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**IN-COURSE CREDIT BEARING ASSESSMENTS**

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# Guidelines for Deciding on In-Course Assessments Reasonable Accommodations

When designing alternative assessments for students with disabilities, it is crucial to

maintain the integrity of the learning outcomes and competencies of each course. The goal

is to ensure that all students, regardless of their abilities, have the opportunity to

demonstrate their mastery of course content and skills effectively. This matrix provides a

structured approach to defining, mapping, customising, collaborating, and continuously

improving accommodations for students.

**Key Principles:**

**1. Defining Learning Outcomes and Competencies:** Clearly articulate the knowledge,

skills, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate upon completion of each

course or assessment. This clarity ensures that all accommodations are purposefully

designed to help students achieve these outcomes.

**2. Mapping Accommodations to Learning Outcomes:** For each type of assessment,

identify how the recommended accommodations support the achievement of

specific learning outcomes. Ensure that accommodations enable students to

effectively demonstrate their mastery of course competencies without

compromising the integrity of the assessment.

**3. Customising Accommodations Based on Competencies:** Recognise that some

accommodations may need to be tailored not only to the student's needs but also to

the specific competencies being assessed. For example, alternative assessment

formats should still evaluate the core competencies of the course.

**4. Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** Implement UDL principles by providing multiple

means of representation, expression, and engagement. This approach ensures that

all students have equal opportunities to learn and demonstrate their knowledge in

ways that work best for them. By designing assessments and instructional materials

that are flexible and inclusive, UDL helps to minimise barriers and maximise learning

for all students.

**5. Faculty/Course Collaboration:** Engage faculty members in discussions about

accommodations and learning outcomes to ensure a deep understanding of how

adjustments can be made without lowering academic standards. Encourage faculty

to think creatively about alternative methods of assessing competencies that are

inclusive of all students.

**6. Feedback Loop:** Establish a feedback mechanism with students to ensure that

accommodations effectively support their learning and attainment of course

competencies. Use this feedback to continually refine accommodations and teaching

strategies.

**7. Documentation and Communication:** Clearly document how accommodations align

with learning outcomes and competencies within course syllabi and accommodation

plans. Communicate with students about how accommodations will support their

learning and assessment performance.

By adhering to these principles, disability officers can create an inclusive learning

environment where accommodations are not only about accessibility but also about

enabling students to demonstrate their full potential and mastery of course competencies.

This matrix serves as a guide to thoughtfully and effectively integrating accommodations

into the academic framework, ensuring that all students can succeed.

# In-Course Assessments Reasonable Accommodation Matrix

In-course assessments in HEIs are designed to evaluate students' understanding, skills, and

progress throughout an academic course, often contributing to the final grade. These

assessments vary widely across disciplines and courses, offering diverse methods to measure

student learning. Here are some common types of in-course assessments used in HEIs:

**1. Essays and Written Assignments:** These require students to compose responses to

specific prompts, demonstrating their ability to research, analyse, and articulate their

thoughts on a subject.

**2. Exams and Tests:** Including both in-class and take-home formats, exams can be

cumulative or cover specific sections of the course material, often featuring a mix of

question types such as multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions.

**3. Quizzes:** Shorter than exams, quizzes are usually administered more frequently

throughout the semester to assess students' understanding of recent lecture material or

Readings.

**4. Lab Reports:** In science and engineering courses, students often complete laboratory

experiments and write reports detailing their methodology, findings, and the implications

of their work.

**5. Presentations:** Both individual and group presentations allow students to develop and

showcase their communication skills, as well as their understanding of a topic.

**6. Group Projects:** These assess students' ability to work collaboratively on a project, often

culminating in a presentation or a written report that synthesises their collective research

and analysis.

**7. Case Studies:** Particularly common in business and law courses, case studies challenge

students to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios, requiring critical thinking

and problem-solving skills.

**8. Portfolios:** Used in many creative disciplines, such as writing, art, and design, portfolios

compile students' work over the semester or academic year, showcasing them

development and best pieces.

**9. Peer Review:** This involves students evaluating each other's work based on set criteria,

fostering critical analysis skills and providing diverse feedback.

**10. Participation and Contribution:** Some courses include marks for participation in class

discussions, demonstrating engagement with the material and contributing to the

learning environment.

**11. Reflective Journals:** These encourage students to reflect on their learning process,

understandings, and personal growth throughout the course.

**12. Practical Assessments:** Especially in disciplines requiring specific practical skills, such as

nursing, engineering, and performing arts, practical assessments evaluate students' ability

to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world or simulated environments.

Each type of assessment has its strengths and limitations and is chosen based on its suitability to measure specific learning outcomes. Effective courses often employ a mix of these assessment types to provide a comprehensive evaluation of student learning and to cater to diverse learning styles and strengths.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assessment Type** | **Challenges** | **Recommended Accommodations** | **Supporting Learning Outcomes** | |
| **Essays/Written Assignments** | Time management, Organisation | Extended deadlines, Use of assistive technology, Alternative formats | Critical thinking, Analytical writing, Research skills | |
| **Exams/Tests** | Concentration, Anxiety | Extended time, Separate testing location, Use of assistive technology | Subject knowledge, Problem-solving, Application of theory | |
| **Quizzes** | Processing speed, Attention | Alternative formats, Extended time, Quiet environment | Understanding of key concepts, Immediate recall, Critical analysis | |
| **Lab Reports** | Physical manipulation, Organisation | Assistive technology, Physical accessibility accommodations, Extended time | Scientific methodology, Data analysis, technical writing | |
| **Presentations** | Social anxiety, Organisation of thoughts | Flexible format options, Practice sessions, Reduced audience size | Oral communication, Persuasive argumentation, Knowledge dissemination | |
| **Group Projects** | Collaboration, Communication | Clear role definitions, Structured collaboration tools, Alternative meeting formats | Teamwork, Project management, Collaborative problem-solving | |
| **Case studies** | Problem solving, critical thinking | Extended deadlines, Use of assistive technology, Alternative assessment | Reflection, critical thinking, problem solving | |
| **Portfolios** | Organisation, Critical thinking | Extended deadline, Alternative format, Assistive Technology | Subject knowledge, critical reflection | |
| **Peer reviews** | Social anxiety, Exclusion | Accessible instructions, choice of communication, training on feedback | Collaborative problem-solving, critical reflection | |
| **Attendance and Participation** | Social anxiety, Fatigue | Alternative forms of participation, assistive technology | Subject knowledge, routine, critical thinking, peer support | |
| **Reflective Exercises** | Communication barriers, Cognitive overload | Flexible format, structured prompt, assistive technology | Reflection, critical thinking | |
| **Practical Assessments** | Physical manipulation, Organisation | Extended time, modified equipment, physical environment adaptation | Research skills, data analysis, application of theory | |
| **Problem Based Learning** | Problem solving, working in a team | Accessible space, extended time, alternative format | Problem-solving, teamwork | |
| **Field Work** | Physical manipulation, fatigue, social anxiety | Accessible location, assistive technology, personal assistance | Research skills, analysis, immediate recall | |
| **Admission Entrance exams & portfolios** | Time management, stress management, sensory difficulties, handwriting | Extended deadlines, Alternative Technology, Alternative format | Understanding of key concepts, subject knowledge | |
|  | | | |

## Accommodations for Essays and Assignments

Providing reasonable accommodations for disabled and neurodivergent students in essays and written assignments ensures equitable access to demonstrating their understanding and skills. These accommodations are tailored to individual needs but generally aim to address barriers that might prevent students from fully showcasing their capabilities. Here are some common accommodations for essays and written assignments:

1. **Extended Deadlines:** Allowing additional time to complete assignments can accommodate students who may require more time due to processing, organisational, or health-related challenges.
2. **Use of Assistive Technology:** Permitting the use of software such as speech-to-text, text-to-speech, spell checkers, grammar checkers, and mind mapping tools can assist students with dyslexia, visual impairments, or physical disabilities affecting their ability to write or type.
3. **Alternative Formats:** Accepting assignments in alternative formats, such as oral presentations or video submissions, can accommodate students who express their understanding better verbally than in written form.
4. **Exam Adjustments:** For timed essay exams, providing extra time, a separate room, or the option to use a computer instead of handwriting responses can help students with various disabilities.
5. **Use of a Scribe:** When AT is insufficient or alternative assessment is not available, offering the assistance of a scribe to physically type out the student's responses can benefit students with physical disabilities that impact their writing ability.
6. **Note-taking Support:** Providing note-taking assistance or access to lecture materials in advance can help students with disabilities that affect their ability to take comprehensive notes during lectures, which are essential for completing assignments.
7. **Adjustments to Assignment Length or Complexity:** Modifying the length requirements or simplifying the complexity of the assignment can be reasonable for students whose disabilities affect their ability to produce extensive written material under standard conditions. For this accommodation to be granted, an non-standard reasonable accommodation application should fill out with a rationale as to why the student cannot complete the assignments. The Disability Service must review the assignment and the learning outcomes.
8. **Breaks During Examinations:** Allowing breaks during in-class essay exams can help students with anxiety, ADHD, or health issues manage their condition without impacting their performance.
9. **Clarification and Guidance:** Offering more detailed explanations, feedback, or guidance on assignments can support students who have difficulties with understanding complex instructions due to specific learning disabilities. For this accommodation to be granted, a non-standard reasonable accommodation application should fill out with a rationale as to why the student cannot complete the assignments. The Disability Service must review the assignment and the learning outcomes.
10. **Access to Resource Materials:** Ensuring that all required readings and resources are available in accessible formats supports students with visual impairments or learning disabilities. The Disability Service should provide spelling and grammar AT resources in the In-course assessments (e.g. Grammarly and Word Editor).

Implementing these accommodations requires collaboration between students, disability support services, and instructors to ensure that the adjustments effectively address the students' needs without compromising academic standards. Accommodations are highly individualised and should be based on documented needs and an understanding of how the student's disability affects their learning and assessment performance.

## Accommodations for Exams and Tests

For exams and tests, which are critical components of the assessment process in educational settings, providing reasonable accommodations for disabled students is essential to ensure equity and access. These accommodations help mitigate the impact of a student's disability on their exam performance, allowing their knowledge and skills to be assessed fairly. Here are several common accommodations for exams and tests:

1. **Extended Time:** Providing additional time to complete exams is one of the most common accommodations, helping students with processing disorders, anxiety, or other disabilities that may slow their work pace.
2. **Separate/Alternative Testing Location:** Offering exams in a distraction-reduced or separate environment can benefit students with ADHD, anxiety disorders, or sensory sensitivities.
3. **Use of Assistive Technology:** Allowing the use of specific technologies, such as screen reading software, speech-to-text applications, or magnification software, supports students with visual impairments, dyslexia, or mobility impairments.
4. **Alternative Formats:** Providing exams in different formats (e.g., Braille, large print, digital formats compatible with assistive technologies, if a digital paper provide a paper version, if required) accommodates students with visual impairments or learning disabilities.
5. **Scribe or Electronic Reader Services:** When AT is insufficient, offering a scribe to write down answers as dictated or a electronic reader (e.g. c pen) to read exam questions can help students with physical disabilities or those who have reading difficulties.
6. **Exam Content Adjustments:** While not changing the core requirements, clarifying exam questions or instructions can assist students who have difficulties with language processing. Examples could involve rephrasing complex questions into simpler, more direct language, providing additional context, or breaking down multi-step questions into clear, distinct parts. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
7. **Alternative Assessment Methods:** In some cases, replacing a standard exam with an alternative form of assessment (e.g., an oral exam, a presentation, or a portfolio) may be a reasonable accommodation for students who demonstrate their knowledge more effectively in other formats. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
8. **Use of Memory Aids:** For some students, especially those with memory impairments or specific learning disabilities, the use of formula sheets, glossaries, prompts, or other memory aids may be appropriate. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
9. **Flexible Scheduling:** Allowing students to take exams at different times (e.g., at a time of day when their symptoms are less severe, or if they can only function at certain times of the day) can accommodate health-related disabilities. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.

