assessment is not possible a student can complete the IEC form.
*Canvas is compliant with W3C standards and US section 508 guidelines and that there is screen reader support (for JAWS and on Firefox and Safari and NVDA on Firefox)			

Recommended Resources

- **CIT TEL student guides to learning online (using Canvas)**
- **CIT Access Service Tips for online studying/preparing for online exams**
- **CIT Reading software in online exams installation guide and installation/training videos**
- **Accessing Accessibility tools for Home Study from CIT Assistive Technology Officer.**
- **Typing training**: http://typing.com
- **Using Dictation software in online CIT exams**
- **Using assistive technology on your phone YouTube videos**
- **Setting up quiet exam space tips** and TCD video guide
- Current CIT students can **download** Microsoft Office ProPlus for free.
- CIT **Assistive Technology** YouTube channel

STAFF
- **CIT - TEL (Technology Enhanced Learning)**
- **CANVAS TEL Help Centre - CIT staff guides to remote teaching online**
- **CIT TLU - Keep Teaching Toolkit**
- **CIT TLU - Tacit Guides**
- **CIT Guidelines for Examiners when Marking Scripts from Students with a Disability who have a Reading, Writing or Spelling Difficulty**
- **10 Ways to Ensure Online Assessment is Accessible and Inclusive**, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education/ AHEAD, published March 24, 2020.
- **10 Points to Consider in Choosing Alternative Assessment Methods for the Online Environment**, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, published March 12, 2020.
- **Selecting Online Alternatives to Common Assessment Methods**, National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, published March 26, 2020.
- Gordon, D. (2020) **The Hitchhikers guide to Alternative Assessments** (DIT lecturer)
- QQI (2020) **Guiding Principles For Alternative Assessments** (Devised In Response To The Covid-19 Emergency Restrictions),
- AHEAD (2020) **Universal Design for Learning**
- **UDL – Learning and Sharing – practical and easy ways to create more innovative and inclusive practice in lectures and assessment** - CIT TLU Tús Maith 2019/20 Programme (2019), Laura Coleman/Ruth Murphy, DSS, and Sinéad Huskisson /Dr Aisling Conway Lenihan, Dept. of Management & Enterprise.

Creating accessible online content and documents FAQs (sourced from Trinity College Dublin Disability Service)

What are the Quick Fixes to make online academic content accessible?
- Structure documents using the inbuilt styles e.g. headings, bulleted lists.
- Use plain English and short sentences.
- Use sans serif fonts such as Arial, Calabri and Verdana.
- Avoid using italic text as it can be harder to read and use **bold** to emphasise words instead.
- Use left align and avoid justified text as this can create large uneven spaces between letters and words.
- Make web links descriptive so it is obvious what you are linking to e.g. 'contact us' instead of 'click here'.
- Add alternative text (or Alt text) to images to describe them for screen readers. If the image is purely decorative then alt text is not required as it doesn't provide important information.
- Use a good colour contrast.
- Add captions to videos and text descriptions for infographics.
- Avoid using merged cells in tables.
- Add page numbers.
- More guidelines on making information accessible can be found at the Trinity Inclusive Curriculum webpages.

How do I create Accessible Documents?
When creating content, you can follow a few basic steps to ensure that your content is accessible. The core steps needed for accessibility are the same regardless of whether your document is in HTML, Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, or another document format:
- Use headings
- Use lists
- Use meaningful hyperlinks
- Add alternate text to images
- Identify document language
- Use tables wisely
- Understand how to export from one format to another

The Trinity Inclusive Curriculum webpages offer clear and concise guidelines on how to ensure your documents are accessible.
See these links for more information:
- Creating accessible documents in Microsoft Word
- Creating accessible presentations in Microsoft PowerPoint
- Creating accessible PDFs

<mark>How do I make my online content accessible?</mark>

Social Media:
- Social Media posts - include Alt text (alternative text) for images to allow screen readers to interpret graphics.
- Use 'CamelCase' for hashtags and capitalise the first letter of every word (for example #ThisIsAccessible whereas #thisisnotaccessible).
- Sharing videos through YouTube allows for automatically generated closed captions.
- Visit the TIC [Social Media Accessibility](#) webpage for further guidance.

Media/video/audio: Videos should be produced and delivered in ways that ensure that all members of the audience can access their content. **An accessible video should include captions and a transcript**. **Captions are text versions of the audio content, synchronized with the video.** They are essential for ensuring your video is accessible to students, employees, and members of the public who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- [Adding captions to You Tube video](#)s
- [Adding captions to videos in Canvas](#)
- [Adding captions to videos in MS Teams](#)
- [Adding captions to videos in Facebook](#)

<mark>How do I create High Quality Scanned Documents?</mark>
In order to be fully accessible, follow these steps (It may be necessary to consult the manufacturer's instructions for your scanner):
1. **Check your results:** Checking your scanned documents to see if it is legible etc.
2. **Increase your default resolution:** Check the scanner's default resolution and increase to a minimum of 300dpi. Your final file size will be larger, but the resulting documents will be much better quality.
3. **The image is distorted or blurred:** Make sure the document or photo lies on a flat stable surface on the document table. Also make sure it is not wrinkled or warped. Make sure you do not move the document or your scanner while scanning.
4. **The scanned image is too dark:** It may be necessary to change the display setting to match the output device. Check the brightness and contrast settings of your computer monitor.
5. **An image on the back of your original appears in your scanned image:** If your original is printed on thin paper, images on the back may be visible to the scanner and appear in your scanned image. Try scanning the original with a piece of black paper placed on the back of it. Also make sure the document type and image type settings are correct for your original.