



Dublin International Study Centre

Reasonable Accommodations Policy

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Reasonable Accommodations Policy

Section One: Purpose and Scope

Purpose

1. ISC is committed to providing an equitable, inclusive, and accessible learning environment to support all learners to reach their full potential. This policy has been drafted to ensure compliance with the requirements outlined by The Equal Status Act 2000¹ (Section 4) which prohibits discrimination within the provision of education. Consequently, DISC embraces the broadest interpretation of disability which attempts to encompass all conditions that amount to a disability.
2. This policy aims to support the rights of all DISC learners with a disability, learning difference or ongoing health condition to participate in assessments that are accessible, inclusive, and free from discrimination.

Scope

3. This policy has been developed in accordance with the Disability Act 2005², the Equal Status Act 2000³, and UN Convention on the Rights of persons with Disabilities. As a result, DISC recognises its legal duty to do all that is reasonable to accommodate a learner with a disability, learning difference and/or ongoing health condition.
4. This policy applies to all DISC learners with a disability, learning difference and/or significant ongoing health condition, and provides a comprehensive framework for the provision of Reasonable Accommodations (RA) for the aforementioned learners at DISC.
5. In accordance with the Equal Status legislation, DISC will provide a range of RAs to ensure fair assessment processes for learners with specific needs whilst ensuring that in accommodating reasonable adjustments, the validity and reliability of assessments are not compromised.

Definitions

6. The term 'Reasonable Accommodations' is used to explain the range of supports and services available at DISC to assist learners with disabilities, learning differences and

¹ Quill, E. 2016. "XIV. Ireland." *European Tort Law Yearbook* 5: 282–303. <https://doi.org/10.1515/tortlaw-2016-0116>

² *Electronic Irish statute book (eisb) (no date a) Disability Act 2005*. Available at: <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2005/act/14/enacted/en/html> (Accessed: 06 March 2025).

³ *Equal status acts (no date a) Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission*. Available at: <https://www.ihrec.ie/guides-and-tools/human-rights-and-equality-in-the-provision-of-good-and-services/what-does-the-law-say/equal-status-acts/> (Accessed: 06 March 2025).

ongoing health conditions.

7. Reasonable Accommodations in the context of academic assessment refer to modifications made to assessment arrangements to support learners whose personal circumstances would otherwise place them at a disadvantage. DISC ensures that such accommodations do not compromise the integrity or standards of the assessment.
8. DISC recognises that several different definitions of ‘disability’ are used in various pieces of legislation. For the purpose of this policy, DISC refers to the definition of disability stipulated under The Disability Act 2005. The act defines disability as “...a substantial restriction in the capacity of a person to carry out a profession, business or occupation in the State or to participate in social or cultural life in the State by reason of an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.”⁴

Section Two: Policy Details

Policy Statement

9. DISC fosters an inclusive environment that allows all learners, regardless of any disability or specific need, to fully participate and engage in educational activities.
10. DISC provides RAs to eliminate barriers and facilitate equal access and participation for learners with a disability and/or specific needs. Therefore, the guidelines of this policy aim to promote inclusivity, accessibility, and equal educational opportunities.

Roles and Responsibilities

11. The recognition of the roles and responsibilities of staff and learners is essential to the successful implementation of this policy. The table below outlines DISC staff and learners' responsibilities regarding the RAs process, implementation, and disclosure.

| Role | Responsibility |
|-------|---|
| Staff | <p>All members of staff at DISC have a legal responsibility and a duty of care to respond effectively when a learner discloses personal information in relation to a disability, learning difference or significant ongoing health condition.</p> <p>Both professional services and academic staff members at DISC have a duty to facilitate RAs identified through a needs assessment.</p> |

⁴ *Electronic Irish statute book (eisb) (no date a) Disability Act 2005*. Available at: <https://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2005/act/14/enacted/en/html> (Accessed: 06 March 2025).

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Learners | To avail of RAs, it is the responsibility of the learner to notify DISC staff of their disability, learning difference and/or significant ongoing health condition, provide any related evidence, and participate in a needs assessment. Learners are also responsible for disclosing such information as soon as is possible to ensure they receive RAs without delay. If staff are not informed in a timely manner, it may limit our ability to meet those needs. |
| Welfare Team | The Welfare Officer has a responsibility to conduct and complete needs assessments in conjunction with the learner and to advise and guide the learner regarding any procedures relating to the accessing of reasonable adjustments. |
| Head of Quality | The oversight of the RAs policy rests with the Head of Quality who has responsibility for regularly reviewing this policy and procedures to ensure continuous improvement and effective policy implementation. |

12. DISC staff are responsible for informing all learners of the RAs policy and procedure at the beginning of the academic year. Learners are directed to review the RAs policy on the Study Smart Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). A 5.0 IELTS version of the policy is available on the VLE to ensure that the policy's readability is pitched to the appropriate entry of English language required for DISC learners. Furthermore, during induction week, DISC facilitates individual introductory meetings for all learners to address any questions and provide clarification regarding RAs.