These accommodations are determined based on individual needs and typically require documentation of the disability. Coordination with disability services at the educational institution ensures that accommodations are implemented effectively, respecting both the integrity of the assessment and the student's right to an equitable testing environment. It's important that accommodations are tailored to support the student's specific needs without compromising the academic standards or learning outcomes of the exam.

## Accommodations for MCQ Assessments

Accommodations for disabled and neurodivergent students in **Multiple Choice Question (MCQ)** assessments aim to provide equitable testing conditions and ensure that the assessment accurately reflects the students' knowledge and skills, not their disabilities. The accommodations vary based on individual needs but generally include modifications to the exam format, environment, or the provision of assistive technology. Here are some commonly provided accommodations for MCQ assessments:

1. **Extended Time:** Allowing extra time to complete the MCQs can help students who need longer to process information or manage their responses due to their disability.
2. **Alternative Formats:** Providing the MCQs in alternative formats, such as large print, Braille, or digital formats compatible with screen readers, paper versions, can accommodate visual impairments or learning disabilities.
3. **Use of Assistive Technology:** Permitting the use of assistive technology, like text-to-speech software, screen readers, or speech recognition software, can support students with a variety of disabilities in accessing and responding to MCQs.
4. **Separate Testing Room:** Offering the option to take the test in a separate room can reduce distractions and anxiety for students with ADHD, anxiety disorders, or other conditions that affect concentration.
5. **Adjustment of Question Presentation:** Presenting one question at a time instead of multiple questions on a single page can help reduce overwhelm and focus difficulties for some students. Presenting answers with altered grammar and phrasing can help students with word processing difficulties. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
6. **Provision of a Scribe or Electronic Reader:** When AT is insufficient, offering a scribe to write down answers as dictated or an electronic reader (e.g. c pen) can read the questions aloud, assisting students with physical disabilities or reading difficulties.
7. **MCQs Design Modification:** Ensuring that the MCQs are written clearly and unambiguously to avoid disadvantaging students with specific learning disabilities. This may include avoiding double negatives or overly complex language that could confuse students with dyslexia or other learning difficulties.
8. **On-Screen Navigation Aids:** For digital assessments, ensuring that navigation is straightforward and accessible for students using assistive technology, such as keyboard-only navigation for students who cannot use a mouse.
9. **Clarification of Questions:** Allowing students to ask for clarification on questions without giving them the answers can help students who might misinterpret questions due to their disabilities.

When determining the appropriate accommodations, it's essential to work closely with the disabled students and, if applicable, the institution's disability services office. This collaboration ensures that accommodations are tailored to meet each student's specific needs and are implemented effectively.

**Assessment Presentation and MCQ Design Modification**: Presenting one question at a time, rather than multiple questions on a single page, can help reduce overwhelm and focus difficulties for students. This method provides a more manageable and less intimidating assessment experience. Additionally, altering the grammar and phrasing of answers can assist students with word processing difficulties. Ensuring Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) are written clearly and unambiguously, avoiding double negatives or overly complex language, further supports students with dyslexia or other learning difficulties. These combined strategies create an inclusive assessment environment that accommodates diverse learning needs.

## Accommodations for Quizzes

Reasonable accommodations for disabled and neurodivergent students in **Quizzes** are designed to ensure equitable access and opportunity to demonstrate their understanding of the course material. Quizzes, being shorter and more frequent than traditional exams, still require thoughtful accommodations to support diverse needs. Here are some accommodations that can be made for quizzes:

1. **Extended Time:** Allowing extra time for quizzes helps students who need more time to read, process information, or articulate their answers due to disabilities affecting their processing speed, such as dyslexia or ADHD.
2. **Alternative Formats:** Providing quizzes in accessible formats, such as large print, Braille, or digitally accessible documents, can accommodate students with visual impairments or learning disabilities.
3. **Use of Assistive Technology:** Enabling the use of assistive technology tools, like screen readers, speech-to-text software, or text enlargement software, supports students with a range of disabilities, including visual impairments, dyslexia, and mobility issues.
4. **Separate Testing Location:** Offering a quiet, distraction-reduced environment can benefit students with ADHD, anxiety disorders, or sensory sensitivities, helping them to concentrate better.
5. **Flexible Scheduling:** Allowing students to take quizzes at a different time or day can accommodate those with fluctuating conditions or who require specific medical treatments.
6. **Scribe or Reader Services:** When AT is insufficient, offering a scribe to write down answers as dictated or an electronic reader (e.g c pen) to read quiz questions can assist students with physical disabilities, visual impairments, or reading difficulties.
7. **Clarification of Quiz Questions:** Allowing students to ask for clarification on quiz questions without providing the answers can help those with processing difficulties or where language barriers might exist. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
8. **Multiple Attempts:** For online quizzes, allowing multiple attempts can reduce test anxiety and accommodate students who may make technical errors or require more than one attempt to adequately demonstrate their knowledge. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
9. **Alternative Assessment Methods:** In certain cases, replacing a quiz with another type of assessment that better suits the student's abilities and needs might be a reasonable accommodation. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.

Implementing these accommodations typically involves collaboration between the student, disability support services, and faculty to ensure that the accommodations are practical and effective, balancing the need to maintain academic standards with the principle of equitable access. The goal is to provide a testing environment that allows all students to demonstrate their understanding of the course material without being disadvantaged by their disabilities.

## Accommodations for Lab Reports

Accommodations for lab reports with additional considerations for disabled and neurodivergent students provides a comprehensive approach to support all students, particularly those with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions. Here's a merged list of accommodations:

1. **Extended Time:** Allow additional time for both laboratory work and report writing to accommodate students with processing speed issues, physical disabilities, or other conditions that impact their pace.
2. **Assistive Technology:** Enable the use of software such as speech-to-text, text-to-speech, or specialised data analysis tools to assist students with disabilities in conducting research, analysing data, and writing their reports.
3. **Alternative Formats for Submission:** Accept lab reports in alternative formats, like oral presentations or video demonstrations, to provide equitable opportunities for students who have difficulties with written expression.
4. **Physical Accessibility:** Ensure the laboratory environment is accessible for students with mobility impairments, including adjustable lab benches and accessible equipment.
5. **Personal Assistants or Lab Partners:** Assign a lab partner or assistant to help with the physical aspects of lab work for students with physical disabilities or visual impairments.
6. **Clear, Structured Instructions:** Provide clear, concise, and structured instructions, possibly with visual aids or examples, to help neurodivergent students understand the task requirements.
7. **Predictable Schedules:** Maintain consistent and predictable schedules for lab sessions and deadlines to help neurodivergent students manage anxiety and plan their workload.
8. **Visual Supports and Organisers:** Use visual supports, such as flowcharts, diagrams, or mind maps, to help in planning and structuring lab reports, assisting students in visualising the steps of the experiment.
9. **Pre-lab Preparations:** Offer pre-lab sessions to go over objectives, procedures, and expectations, providing a clearer understanding of the tasks and reducing anxiety.
10. **Sensory Accommodations:** Provide options to mitigate sensory stimuli in the lab environment for students sensitive to bright lights, noises, or smells.
11. **Flexible Communication:** Offer various modes of communication for asking questions or discussing lab reports to accommodate different communication preferences.
12. **Emphasise Strengths:** Allow students to focus on aspects of the lab work that align with their unique strengths or interests, leveraging the diverse skills of neurodivergent students. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
13. **Explicit Teaching of Social Norms:** In group settings, explicitly discuss expected social norms and collaborative skills, particularly for students with social communication difficulties. Ensure group work guidance for students is provided in writing in the course handbooks.
14. **Check-ins for Understanding:** Conduct regular, individualised check-ins to ensure students are on track, understand the material, and feel supported.
15. **Feedback Methods:** Provide feedback in a constructive, specific, and sensitive manner, considering the needs of neurodivergent students, and offer options for written or one-on-one feedback discussions.
16. **Scribe Services:** Allow the use of a scribe to transcribe students' findings and analyses into the report format for students with physical disabilities impacting typing or writing.
17. **Flexible Scheduling:** Accommodate students who require medical treatment or have conditions necessitating flexible scheduling of lab sessions to ensure equal access.
18. **Breaks During Lab Work:** Permit scheduled breaks during lab sessions to help students with medical conditions, concentration issues, or fatigue manage their energy. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.
19. **Modified Lab Assignments:** Modify the scope of lab assignments or offer alternative assignments that achieve the same learning objectives to accommodate specific needs. This would be deemed to be a non-standard request.

This comprehensive list aims to create an inclusive, accessible laboratory learning environment that accommodates the diverse needs of all students, including those with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions.

## Accommodations for Presentations

For **presentations**, creating an inclusive environment that accommodates disabled and neurodivergent students involves adjustments to both the preparation process and the presentation settings. These accommodations help ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to showcase their knowledge and communication skills. Here’s a comprehensive list of reasonable accommodations:

1. **Flexible Format Options:** Allow students to choose their presentation format, such as a live presentation, pre-recorded video, or a written report. This flexibility can accommodate a range of disabilities and comfort levels.
2. **Extended Preparation Time:** Provide additional time for preparation to students who may require more time due to processing speed issues, organisational challenges, or who need extra practice due to anxiety or communication differences.
3. **Use of Assistive Technology:** Permit the use of assistive technology during the presentation, such as speech-to-text software for drafting scripts, or text-to-speech software for students who have difficulty with verbal communication.
4. **Alternative Visual Aids:** Support the use of alternative visual aids or the assistance of a peer or aide in managing technical aspects of the presentation for students with physical, visual, or cognitive disabilities.
5. **Clarification and Practice Opportunities:** Offer opportunities for rehearsal and feedback in a supportive setting, which can be particularly beneficial for neurodivergent students who benefit from clear expectations and practice.
6. **Reduced Audience Size:** Allow presentations to be given to a smaller audience or just the instructor, reducing anxiety for students with social anxiety or autism spectrum disorders.
7. **Structured Guidelines and Rubrics:** Provide clear, detailed guidelines and rubrics for presentations, including explicit descriptions of the grading criteria. This can help neurodivergent students understand expectations more clearly.
8. **Choice in Group Members:** For group presentations, allow students some flexibility in choosing group members or the option to work alone if group settings are particularly challenging.
9. **Sensory Accommodations:** For students sensitive to sensory input, ensure the presentation environment is conducive to their needs, such as adjusting lighting, minimising background noise, or allowing the use of noise-cancelling headphones until their turn.
10. **Scheduled Breaks:** Permit breaks during longer presentations or preparation sessions to help students manage fatigue, anxiety, or concentration issues.
11. **Presentation Time Flexibility:** Allow students to present at the beginning of the session if anticipation exacerbates anxiety or at a specific time that accommodates medical or therapy schedules.
12. **Clear Communication Channels:** Maintain open, ongoing communication with students about their needs and preferences for accommodations, ensuring adjustments are made in a collaborative and supportive manner.
13. **Peer Feedback Considerations:** Structure peer feedback to be constructive and moderated by the instructor to ensure it is delivered in a manner that is supportive and not overwhelming.
14. **Note Cards or Prompts:** Allow the use of note cards, prompts, or a full script during the presentation for students who may struggle with memory or executive functioning issues.
15. **Assessment Adjustments:** Tailor assessment criteria to focus on content and knowledge rather than penalising for delivery style or nervousness, which can disproportionately affect disabled and neurodivergent students.

