Remote assessment policy for disabled students

Purpose:

This policy sets out recommended approaches to reasonable adjustments for remote assessment to ensure continued compliance with the Equality Act 2010. These recommendations are proposed as a *temporary replacement* of policy on Additional Exam Recommendations (AERs), as set out in the Exam Policy for Disabled and Dyslexic students and covers the period 27 April – end June 2020.

1. Policy Context:

1.1 Following the Government's introduction of stringent new measures to limit social contact, new arrangements have been put in place for teaching, learning and assessment:

1.1.1 All teaching and academic support for the remainder of this academic year is to be **delivered online**. There will be **no teaching** activity for the remainder of this academic year **that will require students to be on campus.**

1.1.2 All programmes being offered during this current academic year will have forms of assessment that can be undertaken off-campus and indeed outside the UK. There will be **no assessment** tasks for the remainder of this academic year **that will require students to be on campus**:

- **Foundation Year or First year Undergraduate students:** will not take module-level end of semester exams. Will complete one assessment (or two smaller ones for Combined Honours students) that will be designed to allow you students to reflect on and consolidate their learning across the semester (and in some cases across the year). This will be a compulsory formative assessment task, and will be made available to you online, with online submission of your work. (Special Considerations process will apply for those not able to take it.)

- **Second year Undergraduate students, or third year students in a four year programme:** Where possible, students will not be asked to take module-level exams. Instead, they will complete one assessment (or two smaller ones for Combined Honours students) that will be designed to allow students to reflect on and consolidate your learning across the semester (and in some cases across the year). This will be a compulsory formative assessment task, and made available online, with online submission of work. (Special Considerations process will apply for those not able to take it.)
- In a few cases, in programmes that are accredited or regulated by external professional bodies, additional assessment tasks may be set to ensure that students graduate with an accredited/professionally recognised degree. This will be only where absolutely necessary (details to follow at the time of writing).

- **Undergraduate final year students:** students are asked to complete their dissertation/project. Some – for example, group projects – will need to be amended in light of the current situation. (Special Considerations process will apply for those not able to take it.)

- **Masters students**: Where possible, students will not be asked to take module-level exams. Instead, they will complete one assessment (or two smaller ones for Combined Honours students) that will be designed to allow reflection on and consolidation of learning across the semester (and in some cases across the year). This will be a compulsory formative assessment task, and made available online, with online submission of your work. (Special Considerations process will apply for those not able to take it.)

2. Principles:

2.1 The recommendations set out in this policy, are built around three key principles;

2.1.1 Manageability - it is not the aim of this paper to cover every single possible type assessment – this will be impossible given the pace of change.

2.1.2 Simplicity - limiting the complexity of offer and reducing the need overall for individual recommendations which will be challenging to manage and implement in the new working conditions (manageability)

2.1.3 Context-driven – in support of the 'no detriment' policy being adopted by the University, whereby the University will guarantee that a student's academic year average will be no lower than the average achieved by 22 March 2020, the University will continue to ensure that no student is disadvantaged by their disability through this new mode of teaching, learning and assessment. Where students are not able to engage with the completion and submission of their work for reasons related to their disability, Special Considerations will apply.

3. Recommended types of remote assessment:

3.1 Based on the principles of manageability and simplicity, three types of remote assessment are considered as part of this temporary policy:

3.1.1 'Take-home' assessments for completion over a given period, (usually between 48 hours and one week) *are recommended*. This minimizes the need for individual recommendations.

3.1.2 *Assessments via presentations/viva carried out virtually should be offered only with appropriate levels of support*, including, for example access to captioning.

3.1.3 Short time-bound, assessments completed online (e.g. a 1 hour assessment) *should be offered only where no alternative remote assessment type is feasible.* Where this is the case, individual recommendations, such as extra time, may be necessary and will need to be managed on a case by case basis. Consideration will need to be given by the Faculty on how to manage AERs, such as additional time, remotely.

4. Accessibility and inclusive practice

4.1 Faculties should follow good accessibility practice. Where remote assessments rely upon on audio/video clips, transcriptions and subtitles should be made available. Guidance on many of these tools are available via https://elearn.southampton.ac.uk/

4.2 The following inclusive practice should be given due consideration when designing a remote assessment task:

4.2.1 Breaking large chunks of information/work down into more manageable smaller pieces, with associated deadlines will help to aid time management.

4.2.2 Provide reading lists in advance ensuring that materials are available in a suitable format.

4.2.3 Supporting students in developing confidence to work virtually through training.

4.2.4 Making clear to students opportunities to ask for help and making clear what is reasonable when asking for help. E.g. when the assessment is set, there should be clear opportunities for asking questions.

4.2.5 Making clear to students where the assessment is open book, and providing guidance about what resources can be accessed.

Implications for current 'typical' Additional Exam Recommendations and recommended new arrangements for 20 April – 19 June 2020

AER	Impact for remote assessment, based on the 'take home' recommendation (set out in 3 above)	RECOMMENDED temporary arrangement
Extra time	The time given to complete a remote assessment should factor in the need for students to take additional time. Usually, 'take-home' assessments are longer in length than a traditional, short-time bound exam, and therefore, additional time does not need to be given.	None required.
Rest Breaks	The time given to complete a remote assessment should factor in the need for students to take rest breaks.	None required.
Smaller room/room alone	Students accessing remote assessments, should be able to work in a space suitable for their needs.	Special considerations should be applied where students find themselves in an unsuitable location for study
Use of word processor	Students accessing remote assessments, should be able to use their computer.	Where students do not have appropriate technology, including broadband connectivity, special considerations should be applied.
Stickered script to indicate the student has an a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD)	In time-bound exams, stickered scripts should not be penalised for spelling and grammatical errors (unless they link to the learning outcomes).	Apply this approach to all remote assessments, regardless of whether the student has an SpLD. This negates the need to cross-check with University data systems (e.g. Banner) whether or not the student has an SpLD.
Use of coloured paper	Students are able to adjust their computer settings to suit their preference. Computer software, such as ClaroView, which can tint the colour of the screen.	Some students may prefer to work on paper, to avoid sitting at a computer screen for too long. Students should be given the option to print off and hand-write or just hand-write (where no printer is available) some elements of the assessment, before submitting a photo/scan of the work. For time-bound open book assessments, extra time should be allowed to facilitate this. The Illegible script policy will still apply.

5. Learning Support for students

5.1 Enabling Services will continue to support those students currently in receipt of learning support, for example the provision of scribes in time-bound examinations, in a remote setting. These recommendations will be based – as before - on an individual basis.

5.2 In addition, Enabling Services will work with cross-university teams, including iSolutions, to provide guidance for students with a hearing impairment or a visual impairment since it is acknowledged that some students may be self-managing and may not currently be in receipt of individual support. Where this is the case, and the student requires additional support, the student and/or their tutor should contact enable@soton.ac.uk in the first instance.

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