Individual Needs Assessment

13. Each RA application will be considered on its individual merit. An Individual Needs Assessment will be conducted for each learner who submits an application for RAs. This assessment gathers crucial information regarding a learner's 's abilities, challenges, and required adjustments, and ensures that any RA is tailored to meet the specific needs of the learner.
14. The existence of a specific need does not automatically entitle a learner to RAs. RAs in assessment will only be accommodated when a learner can provide appropriate evidence/documentation which demonstrates that a specific need impedes a learner to compete on equal terms, under standard assessment conditions, with their peers.
15. There are currently no clear definitive rules to determine what is reasonable. Therefore, the consideration is judged against:
16. The effectiveness of the accommodation in preventing or reducing the impact of any disadvantage.
17. The extent to which it is reasonably practical for DISC to make the accommodations

including a consideration of the cost and availability of resources.

18. The extent to which the accommodations may have a negative impact on DISC's academic activities e.g. the requirement for the learning outcomes of each programme of study to be met.
19. RA applications for the assessment of learners are typically based on specific and permanent needs. However, in some cases, RA applications which are based on a temporary specific need e.g. an injury, will be considered.
20. Applications for RAs will normally be considered on the following grounds:
 - Learning Difference
 - Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
 - Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
 - Hearing Difficulty
 - Visual Difficulty
 - Physical Difficulty
 - Mental Health or Behavioural Difficulty

Privacy and Confidentiality

21. DISC acknowledges that all information regarding a learner's disability and/or health status is personal and private and will respect the confidentiality of such information in accordance with the Data Protection Legislation (2018). As such, this information will only be shared with appropriate members of staff where necessary to support the implementation of agreed adjustments.

Disclosure

22. Disclosure in the context of this policy means informing DISC staff about a disability, learning difference, or health condition. A registered learner may disclose a disability, learning difference and/or significant ongoing health condition by completing the reasonable adjustment application form, which is available on the VLE, Study Smart. However, a learner may make a disclosure more informally in conversation with a member of staff.
23. Once a learner has disclosed a disability to any staff member of staff at DISC, then DISC as a whole is deemed to be aware of this disclosure. Therefore, it is important that staff direct learners to the Welfare Officer following disclosure of a disability so that the learner can be guided through the process and have their needs formally assessed.
24. A learner may choose not to formally disclose a disability, learning difference or significant ongoing health condition. In such cases, they should be informed that non-disclosure may limit the support they receive, until such time as they choose to make



a formal disclosure.

Training and Awareness

25. DISC provides comprehensive training and professional development opportunities to staff regarding disabilities, specific needs, and the provision of RAs. This training is mandatory for all staff and is delivered annually as part of the staff induction programme.

Monitoring, Review, and Evaluation

26. RA policy reviews will be conducted by the Head of Quality annually thereafter.
27. Learner and staff workshops and focus groups will be convened to assess the impact of the provision of RAs on learners' educational progress and overall experience. This will ensure that feedback can be considered when the policy and provision of RAs are reviewed.
28. An effective monitoring system, which includes a robust documentation and audit trail, is in place to track the provision of RAs and ensure compliance with legal requirements.
29. DISC will promptly investigate and address all reported concerns. Appropriate actions will be taken to rectify any shortcomings.

Section Three: Application Process

Application Process

30. Learners who wish to avail of RAs are asked to complete a RAs form (Appendix 1.1) which is available on Study Smart or via the Welfare Officer.
31. Learners must submit appropriate medical verification/documentation to support their application.
32. DISC's welfare team will process each RA application and invite the learner to attend an Individual Needs Assessment meeting with the Welfare Officer.
33. Following the Needs Assessment meeting, a copy of the Learner Needs Educational Summary (Appendix 1.2) will be emailed to the learner. Where the learner provides permission, the recommended RAs will be communicated to relevant stakeholders and will be implemented as promptly as possible.
34. A learner may apply for RAs at any stage during their time at DISC. However, learners are strongly encouraged to disclose any disability, learning difference and/or ongoing health condition as soon as is feasibly possible to allow time for the implementation of the most appropriate and effective RA.
35. Where a difficulty arises in implementing an authorised RA, the Welfare team will promptly raise any concerns with the Centre Director. All relevant staff members and the learner will discuss the possibility of implementing an alternative, effective, and reasonable form of adjustment.

Possible Accommodations

36. Potential accommodations are identified through the Individual Needs Assessment process. The accommodations listed below may be approved and implemented as a result of the Needs Assessment:
- Word processor or other writing accommodations e.g. recording device.
 - The use of assistive software
 - A scribe, (in exceptional circumstances), where it is determined that a word processor, assistive software, or recording device is not sufficient support.
 - A reader to aid with reading without elaboration or explanation.
 - The use of a colour identifier.
 - Additional time of 10 minutes per hour with a maximum of 30 minutes of additional time per examination.
 - The provision of a modified examination paper and/or brief.
 - The use of a separate examination room.