Implementing these accommodations involves collaboration between educators, disability services, and the students themselves to ensure that the support provided effectively addresses individual needs and promotes an inclusive learning environment.

## Accommodations for Group Projects

For **group projects**, accommodations for disabled and neurodivergent students should aim to ensure equitable participation and collaboration opportunities. These accommodations can help manage the challenges these students might face in group settings and support their contribution to the project's success.

How to navigate accommodation without disclosure

Here's a comprehensive list of reasonable accommodations:

1. **Clear Role Definitions:** Establish clear roles and responsibilities within the group, tailored to each member's strengths and needs. This can help manage expectations and reduce anxiety for students who struggle with ambiguity or social interaction.
2. **Flexible Communication Options:** Offer various communication methods (e.g., email, online forums, video conferencing) to accommodate different communication preferences and needs. For example, non-verbal or minimally verbal students might prefer written communication.
3. **Structured Collaboration Tools:** Utilise structured collaboration tools and platforms that allow for organised task assignment and progress tracking. This can benefit students with executive functioning challenges by providing a clear overview of the project's status and their responsibilities.
4. **Alternative Meeting Formats:** Allow for flexible meeting formats, such as virtual meetings, to accommodate students who may have sensory sensitivities, social anxiety, or mobility issues.
5. **Extended Deadlines:** Provide additional time for group projects to accommodate students who need more time for processing, communication, or coordination with group members. Extra time should be given to the group without penalty.
6. **Individual Assessment Options:** Offer the option for students to be assessed individually in addition to or instead of the group assessment if the group setting significantly impacts their ability to contribute.
7. **Guided Peer Interaction:** Provide structured activities or guidelines for peer interaction to support students with social communication difficulties in navigating group dynamics.
8. **Regular Check-ins:** Schedule regular check-ins with the instructor or a designated facilitator to ensure that all group members are participating fully and that accommodations are effectively implemented.
9. **Conflict Resolution Support:** Offer conflict resolution support or mediation to help groups navigate disagreements or communication challenges, ensuring that all voices are heard and respected.
10. **Sensory-Accommodative Workspaces:** Ensure that any physical meetings are held in spaces that accommodate sensory needs, such as quiet rooms with minimal distractions for those with sensory processing sensitivities.
11. **Explicit Teaching of Social Norms:** Educate group members about the importance of inclusivity and the specific accommodations being implemented, fostering a supportive and understanding team environment. This can be achieved, for example, by a class on inclusivity, an online course, a document to be read and signed by the students.
12. **Flexible Contribution Formats:** Allow students to contribute to the project in various formats (e.g., video, audio, written text) that best suit their abilities and communication styles.
13. **Use of Assistive Technology:** Support the use of assistive technology by any group member, ensuring compatibility and accessibility in shared documents and communication platforms.
14. **Explicit Instructions and Feedback:** Provide explicit instructions for the project and constructive feedback throughout, helping students understand expectations and areas for improvement.
15. **Choice in Group Selection:** When possible, give students some choice in their group selection, allowing them to work with peers they feel comfortable with, which can alleviate anxiety and facilitate smoother collaboration. It is also recommended that lecturers should decide on group formations as some students may find it challenging to work in groups.

Implementing these accommodations requires proactive planning and communication among educators, disability services, and students. The goal is to create an inclusive environment that acknowledges and respects the diverse needs of all students, enabling them to collaborate effectively and achieve their full potential in group projects.

## Accommodations for Case Studies

**Case Studies:** For disabled and neurodivergent HEI students engaged in courses that use case studies, reasonable accommodations can be essential to ensure equitable access to learning and the ability to fully participate. The goal is to provide supports that respect the students' unique needs without compromising the integrity of the educational experience. Here are some examples of reasonable accommodations:

1. **Extended Time**: Allowing extra time for reading and completing case studies can help students who need more time to process information.
2. **Accessible Formats**: Providing case studies in accessible formats (e.g., large print, braille, audio) ensures that students with visual impairments or reading disorders can access the material.
3. **Assistive Technology**: Utilising technology such as screen readers, speech-to-text, or text-to-speech software can be invaluable for students with a range of disabilities, including mobility, vision, or learning disabilities.
4. **Alternative Assignment Formats**: Some students might benefit from presenting their analysis orally or through a video presentation if they have difficulties with writing.
5. **Note-taking Assistance**: Offering note-taking support or providing lecture notes in advance can help students who struggle with taking notes due to physical, cognitive, or learning disabilities.
6. **Study Groups and Peer Support**: Encouraging or facilitating the formation of study groups can provide additional support and a collaborative approach to understanding and analysing case studies.
7. **Clarification and Guidance**: Offering office hours or extra guidance sessions for students who need clarification on case studies can help those who might need additional explanation to fully understand the scenarios.
8. **Flexible Deadlines**: Being open to adjusting deadlines for students dealing with fluctuating conditions or those who require more time due to their disability.
9. **Distraction-Reduced Environment**: For in-class analysis or presentations, providing an option to work in a quiet, reduced-distraction environment can benefit students with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

It's important to collaborate with each student to identify the accommodations that best meet their individual needs. Higher Education Institutions often have disability services offices that can assist in determining and implementing these accommodations effectively.

## Accommodations for Portfolios

For disabled and neurodivergent students working on **portfolios** in creative disciplines, accommodations should aim to provide equitable opportunities to demonstrate their skills and development. These accommodations can be tailored to each student's needs, ensuring they can effectively compile and showcase their work. Here are some examples of reasonable accommodations for portfolio development:

1. **Extended Deadlines**: Allowing more time to complete and compile portfolio pieces can accommodate various needs, from slower processing speeds to physical disabilities that impact a student's pace of work.
2. **Alternative Submission Formats**: Some students may benefit from submitting their portfolio in a different format that better suits their abilities, such as digital presentations for those with physical disabilities or video/audio descriptions for visually impaired students.
3. **Assistive Technology**: Providing access to or allowing the use of assistive technology, like speech-to-text software for students with dyslexia or motor impairments, can facilitate the portfolio creation process.
4. **Modified Assignments**: Adjusting the portfolio requirements to accommodate the student's needs, such as reducing the number of pieces required for students who need more time to produce work or allowing different types of work that play to the student's strengths.
5. **Physical Accommodations**: Ensuring that all spaces used for creating portfolio pieces are accessible for students with mobility issues, and that any necessary physical accommodations are made in studios and classrooms.
6. **Personalised Feedback and Guidance**: Offering additional feedback sessions or guidance can help students who need more direction to understand the expectations for their portfolio and to receive personalised advice on their work.
7. **Peer Support and Collaboration**: Facilitating peer review sessions or collaborative projects within the portfolio can provide additional support and feedback, helping students refine their work through diverse perspectives.
8. **Flexible Presentation Options**: For students who must present their portfolio, offering flexible presentation options—such as private presentations, video presentations, or alternative formats—can accommodate anxiety, communication challenges, or physical disabilities.
9. **Technical Support**: Providing technical assistance for digital portfolios, including software training or help with digital accessibility, ensures that all students can utilise digital platforms effectively.
10. **Emotional and Mental Health Support**: Recognising that the process of creating and showcasing personal work can be stressful, providing access to emotional and mental health support is vital.

By implementing these accommodations, educators can help ensure that all students, regardless of disability or neurodivergence, have the opportunity to successfully complete and present their portfolios, reflecting their growth and achievements in their chosen discipline.

## Accommodations for Peer Review Exercises

In **peer review** exercises, reasonable accommodations for disabled and neurodivergent HEI students ensure they can fully participate and benefit from the process. These accommodations address various needs, promoting an inclusive learning environment where all students can engage effectively in evaluating each other's work. Here are some suggested accommodations:

1. **Clear and Accessible Instructions**: Provide instructions in various formats (written, oral, video) to accommodate different learning styles and needs, ensuring all students understand the peer review criteria and process.
2. **Extended Time**: Allow additional time for students who may need longer to process information or articulate their feedback, accommodating those with processing delays, dyslexia, or other learning disabilities.
3. **Use of Assistive Technology**: Enable students to use speech-to-text, text-to-speech software, or other assistive technologies that support their participation in writing or reading reviews.
4. **Structured Feedback Templates**: Offer structured feedback forms or templates to guide students in providing constructive feedback. This can help those who may struggle with organising their thoughts or with executive functioning challenges.
5. **Choice of Communication Method**: Allow students to choose how they provide feedback (e.g., written, oral, video) to accommodate various needs, such as anxiety disorders or difficulties with written expression.
6. **Training on Giving Feedback**: Provide training or guidelines on how to give constructive and respectful feedback, which can be particularly helpful for students with social communication difficulties, such as those on the autism spectrum.
7. **Moderated Feedback Sessions**: In cases where peer review is conducted in person or in real-time online settings, consider moderating these sessions to ensure a supportive environment, particularly for students who may experience anxiety or have difficulty with social interactions.
8. **Anonymous Feedback Options**: Offering the option to give or receive feedback anonymously can reduce anxiety and stress for some students, making the peer review process feel safer and more comfortable.
9. **Alternative Assignments**: If peer review poses insurmountable challenges for a student, consider alternative assignments that can achieve similar learning outcomes.
10. **Support and Accommodations for Receiving Feedback**: Provide support for students in processing and understanding the feedback they receive, such as one-on-one discussions with the instructor or support from a learning specialist.

Implementing these accommodations requires a flexible approach, tailored to the individual needs of each student. By doing so, educators can create a peer review process that not only fosters critical analysis and diverse perspectives but also respects and accommodates the diverse needs of all students, including those with disabilities and neurodivergence.

## Accommodations for Attendance, Participation and Contribution

In courses where attendance, **participation and contribution** are part of the grading criteria, providing reasonable accommodations for disabled and neurodivergent students is crucial to ensure equitable access and opportunities for engagement. These accommodations should recognise and address various barriers to participation, allowing all students to demonstrate their understanding and engagement with the material. Here are some accommodations that could be provided:

1. **Alternative Forms of Participation**: Allow students to participate in ways that suit their needs and abilities, such as written reflections, online discussion posts, or small group discussions, instead of solely relying on verbal participation in large group settings.
2. **Use of Technology**: Enable the use of assistive technology, such as speech-to-text software for students who have difficulty writing or communication devices for those with speech impairments.
3. **Preparation Time**: Give students the option to prepare responses or questions in advance of class discussions, which can benefit those with anxiety, processing delays, or who require more time to articulate their thoughts.
4. **Flexible Attendance Policies**: Consider flexible attendance policies for students whose disabilities may affect their ability to attend class regularly. Offer alternatives such as watching recorded lectures or participating in online forums.
5. **Designated Speaking Turns**: Implement structured discussion formats where students have designated turns or are invited to speak, reducing the pressure and anxiety associated with speaking up in more spontaneous discussion settings.
6. **Clarification and Reiteration**: Allow students to ask for clarification or to have information repeated during discussions to ensure they have fully understood the material, benefiting those with auditory processing disorders or attention deficits.
7. **Note-taking Assistance**: Provide note-taking support or access to lecture notes in advance to help students who have difficulty taking notes due to physical, cognitive, or learning disabilities.
8. **Peer Support**: Encourage or facilitate the formation of study groups or peer partnerships, providing another avenue for participation and learning that can be less intimidating than full class discussions.
9. **Anonymous Participation Options**: In settings where it's feasible, such as online forums or digital polling during class, offer anonymous participation options to reduce anxiety and encourage more open contribution.
10. **Regular Check-ins**: Schedule regular check-ins with students to discuss their participation, any challenges they're facing, and adjustments that might be needed to better accommodate their needs.
11. **Recognition of Non-verbal Participation**: Acknowledge and credit non-verbal forms of engagement, such as attentive listening, note-taking, or non-verbal responses, as valid forms of participation for students who may struggle with verbal communication.

By adopting a flexible and inclusive approach to participation and contribution, educators can create a learning environment where all students have the opportunity to engage with the material and contribute to discussions in a manner that respects their individual needs and abilities.

## Accommodations for Reflective journals

For disabled and neurodivergent students, **reflective journals** as a component of coursework require thoughtful accommodations to ensure equitable access and meaningful participation. Accommodations should cater to diverse needs, enabling students to reflect on their learning effectively. Here are several accommodations that could be provided:

1. **Flexible Format Options**: Allow students to choose their preferred format for reflective journals, including typed documents, audio recordings, video logs, or digital storytelling, to accommodate different abilities and preferences.
2. **Assistive Technology**: Support the use of assistive technologies, such as speech-to-text software for students with dyslexia or motor difficulties, and screen readers for visually impaired students, to facilitate the journaling process.
3. **Extended Deadlines**: Offer extended deadlines for journal entries to accommodate students who need additional time due to processing speeds, executive functioning challenges, or other disabilities that impact their ability to complete tasks promptly.
4. **Structured Prompts**: Provide structured prompts or guidelines to help students who may struggle with open-ended tasks. This can be particularly helpful for students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or those who find it challenging to initiate or organise their thoughts.
5. **Alternative Reflection Methods**: For students who may find written reflection challenging, consider alternative methods of reflection, such as creating a collage, drawing, or engaging in a one-on-one discussion to articulate their learning and growth.
6. **Clarification and Support**: Offer additional support sessions or materials to clarify expectations and provide guidance on reflective writing, beneficial for students who may need more explicit instruction.
7. **Confidentiality Assurance**: Ensure confidentiality and a safe space for students to share personal reflections, which is crucial for students who might be apprehensive about disclosing personal experiences or perspectives.
8. **Feedback Accommodations**: Provide feedback in accessible formats and consider the student's preferred method of receiving feedback to ensure they can fully understand and benefit from your guidance.
9. **Peer Support Options**: Facilitate optional peer review or group reflection sessions for students who benefit from discussing their thoughts and experiences with others, ensuring a supportive and inclusive environment.
10. **Emotional Support**: Recognise the emotional aspect of reflection and provide access to emotional support or counselling services for students who may uncover or deal with difficult emotions through the process.

By implementing these accommodations, educators can create an inclusive environment that recognises and respects the diverse needs of disabled and neurodivergent students, allowing them to engage meaningfully in reflective journaling activities.

## Accommodations for Practical Assessments

For disabled and neurodivergent students in disciplines that include **practical assessments**, reasonable accommodations are crucial to ensure equitable opportunities to demonstrate their competencies. Accommodations should be tailored to individual needs without compromising the essential outcomes of the assessment. Here are some accommodations that could be provided:

1. **Extended Time**: Allowing extra time for completing practical tasks can accommodate students with various disabilities, including those who process information more slowly or have physical disabilities affecting their speed.
2. **Modified Equipment**: Providing or allowing the use of modified equipment and tools can enable students with physical disabilities to perform practical tasks more effectively.
3. **Alternative Assessment Methods**: Offering alternative ways to demonstrate practical skills, such as oral presentations or written assignments, can accommodate students who face barriers in traditional practical assessments.
4. **Assistive Technology**: Utilising assistive technologies, like augmented communication devices for students with speech impairments or adaptive software for those with visual impairments, can support students in completing practical assessments.
5. **Physical Environment Adjustments**: Modifying the physical environment to ensure accessibility, such as adjustable workbenches for wheelchair users or quiet, distraction-free spaces for neurodivergent students, can remove barriers to participation. Allow students to choose their working area.
6. **One-on-One Assistance**: Providing personal assistants or allowing students to have a support person present during assessments can help with navigating the physical space or understanding instructions.
7. **Flexible Scheduling**: Offering assessments at different times or on different days can accommodate students with fluctuating conditions or those who require more time to prepare due to anxiety or other mental health issues.
8. **Clear, Structured Instructions**: Presenting instructions in clear, concise, and multiple formats (written, verbal, visual) can help students with learning disabilities or those who process information in specific ways.
9. **Breaks During Assessment**: Allowing breaks can help students with attention deficits, fatigue, or anxiety manage their energy levels and focus during practical assessments.
10. **Simulations and Practice Sessions**: Providing opportunities for simulations and extra practice sessions before the assessment can help all students, especially those who need more time to master practical skills due to their disabilities.
11. **Assessment Criteria Adjustments**: While maintaining core competencies, adjusting criteria to focus on the essential skills and knowledge needed can accommodate students' diverse ways of demonstrating proficiency.

**Additional Considerations**

**1. Inclusive Design:** Ensure that all practical assessment environments are designed to be as accessible as possible from the outset. This includes making facilities, transportation, and bathrooms universally accessible, benefiting the entire group.

**2. Field Work Challenges:** Recognise that fieldwork can pose accessibility challenges. Provide alternative assignments or ensure that field locations are accessible when possible.

**3. Station Preferences:** Allow students to select their assessment stations to manage anxiety and physical needs by giving them preference for the sequence of assessment or viewpoint.

**4. Implementation Challenges:** Address difficulties with staff not implementing accommodations for in-course assessments by providing training and resources to ensure understanding and compliance with accommodation policies.

**5. Facilitating In-Class Exams:** Address the challenges of facilitating in-class exams by providing separate exam venues and necessary accommodations to support all students.

**6. Notification of Accommodations:** Implement a system where students' accommodation needs are automatically communicated to relevant staff. Consider integrating accommodation reports into a centralized management system for easy access.

**7. Reasonable Accommodation Policies:** Ensure all HEI have clear and consistent reasonable accommodation policies that are published and accessible to both students and staff.

By implementing these accommodations and ensuring clear, consistent policies and procedures, educational institutions can create an inclusive and supportive environment for all students, particularly those with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions. This approach not only ensures equity in practical assessments but also aligns with broader institutional commitments to accessibility and inclusion.

## Accommodations for Field Work

Fieldwork, including trips to sites or going abroad, can present unique challenges for

disabled and neurodivergent students. Providing reasonable accommodations ensures that

these students have equitable opportunities to participate and benefit from these

experiences. Here are some suggested accommodations:

**1. Pre-Trip Planning and Information:**

* Provide detailed information about the trip itinerary, locations, activities, and

accommodations well in advance.

* Offer pre-trip orientation sessions to discuss the itinerary, expectations, and

accommodations needed.

* Ensure all necessary documentation, including medical information and

emergency contacts, is collected and reviewed beforehand.

**2. Accessibility of Locations:**

* Choose field trip locations that are accessible to students with mobility

impairments, including accessible paths, entrances, and facilities.

* If the chosen site has limited accessibility, provide alternative locations or

virtual participation options where possible.

**3. Travel Arrangements:**

* Ensure transportation is accessible, including buses or vans with wheelchair

lifts or spaces.

* Provide assistance with booking accessible flights and ensuring

accommodation for travel-related needs, such as seating arrangements and

assistance at airports.

**4. Accommodation and Lodging:**

* Ensure lodging facilities are accessible, including accessible rooms,

bathrooms, and common areas.

* Verify that accommodations meet the specific needs of students with

disabilities, such as availability of roll-in showers, grab bars, and lower

countertops.

**5. Assistive Devices and Technology:**

* Allow and facilitate the use of assistive devices and technology, such as

mobility aids, hearing aids, and communication devices.

* Provide portable assistive technology, like laptops or tablets, for students to

use during the trip.

**6. Personal Assistance:**

* Arrange for personal assistants or support staff to accompany students who

require help with daily activities or navigating the fieldwork environment.

* Ensure that personal assistants are trained and aware of the students’

specific needs.

**7. Flexible Scheduling:**

* Allow flexibility in the schedule to accommodate students who may need

more time for certain activities or require frequent breaks.

* Plan for rest periods and downtime to help students manage fatigue and

energy levels.

**8. Alternative Assignments:**

* Provide alternative assignments for students who cannot participate in

certain activities due to their disabilities. These could include virtual tours,

online research, or alternative fieldwork experiences.

* Ensure these assignments still meet the learning objectives of the field trip.

**9. Communication and Support:**

* Maintain clear and open communication with students regarding their needs

and accommodations throughout the trip.

* Provide contact information for staff members who can assist with any issues

that arise during the trip.

**10. Health and Safety:**

* Develop a health and safety plan that includes procedures for managing medical

emergencies and providing necessary accommodations.

* Ensure all staff and students are aware of the plan and know how to respond in case

of an emergency.

**11. Sensory Considerations:**

* Plan for sensory-friendly environments or provide sensory breaks for students who

may be overwhelmed by new or intense sensory experiences.

* Offer earplugs, noise-cancelling headphones, or quiet spaces as needed.

**12. Financial Support:**

* Provide financial assistance or grants to cover additional costs related to

accommodations, such as hiring personal assistants or specialized transportation.

* Ensure that students are aware of available funding and how to apply for it.

By implementing these accommodations, educational institutions can ensure that field trips

and study abroad experiences are inclusive and accessible to all students, allowing them to

fully participate and benefit from these valuable educational opportunities.

## Accommodations for Admissions Entrance Portfolios, Tests or Exams

Ensuring that the admissions process, including portfolios and entrance exams, is accessible and fair for all students, particularly those with disabilities and neurodivergent conditions, is critical. Here are tailored accommodations for portfolios and entrance exams to promote inclusivity:

**Portfolios**

**1. Extended Deadlines:** Provide extended deadlines for submitting portfolios to accommodate students who may require more time due to processing speed issues, physical disabilities, or other conditions.

**2. Assistive Technology**: Allow the use of assistive technology such as speech-to-text software, text-to-speech readers, and specialised design tools to help students create their portfolios.

**3. Alternative Formats:** Accept portfolios in various formats, including digital presentations, videos, or physical models, to accommodate students with different strengths and needs.

**4. Structured Guidance:** Offer clear, structured guidelines and examples for portfolio requirements to help students understand expectations and reduce anxiety.

**5. Pre-Submission Reviews:** Provide opportunities for pre-submission reviews and feedback sessions to help students refine their portfolios and ensure they meet the required standards. **6. Flexible Submission Methods:** Allow for multiple methods of submission, including online uploads, mailed physical copies, or in-person drop-offs, to accommodate different accessibility needs.

**Admissions Entrance Tests or Exams**

**1. Extended Time:** Allow additional time for entrance exams to accommodate students

who require it due to processing speed issues, anxiety, or other conditions.

**2. Assistive Technology:** Permit the use of assistive technology such as screen readers,

magnification tools, and alternative input devices during exams.

**3. Alternative Testing Formats:** Offer alternative testing formats, such as oral exams,

practical assessments, or take-home tests, to accommodate students who may

struggle with traditional written exams.

**4. Quiet Testing Environment:** Provide a quiet, distraction-free environment for

students who need it to focus and perform their best.

**5. Breaks During Exams:** Allow scheduled breaks during exams to help students

manage their energy and concentration levels, especially those with medical

conditions or attention difficulties.

**6. Scribe Services:** Provide scribe services for students with physical disabilities that

impact their ability to write or type.

**7. Practice Tests:** Offer practice tests and preparatory sessions to familiarise students

with the exam format and reduce anxiety.

**8. Flexible Scheduling:** Allow flexible scheduling of entrance exams to accommodate

students who may have conflicting medical appointments or other commitments.

## Accommodations for Problem-Based Learning (PBL)

In PBL, students are presented with a problem and work collaboratively in groups to find

solutions. Each student may take on different roles within the group, contributing their

unique perspectives and skills to tackle the problem. This approach helps develop critical

thinking, problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and subject-specific knowledge.

In PBL, the problem is often complex and open-ended, requiring students to engage in self-directed learning, research, and application of knowledge. This method is widely used in

various professional courses, such as medical education, engineering, business, and other

fields where real-world problem-solving is essential.

The following reasonable accommodations can be applied:

**1. Accessible Meeting Spaces:** Ensure that all group meeting spaces are wheelchair

accessible and equipped with necessary facilities.

**2. Assistive Technology:** Provide assistive devices or software that facilitate

participation, such as speech-to-text software, screen readers, or adapted

keyboards.

**3. Extended Time:** Allow extra time for research, problem-solving, rest breaks and

completion of tasks.

**4. Written Instructions:** Provide clear, concise, and written instructions for tasks and

expectations.

**5. Structured Support:** Offer additional support sessions or tutoring to help with

understanding and managing tasks.

**6. Alternative Formats:** Provide reading materials in accessible formats, such as braille,

large print, or digital text that can be read with screen readers.

**7. Verbal Descriptions:** Ensure all visual information is described verbally during

discussions and presentations.

**8. Minimized Distractions:** Create a structured and low-distraction environment for

group work.

**General Accommodations:**

**1. Clear Role Definitions:** Clearly define roles and responsibilities within the group to

provide structure and clarity.

**2. Flexible Participation:** Allow students to participate in various ways, not just through

verbal communication but also through written or digital contributions.

**3. Peer Support:** Encourage peer mentoring and support within the groups.

**4. Inclusive Materials:** Ensure that all learning materials are accessible and inclusive for

all students.

**Communication and Feedback:**

**1. Regular Check-Ins:** Have regular check-ins with each student to assess their needs

and adjust accommodations as necessary.

**2. Feedback Mechanism:** Implement a system for anonymous feedback on group

dynamics and accommodations to continuously improve the PBL experience.

By incorporating these accommodations, educators can create an inclusive and supportive

PBL environment that caters to the diverse needs of all students.

## Accommodations for Capstone project/Final Year Project

A capstone project or a Final Year Project is a comprehensive, culminating assignment typically undertaken in the final phase of an academic program, such as a bachelor's or master's degree. In the context of occupational therapy degrees, a capstone project involves:

* **Designing**: Planning and developing a research-based intervention or program that addresses a specific issue or need within the field of occupational therapy.
* **Implementing**: Executing the intervention or program in a real-world setting, which may involve working with clients, collecting data, and monitoring outcomes.
* **Evaluating**: Analysing the effectiveness of the intervention or program, assessing outcomes, and making recommendations for future practice or research.
* **Reporting and Presenting**: Compiling findings into a detailed written report and presenting the project to faculty and peers.

**Accommodations for Capstone and Final Year Project**

**Design Phase**

1. **Extended Time**
   * Allow additional time for project planning and development to accommodate varying processing speeds and cognitive needs.
2. **Assistive Technology**
   * Provide access to software such as mind-mapping tools, speech-to-text, and project management software to assist in organising and developing project ideas.
3. **Alternative Formats**
   * Permit the use of alternative formats for project proposals, such as video presentations or audio recordings, instead of solely written documents.
4. **Support Personnel**
   * Offer the assistance of research mentors or academic advisors to help with the conceptualisation and planning stages of the project.

**Participation Phase**

1. **Physical Accessibility**
   * Ensure that any venues or sites used for research or data collection are fully accessible, including transportation and facilities.
2. **Flexible Scheduling**
   * Allow flexibility in scheduling research activities, data collection, and meetings to accommodate medical appointments or energy levels.
3. **Support Personnel**
   * Provide research assistants to help with tasks requiring physical effort or technical skills that may be challenging for the student.
4. **Assistive Technology**
   * Supply necessary assistive devices and ensure students are trained in their use to facilitate participation in data collection and other hands-on activities.
5. **Collaboration**
   * Encourage collaborative work with peers to distribute tasks and responsibilities according to individual strengths and abilities.

**Assessment Phase**

1. **Alternative Assessment Methods**
   * Offer the option for oral defences or viva voce examinations where students can verbally explain their research and findings if writing is a barrier.
2. **Extended Time**
   * Provide additional time for completing the final report and preparing for presentations to accommodate processing and organizing needs.
3. **Assistive Technology**
   * Allow the use of speech-to-text software for writing the final report or creating presentation materials.
4. **Support Personnel**
   * Provide editors or proof-readers to assist with refining written reports, ensuring clarity and coherence.
5. **Alternative Formats**
   * Accept alternative formats for the final report, such as multimedia presentations, video summaries, or audio reports, alongside or instead of traditional written documents.
6. **Mentorship and Feedback**
   * Offer regular mentorship sessions and constructive feedback throughout the project to guide the student and address any challenges promptly.

**General Accommodations**

1. **Breaks and Self-Care**
   * Allow for regular breaks during work sessions to manage fatigue and stress and provide access to mental health resources.
2. **Tailored Project Scope**
   * Adjust the scope of the project to ensure it remains rigorous but manageable within the student’s capabilities, focusing on their strengths.
3. **Reflective Journals**
   * Encourage the use of reflective journals to document the process, challenges, and learning experiences, which can complement the final project assessment.

By implementing these accommodations, educators can ensure that disabled students are able to fully participate in and benefit from capstone projects, demonstrating their capabilities and readiness for professional practice.

# In-course Professional Assessments, Competencies and Reasonable Accommodations.

The purpose of this document is to illustrate the breadth of reasonable accommodations that can be applied to various assessments and tasks within professional courses, this can include health sciences, teaching etc. Many of these accommodations are standard and outlined in the University's reasonable accommodations policy. It is noteworthy that most students typically only require extra time for assessments, with a smaller number requiring other interventions, known as non-standard reasonable accommodations.

When non-standard reasonable accommodations are necessary, the disability officer engages in dialogue with the course representatives to discuss and understand the proposed accommodations. This collaboration ensures that the accommodations are reasonable and effectively meet the needs of the student. Additionally, some assessments are carried out during placements, which may also require attention. Placement planning and preparation should clearly outline to students the types of assessments that will take place during placements, and the potential need for assessment accommodations should be addressed.

**Streamlining Administrative Processes:** Simplifying the processes for securing accommodations can reduce the administrative burden on disabled students, allowing them to focus more on their studies. This includes making it easier to apply for accommodations and ensuring timely implementation by faculty​

This document is designed to assist all parties involved in these discussions by providing a comprehensive overview of potential accommodations.

## **Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)**

An Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is a modern type of examination often used in health sciences to assess students' clinical competencies. OSCEs typically involve multiple stations, each designed to test a specific skill or set of skills. At each station, students may interact with standardized patients (actors trained to present medical conditions), perform clinical procedures, or interpret medical data. The performance is assessed by examiners using standardized checklists and rating scales.

### **Competencies Being Assessed**

OSCEs assess a range of competencies essential for healthcare professionals, including but not limited to:

1. **Clinical Skills**: Practical skills such as taking a patient history, performing physical examinations, and executing medical procedures.
2. **Communication Skills**: The ability to effectively communicate with patients, families, and other healthcare professionals.
3. **Clinical Reasoning**: The capability to analyse clinical data, make diagnoses, and develop treatment plans.
4. **Professionalism**: Ethical behaviour, empathy, and respect for patients.
5. **Time Management**: Efficiency in managing time to complete tasks within the allotted time at each station.
6. **Interpersonal Skills**: Building rapport and trust with patients and colleagues.

### **Accommodations for Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)**

To ensure equity and accessibility, the following reasonable accommodations can be provided for students sitting OSCEs:

1. **Extended Time**: Allowing additional time for each station or overall examination to accommodate students who may need more time due to disabilities that affect processing speed, manual dexterity, or other factors.
2. **Assistive Technology**: Providing access to assistive devices such as screen readers, speech-to-text software, or specialised medical equipment that the student regularly uses.
3. **Physical Modifications**: Ensuring that the exam environment is accessible to students with mobility impairments. This could include height-adjustable examination tables, accessible restrooms, and clear pathways.
4. **Quiet Environment**: Ensuring a quiet, distraction-free environment for students who are sensitive to noise or have conditions such as ADHD.
5. **Flexible Scheduling**: Offering students with extra time the option to go first or last. Providing assessments at different times or on different days can accommodate students with fluctuating conditions or those who require more time to prepare due to anxiety or other mental health issues.
6. **Rest Breaks**: Allowing additional or more frequent breaks to manage fatigue, medication schedules, or other health-related needs.
7. **Modified Scenarios**: Adjusting scenarios to accommodate specific disabilities without compromising the assessment's integrity. For example, a student with a hearing impairment might have a written scenario instead of a spoken one.
8. **Sign Language Interpreter**: Providing a sign language interpreter for students who are deaf or hard of hearing to facilitate communication during the exam.
9. **Support Personnel**: Allowing the presence of support personnel, such as a personal care assistant, to help with non-examination-related needs.
10. **Pre-Exam Orientation**: Providing an orientation session before the exam to familiarise the student with the format, equipment, and environment, reducing anxiety and helping them to perform to the best of their abilities.

Each accommodation should be tailored to the individual needs of the student, ensuring that it does not give an unfair advantage but rather levels the playing field. Collaboration with the student, disability services, and faculty is essential to determine the most appropriate accommodations.

## 

## **Clinical Skills Assessments**

Clinical Skills Assessments (CSAs) are evaluations designed to measure the practical abilities and competencies of healthcare students and professionals. These assessments are integral to medical education and are used to ensure that individuals possess the necessary skills to provide effective and safe patient care. CSAs typically involve direct observation of clinical tasks, interaction with standardized patients, and performance of medical procedures.

### Competencies Being Assessed

CSAs assess a range of competencies crucial for healthcare practice, including:

1. **Clinical Skills**: Proficiency in performing physical examinations, medical procedures, and other hands-on tasks.
2. **Communication Skills**: Effectiveness in interacting with patients, families, and healthcare team members.
3. **Clinical Reasoning**: Ability to synthesize clinical information, make diagnoses, and develop treatment plans.
4. **Professionalism**: Adherence to ethical standards, demonstrating empathy, and maintaining patient confidentiality.
5. **Interpersonal Skills**: Ability to build rapport and trust with patients and colleagues.
6. **Time Management**: Efficiency in completing clinical tasks within the allotted time.

**Reasonable Accommodations**

Accommodating disabled students in clinical skills assessments requires thoughtful adaptations that ensure fairness while maintaining the rigorous standards expected in professional courses such as those in medical education. Here are guidelines designed to provide effective, inclusive, and reasonable accommodations for disabled students during clinical skills assessments:

1. **Extended Time**
   * **Additional Time**: Allow extra time for each station or the overall assessment to accommodate students who need more time due to their disabilities.
2. **Flexible Scheduling**
   * **Flexible Options**: Provide assessments at different times or on different days to accommodate students with fluctuating conditions or those who require more time to prepare due to anxiety or other mental health issues.
3. **Assistive Technology**
   * **Technology Provision**: Supply assistive devices such as screen readers, speech-to-text software, and other technology that students regularly use.
   * **Training and Support**: Ensure students and examiners are trained in using the assistive technology provided.
4. **Alternative Formats**
   * **Instruction Formats**: Provide instructions and questions in alternative formats such as large print, Braille, or audio recordings for students with visual impairments or reading difficulties.
   * **Scenario Modifications**: Adjust scenarios to be more accessible without compromising the integrity of the assessment (e.g., written scenarios for hearing-impaired students).
5. **Physical Accessibility**
   * **Venue Accessibility**: Ensure that all assessment locations are physically accessible, including ramps, elevators, and accessible restrooms.
   * **Equipment**: Provide height-adjustable examination tables, accessible medical equipment, and other necessary modifications to ensure students can perform clinical tasks.
6. **Quiet Environment**
   * **Distraction-Free Environment**: Ensure a quiet, distraction-free environment for students who are sensitive to noise or have conditions such as ADHD.
7. **Breaks**
   * **Additional Breaks**: Allow additional or more frequent breaks to manage fatigue, medication schedules, or other health-related needs.
8. **Modified Scenarios**
   * **Adjustments**: Adjust scenarios to accommodate specific disabilities without compromising the assessment's integrity. For example, a student with a hearing impairment might have a written scenario instead of a spoken one.
9. **Sign Language Interpreter**
   * **Provision of Interpreter**: Provide a sign language interpreter for students who are deaf or hard of hearing to facilitate communication during the exam.
10. **Support Personnel**
    * **Support Presence**: Allow the presence of support personnel, such as a personal care assistant, to help with non-examination-related needs.
11. **Pre-Exam Orientation**
    * **Orientation Session**: Provide an orientation session before the exam to familiarize the student with the format, equipment, and environment, reducing anxiety and helping them to perform to the best of their abilities.

Each accommodation should be tailored to the individual needs of the student, ensuring that it does not give an unfair advantage but rather levels the playing field. Collaboration with the student, disability services, and faculty is essential to determine the most appropriate accommodations.

## Spot testing assessments

Spot testing assessments in health science courses are brief, often unannounced, evaluations designed to test students' knowledge, skills, and competencies in real-time, usually in a clinical or practical setting. These assessments are critical in ensuring that students can apply theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios, which is essential in health science education.

**What is Spot Testing?**

Spot testing involves short, focused assessments that are typically conducted in clinical, laboratory, or simulation settings. These tests may include:

* **Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs):** Stations where students perform specific clinical tasks or respond to clinical scenarios.
* **Practical skills tests:** Assessments of students' ability to perform particular medical or laboratory techniques.
* **Mini-CEX (Clinical Evaluation Exercise):** Direct observation of student interactions with patients, followed by immediate feedback.
* **Quiz or viva (oral examination):** Brief oral questions or quizzes on specific topics.

**Competencies Assessed**

Spot testing in health science courses assesses various competencies, including:

1. **Clinical Skills:**

* Ability to perform specific medical or laboratory procedures.
* Proper use of medical equipment.
* Adherence to safety protocols.

1. **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:**

* Application of theoretical knowledge to clinical scenarios.
* Diagnosis and treatment planning.
* Decision-making under pressure.

1. **Communication Skills:**

* Effective communication with patients and colleagues.
* Clear and concise oral presentations.

1. **Professionalism:**

* Ethical behaviour.
* Time management and organizational skills.
* Response to feedback.

1. **Knowledge Integration:**

* Synthesis of information from various disciplines.
* Application of evidence-based practice.

**Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students**

To ensure that disabled students are provided with equitable opportunities to demonstrate their competencies, various accommodations can be considered for spot testing assessments. These may include:

**1. Extended Time:**

* Allowing additional time for completing practical tasks or answering questions.

**2. Alternative Formats:**

* Providing written instructions or visual aids for students to ensure content is more accessible to everyone.
* Offering oral assessments to cater for students varying learning styles.  **3. Assistive Technology:**
* Use of adaptive equipment or software to aid in performing tasks.
* Providing modified tools for students. For example, amplified stethoscopes

**4. Physical Accessibility:**

* Ensuring that testing environments are accessible to all students.
* Providing ergonomic adjustments, for example, adjustable examination tables or chairs.

**5. Modified Assessment Tasks:**

* Allowing students to demonstrate skills through alternative methods if they cannot perform standard tasks due to their disability.
* Using simulation software to replicate clinical scenarios for students unable to participate in real-life clinical settings.

**6. Support Services:**

* Providing a scribe or electronic reader for students to support varying modes of representation and expression of the learning content.
* Offering sign language interpreters or communication support workers.

**7. Sensory Considerations:**

* Reducing background noise and other distractions for students with sensory needs
* Allowing breaks for students with functioning difficulties that affect concentration or stamina.
* Periodically review and update accommodation policies to reflect changing needs and best practices.

By providing these accommodations, health science courses can ensure that all students, regardless of disability, can demonstrate their knowledge and skills effectively.

## Case-Based Assessments

Case-based assessments in health science courses involve evaluating students' abilities to analyse, diagnose, and manage presented clinical cases. These assessments can take the form of written case reports, oral presentations, or discussions. They are designed to simulate real-world clinical scenarios, allowing students to demonstrate their clinical reasoning, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.

Competencies Assessed

**1. Clinical Reasoning and Decision-Making:**

* Ability to analyse clinical data and patient history.
* Formulation of differential diagnoses.
* Development of management and treatment plans.

**2. Problem-Solving Skills:**

* Application of theoretical knowledge to practical clinical scenarios.
* Critical thinking and the ability to identify key issues in complex cases.

**3. Communication Skills:**

* Effective written and oral communication of clinical findings and plans.
* Presentation skills and the ability to discuss cases coherently.

**4. Interpersonal Skills:**

* Ability to collaborate with peers and healthcare professionals.
* Demonstration of empathy and patient-centred care.

**5. Professionalism:**

* Adherence to ethical standards and professional conduct.
* Demonstrating responsibility and accountability in clinical decision-making.

**6. Knowledge Integration:**

* Synthesis of information from various medical disciplines.
* Application of evidence-based practice in clinical decision-making.

Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students

To ensure equitable opportunities for disabled students to demonstrate their competencies in case-based assessments, the following accommodations can be considered:

Written Cases

**1. Extended Time:**

* Allow additional time for reading, analysing, and writing case reports.

**2. Alternative Formats:**

* Provide case materials in accessible formats, such as large print, braille, or digital text for screen readers.

**3. Assistive Technology:**

* Allow use of speech-to-text software, text-to-speech readers, or other assistive devices.

**4. Modified Submission Methods:**

* Accept audio or video recordings of case analyses for students with ~~writing impairments.~~ difficulties in written expression.

**5. Support Services:**

* Provide a scribe or transcription service for students ~~with motor impairments.~~ to support varying modes of representation and expression of the learning content.

Oral Presentations

**1. Extended Time:**

* Allow additional preparation and presentation time.

**2. Alternative Formats:**

* Permit the use of visual aids, such as slides, videos or diagrams, to support the presentation.

**3. Assistive Technology:**

* Provide access to communication aids, such as speech-generating devices or amplifiers.

**4. Presentation Modifications:**

* Allow presentations to be recorded in advance if live presentation poses a significant challenge.

**5. Support Services:**

* Offer sign language interpreters or communication support workers.

Discussions

**1. Extended Time:**

* Allow additional time for students to process information and participate in discussions.

**2. Alternative Participation Methods:**

* Permit written responses, use of props (e.g. cue cards)  or contributions via chat functions in online discussions.

**3. Assistive Technology:**

* Use of communication aids or speech-to-text software during discussions.

**4. Sensory Considerations:**

* Minimise background noise and provide a quiet environment for discussions.

**5. Support Services:**

* Provide note-takers or discussion facilitators to assist with participation.

Health Science Portfolios

Health science portfolios are compilations of students' work collected over time, showcasing their learning progress, experiences, and reflections. These portfolios often include case summaries, reflective essays, and evidence of skill development. They provide a comprehensive view of students' competencies and growth throughout their education.

Competencies Assessed

**1. Clinical Knowledge and Application:**

* Understanding and application of clinical knowledge through case summaries.
* Ability to connect theoretical concepts with practical experiences.

**2. Reflective Practice:**

* Self-assessment and reflection on personal and professional growth.
* Ability to critically analyse one's experiences and learning process.

**3. Skill Development:**

* Documentation and evidence of developing clinical and technical skills.
* Progress in mastering specific competencies relevant to the field.

**4. Communication Skills:**

* Clarity and coherence in writing reflective essays and case summaries.
* Ability to present information in a structured and professional manner.

**5. Professionalism:**

* Adherence to ethical standards and professional conduct in documentation.
* Demonstrating accountability and responsibility in personal and professional development.

**6. Integration of Knowledge:**

* Ability to synthesize information from various sources and disciplines.
* Application of evidence-based practices in clinical settings.

Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students

To ensure equitable opportunities for disabled students in compiling and presenting health science portfolios, the following accommodations can be considered:

Case Summaries

1. **Extended Time:**

* Allow additional time for writing and compiling case summaries.

1. **Alternative Formats:**

* Accept summaries in various formats, such as audio recordings or videos.

1. **Assistive Technology:**

* Provide access to speech-to-text software or text-to-speech readers.

1. **Support Services:**

* Offer assistance from a scribe or transcription service.

Reflective Essays

1. **Extended Time:**

* Allow extra time for writing and reflecting on experiences.

1. **Alternative Formats:**

* Accept reflective essays in different formats, such as audio or video recordings.

1. **Assistive Technology:**

* Provide access to writing aids, such as grammar and spell-check tools, and speech-to-text software.

360-Degree Evaluations

360-degree evaluations are comprehensive assessments that gather feedback from multiple sources involved in students' education, including peers, faculty, and patients. This type of assessment aims to evaluate students' professional behaviour and teamwork skills from various perspectives, providing a well-rounded view of their performance.

Competencies Assessed

1. **Professional Behaviour:**

* Adherence to ethical standards and professional conduct.
* Demonstrating responsibility, reliability, and accountability.

1. **Teamwork and Collaboration:**

* Ability to work effectively within a team.
* Contribution to team goals and supporting team members.

1. **Communication Skills:**

* Clarity, coherence, and professionalism in verbal and written communication.
* Effective communication with peers, faculty, and patients.

1. **Interpersonal Skills:**

* Building and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues and patients.
* Demonstrating empathy, respect, and cultural competence.

1. **Self-Awareness and Reflective Practice:**

* Ability to self-assess and reflect on feedback to improve performance.
* Openness to constructive criticism and willingness to make changes.

1. **Leadership and Initiative:**

* Taking initiative in clinical and educational settings.
* Demonstrating leadership skills and the ability to motivate others.

Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students

To ensure equitable opportunities for disabled students in 360-degree evaluations, the following accommodations can be considered:

Peer and Faculty Feedback

1. **Extended Time for Feedback:**

* Allow additional time for peers and faculty to complete evaluations.

1. **Alternative Formats:**

* Accept feedback in various formats, such as audio recordings or typed responses.

1. **Assistive Technology:**

* Provide access to speech-to-text software for giving and receiving feedback.

1. **Support Services:**

* Offer assistance from a scribe or transcription service for peers or faculty who need it.

Patient Feedback

1. **Alternative Feedback Methods:**

* Collect feedback through accessible methods, such as digital surveys or verbal feedback recorded by staff.

1. **Communication Aids:**

* Provide communication aids or interpreters to facilitate patient feedback.

1. **Simplified Feedback Tools:**

* Use simplified forms or questionnaires with visual prompts to make it easier for patients to provide feedback.

General Accommodations

1. **Extended Time for Evaluation:**

* Allow additional time for students to review and respond to feedback.

1. **Alternative Reflection Formats:**

* Accept reflective responses in various formats, such as audio or video recordings.

1. **Support for Reflection:**

* Provide guidance and support for reflective practice, including access to mentors or counsellors.

1. **Regular Feedback and Check-Ins:**

* Schedule regular check-ins to discuss feedback and progress with students.

## Computer-Based Simulations

Computer-based simulations use software or virtual reality environments to replicate clinical scenarios, allowing students to practice decision-making, diagnostic reasoning, and management plans in a controlled, risk-free environment. These simulations are invaluable in health science education for providing realistic, hands-on experiences without the risks associated with real-life clinical practice.

### Competencies Assessed

1. **Decision-Making:**

* Ability to make informed, timely decisions in clinical scenarios.
* Prioritization and selection of appropriate interventions.

**2. Diagnostic Reasoning:**

* Accurate interpretation of clinical data and patient history.
* Formulation of differential diagnoses based on presented symptoms.
* Development and implementation of effective treatment and management plans.
* Evaluation of treatment outcomes and adjustment of plans as needed.

**3. Clinical Skills:**

* Application of theoretical knowledge to practical, simulated situations.
* Proficiency in performing virtual clinical procedures and techniques.

**4. Critical Thinking:**

* Analysis and synthesis of complex information.
* Problem-solving and adaptation to changing clinical scenarios.

**5. Communication Skills:**

* Effective communication with virtual patients, families, and healthcare teams.
* Clear documentation of clinical findings and plans.

**6. Professionalism:**

* Ethical decision-making and professional conduct in simulated environments.
* Demonstration of empathy and patient-centred care.

### Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students

To ensure equitable opportunities for disabled students in computer-based simulations, the following accommodations can be considered:

### Technology and Interface Adaptations

**1. Accessible Software:**

* Ensure simulation software is compatible with screen readers, magnification tools, and other assistive technologies.

**2. Customizable Interfaces:**

* Allow customization of interface elements, such as font size, contrast, and colour schemes, to accommodate visual impairments.

**3. Alternative Input Methods:**

* Provide alternative input methods, such as voice commands, adaptive keyboards, or switch devices for students where required.

### Virtual Reality (VR) Adaptations

**1. Adapted VR Equipment:**

* Use VR equipment that can be adjusted for comfort and accessibility, such as lighter headsets, adjustable straps, and controllers designed for various abilities.

1. **Sensory Modifications:**

* Offer sensory modifications, such as reducing motion sensitivity for students prone to motion sickness or providing auditory descriptions for students with visual impairments.

1. **Seated VR Options:**

* Provide seated VR options for students where required.

### Simulation Scenarios

**1. Scenario Adjustments:**

* Modify scenarios to ensure they are accessible, such as providing text descriptions or auditory instructions for visual content.

**2. Flexible Timing:**

* Allow additional time for completing simulations and tasks within the virtual environment.

**3. Step-by-Step Guidance:**

* Offer step-by-step guidance or tutorials to help students navigate and understand the simulation environment.

### Physical and Environmental Accommodations

**1. Ergonomic Workstations:**

* Ensure that workstations for computer-based simulations are ergonomic and adjustable to accommodate various physical needs.

**2. Distraction-Free Environment:**

* Provide a quiet, distraction-free environment for simulations to aid concentration and focus.

### Support Services

**1. Technical Assistance:**

* Offer technical support to help students set up and use simulation software and equipment effectively.

**2. Guidance and Mentorship:**

* Provide access to mentors or tutors who can offer guidance and support throughout the simulation experience.

## Logbooks

Logbooks in health science courses document students' participation in various clinical procedures and encounters. They ensure that students meet the required breadth and depth of clinical experience, tracking their progress and providing evidence of their clinical training.

Competencies Assessed

**1. Clinical Skills:**

* Proficiency in performing a variety of clinical procedures.
* Accurate and safe execution of techniques.

**2. Clinical Experience:**

* Exposure to a diverse range of clinical scenarios and patient cases.
* Meeting the required number of encounters and procedures.

**3. Documentation and Record-Keeping:**

* Ability to accurately document clinical activities and experiences.
* Maintenance of detailed and organized records.

**4. Reflective Practice:**

* Reflection on clinical experiences and learning outcomes.
* Self-assessment and identification of areas for improvement.

**5. Professionalism:**

* Adherence to ethical standards and professional conduct in clinical settings.
* Demonstrating responsibility and accountability in clinical practice.

**6. Time Management:**

* Efficient management of time to meet clinical requirements and logbook completion.

Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students

To ensure equitable opportunities for disabled students in maintaining and using logbooks, the following accommodations can be considered:

### Digital and Alternative Formats

**1. Digital Logbooks:**

* Provide digital logbook options that can be accessed and completed using computers, tablets, or smartphones.

**2. Accessible Formats:**

* Ensure logbooks are available in accessible formats, such as large print, braille, or digital text compatible with screen readers.

**3. Voice-to-Text:**

* Allow students to use voice-to-text software to document their clinical experiences.

### Physical and Environmental Adaptations

**1. Assistive Technology:**

* Provide access to assistive devices, such as speech recognition software, screen readers, or adaptive keyboards.

**2. Ergonomic Tools:**

* Ensure that any physical logbooks or documentation tools are ergonomic and accessible to students with physical disabilities.

### Support Services

**1. Scribe Assistance:**

* Offer scribe services for students who have difficulty writing or typing.

**2. Tutoring and Mentorship:**

* Provide access to tutors or mentors who can help with organizing and completing logbooks.

### 

### Time Management and Scheduling

**1. Extended Time:**

* Allow additional time for completing logbook entries, particularly for students who may need more time to document their experiences accurately.

**2. Flexible Scheduling:**

* Provide flexible scheduling options for clinical placements and logbook documentation.

### 

### Reflective Practice and Feedback

**1. Guided Reflection:**

* Offer structured reflection templates or guided questions to help students articulate their experiences and learning.

**2. Regular Feedback:**

* Provide regular feedback on logbook entries to ensure students are meeting requirements and to help them improve their documentation skills.

## Fieldwork-Placement Performance Evaluations

Fieldwork-Placement Performance Evaluations involve the assessment of students by clinical supervisors based on their performance during fieldwork placements. These evaluations focus on several key areas:

**1. Practical Application of Skills:** Students are assessed on their ability to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world clinical scenarios. This includes the proficient use of medical equipment, execution of procedures, and adherence to safety protocols.

**2. Patient Interaction:** Evaluations measure the students' effectiveness in communicating with patients, demonstrating empathy, and maintaining professionalism. This includes obtaining patient histories, explaining procedures, and providing emotional support.

**3. Professional Behaviour:** Students are evaluated on their adherence to ethical standards, reliability, responsibility, and overall professional conduct within the clinical setting. This encompasses punctuality, appearance, teamwork, and response to feedback.

**4. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:** The ability to analyse clinical data, make informed decisions, and develop appropriate treatment plans is crucial. Students must demonstrate their capacity to think critically and solve problems effectively in a dynamic clinical environment.

**5. Adaptability:** Students are assessed on their ability to adapt to new environments and changing circumstances. This includes managing stress, adjusting to different patient needs, and integrating into various clinical teams.

Courses

Fieldwork-Placement Performance Evaluations are commonly found in health science courses where hands-on clinical experience is essential. These courses include, but are not limited to:

* **Nursing:** Students engage in diverse clinical settings such as hospitals, clinics, and community health centers to practice patient care and medical procedures.
* **Medicine:** Medical students undergo rotations in various specialties, including internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, and obstetrics, to gain comprehensive clinical experience.
* **Physical Therapy:** Students work in rehabilitation centers, hospitals, and outpatient clinics to apply therapeutic techniques and patient management strategies.
* **Occupational Therapy:** Fieldwork involves placements in hospitals, schools, and community settings where students assist patients in developing and recovering daily living skills.
* **Radiography:** Students practice imaging techniques in hospital radiology departments and specialized imaging centers.
* **Pharmacy:** Fieldwork placements in community pharmacies, hospitals, and research settings allow students to gain practical experience in medication management and patient counselling.
* **Social Work:** Students are placed in healthcare facilities, community organizations, and mental health agencies to support patients and their families.

These evaluations ensure that students in these programs are not only competent in their technical skills but also excel in patient care and professional behaviour, preparing them for successful careers in their respective fields.

Competencies Assessed:

* **Clinical Skills:** Proficiency in practical application of health science techniques.
* **Patient Interaction:** Ability to communicate effectively with patients, showing empathy and professionalism.
* **Professional Behaviour:** Adherence to ethical standards, responsibility, and reliability in clinical settings.
* **Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:** Application of theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios.
* **Adaptability:** Ability to adjust to new environments and changing circumstances in clinical settings.

Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students:

* **Extended Time:** Allow additional time for tasks and interactions during fieldwork.
* **Assistive Technology:** Use of adaptive devices or software to assist in performing tasks.
* **Physical Accessibility:** Ensure clinical environments are accessible, with necessary adjustments such as ramps or adjustable equipment.
* **Support Services:** Provide sign language interpreters, electronic scribes, or other support personnel as needed.
* **Flexible Scheduling:** Adjust schedules to allow breaks or alternate times for completing tasks.

Fieldwork-Placement Logs and Journals

**Description:** Documentation and reflection on fieldwork experiences, highlighting challenges, successes, and areas for improvement.

Competencies Assessed:

* **Reflective Practice:** Ability to self-assess and reflect on personal and professional growth.
* **Documentation Skills:** Accuracy and clarity in recording clinical experiences.
* **Critical Thinking:** Analysis of fieldwork experiences to identify challenges and solutions.
* **Professionalism:** Maintaining ethical standards and accountability in record-keeping.
* **Communication Skills:** Coherent and structured writing in logs and journals.

Reasonable Accommodations for Disabled Students:

* **Extended Time:** Allow additional time for writing and reflecting on fieldwork experiences.
* **Alternative Formats:** Accept logs and journals in various formats, such as audio recordings or videos.
* **Assistive Technology:** Provide access to speech-to-text software, text-to-speech readers, and other writing aids.
* **Support Services:** Offer assistance from scribes or transcription services.
* **Digital Logbooks:** Provide digital options that can be accessed and completed using computers, tablets, or smartphones.

## Fieldwork-Placement Performance Evaluations in Teacher Training

In teacher training programs, Fieldwork-Placement Performance Evaluations involve the assessment of student teachers by their supervising teachers and mentors during their practicum or student teaching placements. These evaluations focus on several key areas:

**1. Classroom Management and Instruction:** Student teachers are assessed on their ability to create and maintain an effective learning environment, manage classroom behaviour, and implement instructional strategies that meet diverse student needs.

**2. Lesson Planning and Delivery:** Evaluations measure the effectiveness of lesson planning, including the alignment with curriculum standards, clarity of instructional goals, and the ability to engage students through well-organized and dynamic lesson delivery.

**3. Student Interaction:** The ability of student teachers to build positive relationships with students, encourage participation, and respond to individual learning needs is critically evaluated.

**4. Professional Behaviour:** Student teachers are evaluated on their adherence to professional standards, including punctuality, dress code, ethical behaviour, and their ability to work collaboratively with school staff and administration.

**5. Assessment and Feedback:** Evaluations focus on the student teachers' ability to assess student learning accurately, provide constructive feedback, and use assessment data to inform instructional decisions.

**6. Adaptability:** The ability to adapt to different classroom settings, unexpected challenges, and varying student needs is an important aspect of the evaluation process.

Likely Courses

Fieldwork-Placement Performance Evaluations are integral to teacher training programs across various educational specializations, including:

* **Early Childhood Education:** Student teachers work in preschool and kindergarten settings, focusing on early childhood development and foundational learning experiences.
* **Elementary Education:** Placements in elementary schools allow student teachers to practice teaching core subjects to young learners and managing a diverse classroom environment.
* **Secondary Education:** Student teachers are placed in middle and high schools to teach specific subjects such as mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies.
* **Special Education:** Student teachers work with children with special needs in inclusive classrooms or specialized settings, focusing on individualized instruction and adaptive teaching methods.
* **Physical Education:** Student teachers are placed in schools to teach physical education classes, focusing on promoting physical fitness, motor skills development, and healthy lifestyles.
* **English as a Second Language (ESL):** Placements involve working with students for whom English is an additional language, focusing on language acquisition and cultural integration.

These evaluations are crucial in ensuring that student teachers are well-prepared to manage classrooms, deliver effective instruction, and positively impact their future students' learning experiences.

**Guidelines for Reweighting Examinations and Course Assessments**

## 1. Identification and Documentation of Needs

**Assessment of Needs:**

* Work closely with the HEI’s Disability Service to document the specific challenges and needs of disabled students.
* Regular assessments and updates to the student's Learning Agreement should be conducted to ensure accommodations remain relevant and effective.

**Engagement with Stakeholders:**

* Involve students, academic staff, and disability advisors in discussions to understand the full scope of the student's needs and the potential impact on their academic performance.

**Follow the UDL Framework**

* Adhere to principles of educational equity, the HEI embeds [Universal Design for Learning (UDL)](https://tcdud.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/TCD365-DisabilityTCD/DS%20Projects/DAWN%202023/Intern%20folder/DAWN%20Exam%20policy/Policy%20outline%20draft%2012%20July.docx?d=wfc6e97dab5034a4aa34b4b431863e209&csf=1&web=1&e=dLkgNZ) and ensures reasonable accommodations to enhance inclusivity and accessibility.

## 

## 2. Developing Reweighted Assessments

**Collaborative Planning:**

* Establish a collaborative committee including disability services, course members, and, if possible, the students themselves to explore feasible reweighting options.
* This team should consider various assessment formats that could align better with the student’s capabilities, such as oral exams, multiple-choice questions, or project-based assessments.

**Flexibility in Assessment Types:**

* For students who face challenges with traditional exam formats, consider alternative assessments that may include:
  + Take-home exams.
  + Open-book exams.
  + Oral examinations.
  + Practical demonstrations or portfolio submissions.

## 3. Implementation of Reweighted Assessments

**Adjustment of Weightings:**

* Adjust the weightings of different assessment components to better accommodate the student’s strengths and mitigate the impact of their disability on their performance.
* For instance, if a student struggles with timed exams due to anxiety or physical limitations, increase the weighting of coursework or take-home projects.

**Transparency and Consistency:**

* Clearly communicate the reweighted components to all students and staff involved. Ensure that these adjustments are consistently applied across similar cases to maintain fairness and equity.

## 4. Exam and Assessment Scheduling

**Flexible Scheduling:**

* Allow flexible scheduling to enable students to perform under the best possible conditions. This may include:
  + Scheduling exams with breaks.
  + Allowing exams to be taken during times of day when the student feels they can perform best.

**Environment Adjustments:**

* Modify exam environments to reduce dependency on assistive technologies or personnel, where feasible. This might include providing adaptive technology in exam halls or quieter rooms for those who are easily distracted.

## 5. Continuous Monitoring and Feedback

**Evaluation of Accommodations:**

* Implement a systematic process for evaluating the effectiveness of the reweighted assessments through student feedback, academic performance, and consultations with disability services.
* Adjust accommodations based on feedback to continually improve the support provided to disabled students.

## 6. Documentation and Reporting

**Record Keeping:**

* Keep detailed records of all accommodations and adjustments made for auditing and continuous improvement purposes.
* Reports should be reviewed annually to adapt to any changes in student needs or advancements in educational practices.

## 7. Policy Review and Adaptation

**Regular Policy Updates:**

* Regularly review and update policies related to NSRA to reflect new research, technological advancements, and feedback from the HEI community.
* Ensure that these policies are in line with national education regulations and standards for fairness and accessibility.

## Conclusion

By adhering to these guidelines, Irish universities can effectively tailor their assessment methods to meet the diverse needs of students with disabilities, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to succeed academically on an equitable basis. This approach not only supports individual academic achievement but also reinforces the institution's commitment to inclusivity and educational equity.

## **Appendix 1: Guidelines for Granting Reasonable Accommodations to Students with a Disability who Have a Reading, Writing or Spelling Difficulty.**

These guidelines have been informed by the criteria applied by the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) in Ireland and also by the criteria applied by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) in the UK.

These guidelines are intended to assist HEIs when determining the examination accommodations that may be required by students with a disability who have a reading, writing or spelling difficulty. The need for a particular accommodation is determined through the needs assessment process, taking account of the student’s individual needs and the impact of the disability in an examination setting.

In a small number of complex cases – where the learning profile of the student falls outside of these guidelines, there is a co-morbidity of diagnosis, or other mitigating circumstances that are deemed to constitute a significant barrier to performance – appropriate examination accommodations may be awarded based on the expertise, and at the discretion of, the Disability Officer.

Students with a disability who demonstrate a lower-than-average writing, reading, working memory or processing speed (i.e. at or below a standard score of 89/23rd percentile) may require extra time in examinations.

Students with a disability who demonstrate one or more of the following may require a computer in examinations:

* a lower-than-average writing speed (below 15wpm)

* a speed of processing at or below a standard score of 85/ 16th percentile

* a level of legibility that would make the paper unreadable to an examiner

Students with a disability who have a spelling attainment at or below a standard score of 70/ 2nd percentile may require the use of a scribe.

Students with a disability whose reading speed, accuracy or comprehension is at or below a standard score of 85/ 16th percentile may require a reader in examinations.

## 

## **Appendix 2: Guidelines for Examiners When Marking Scripts from Students with a Disability Who Have a Reading, Writing or Spelling Difficulty.**

A student with a disability who has a reading, writing, or spelling difficulty can be disadvantaged when assessment takes the form of a written, timed examination. Student’s written work may contain:

Surface errors in spelling and grammar such as inaccuracies in the use of tense, grammatical agreement, plurals, spelling, and punctuation.

Structural flaws including weak sequencing of ideas, paragraphs, and sentences; unclear expression of cause and effect; lack of competence in using abstract language or lack of awareness of writing genre.

The following guidelines should be taken into consideration when marking the examination script of a student with a reading, writing, or spelling difficulty:

First, read the script quickly to judge the student’s underlying understanding of the topic; then, assess their performance against the learning outcomes. If the script contains all the required elements but does not introduce them in a clear logical order, avoid penalising the student for a lack of structure in their writing unless this is a stipulated competency being assessed.

Errors in spelling do not necessarily mean that the student is confused about the meaning of the word or its function in their writing. Generally, such errors do not lead to ambiguity and should not be penalised when subject knowledge is being assessed.

Lexical errors, such as “coarse” for “course,” do not mean that the student is confused about the meaning of the words. This kind of error should not be penalised unless it leads to ambiguity.

Grammatical errors, like incorrect tense endings, lack of subject-verb agreement and incorrect word order may not affect the meaning of the sentence.

For example: “Some of the features of Socratic dialogues were they seek definitions of abstract ideas, cross examining beliefs to expose contradictions and he used to use questioning to bring the pupil to recognise the truth.” Here the student’s meaning is clear, the errors do not lead to ambiguity and the student should not be penalised.

Students with difficulties in reading, writing and spelling might not always use punctuation as a tool to clarify meaning. Scripts may contain long sentences that are difficult to follow with indiscriminate punctuation or no punctuation at all. Very short sentences or fragments of sentences might also be produced.

For example: “The study considered three main areas of research. The effects of frequent drug use the role of the family in the offender’s behaviour and the impact of custodial sentences on reoffending. In this case the student’s meaning is clear, but errors in punctuation can lead to ambiguity which will be reflected in the mark awarded.”

Some students may have restricted vocabulary and use a far more limited range of words than one would expect. Avoid penalising students who may have an immature style of writing, unless written communication is a specified learning outcome.

Where grammar and spelling are core competencies of a course, a student’s work must be marked on the basis of accuracy in the language and therefore these marking guidelines will not apply.

In all subjects, if a student’s errors make a material difference to the meaning of their work, it will not be possible to classify them as surface errors that do not incur penalty. For instance, if a nursing student writes hypertension instead of hypotension, this will affect the mark awarded.

In all subjects, if the surface errors or structural flaws make the student’s work so ambiguous that it is impossible to decipher the meaning, then this diminishes their ability to demonstrate the module’s learning outcomes and this would be reflected in the marks awarded.