Exemptions Under Legislation

37. The Employment Acts 1998 – 2015 identify the following exemptions to the requirement for the provision of all necessary measures regarding RAs for the person(s) with a disability, learning difference and/or ongoing health condition:
38. Where the provision of accommodations or measures would place a disproportionate burden on the organisation.
39. Where, even with the provision of all appropriate accommodations, the learner is unable to fulfil the essential requirements of the assessments and meet the programme learning outcomes.

Section Four: Appeals Procedure

Informal Review

Stage 1

40. Where a learner believes that the recommended RAs are not effective or are unreasonable, the learner should promptly raise concerns with the Welfare Officer via email to DublinISCwelfare@studygroup.com.
41. In these circumstances, the Welfare Officer will liaise with relevant staff members to consider alternative measures within 14 working days of receipt of correspondence. If the matter is not resolved within the 14-working day period, or if the learner is not

happy with the outcome and wishes the matter to be considered further, the learner may invoke Step 2 of the Informal Appeal process.

Stage 2

42. A learner may invoke stage 2 of the informal appeals procedure by sending a meeting request via email to the Welfare Officer. This meeting will be attended by a relevant staff member and a Welfare Officer. A full Needs Assessment Review will be conducted. The meeting will be convened within 14 working days of the receipt of the correspondence from the learner invoking Step 2.

Formal Appeals Process

43. In exceptional circumstances where an agreement between the Welfare Officer, relevant staff member, and learner cannot be reached regarding recommended RAs under the informal appeals procedure, a learner may request to escalate their appeal to a formal appeal. A learner may request that a RAs Appeals committee convene to further consider the matter. The request for a formal appeal must be submitted via email to DublinISCwelfare@studygroup.com.
44. A meeting of the Committee should be convened within 14 working days of the request made by the learner. The Reasonable Accommodations Appeals Committee (RAC) is established to ensure that appropriate, and fair adjustments have been agreed for the learner.
45. The objectives of the RAC are to:
- Review requests for RAs submitted by learners.
 - Assess the impact of proposed accommodations on the learner and the wider educational environment.
 - Ensure that accommodations are practical, proportionate, and do not compromise academic standards.
 - Promote and inclusive working environment.
 - Provide guidance to staff on implementing RAs effectively.
46. The RAC considers accommodations in areas such as:
- Teaching and learning methods.
 - Assessments and examination arrangements.
 - Use of assistive technology.
47. The RAC will be chaired by the Head of Curriculum and Progression and a quorum of at least three members from the list below will be required to convene the meeting:
- Centre Director.
 - Head of Quality.
 - Head of English.

- Welfare Officer (not part of the initial reasonable accommodations process).
- Student Representative.

48. The RAC will, at its absolute discretion, consider the appeal in an appropriate manner having regard to fairness and due process. The Committee will decide as to what, if any, accommodation should be recommended for the learner in question. The Committee's adjudged decision will be final, and the Committee chair will communicate the final decision to the learner in question via email.

Document Control

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Document name | | Reasonable Accommodations Policy | |
| Document owner | | Head of Quality | |
| Approved by | | Academic Board | |
| Approval date | | March 2026 | |
| Next review date | | June 2026 | |
| Version | | 1.1 | |
| Policy applies to | | DISC students | |
| Related documents | | | |
| Version | Date | Update by | Details |
| 1.0 | 29/01/2024 | Head of Quality | Policy Development |
| 1.1 | 06/03/2025 | Head of Quality | Policy amendment and review |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Appendices

Appendix 1.1

| Section A – DISC Declaration |
|---|
| <p>DISC provides a range of accommodations and supports for students with disabilities. DISC requires a student to submit evidence of a disability and attend a Needs Assessment meeting to access RAs for assessment. The Evidence of Disability is used to confirm the nature of a disability and greatly informs the Needs Assessment process. Please refer to DISC's Reasonable Accommodation Privacy Statement which provides full details of the legal basis and methods DISC uses to collect, store, and process data and your rights under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).</p> |

| Section B – Guide to Providing Evidence of Disability | |
|--|---|
| Evidence of Disability | <p>Existing Reports from Medical Consultant / Specialist criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The report is on headed paper. • The report is signed by the Medical Consultant/Specialist. Typed signatures and per procuracionem (i.e. pp signatures) signatures will not be accepted, • If the report is in another language, other than English, it must be professionally translated to English. |
| Reasonable Accommodation Request Form | <p>Learners must provide one of the following as evidence of their disability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A completed and signed Reasonable Accommodation Request form from the relevant Consultant/ Specialist. • A completed and signed Reasonable Accommodation Request form from a GP verifying that a diagnosis is on file from a Specialist/Consultant (a copy of the diagnosis must be provided). • Learners with a disability who are not under the care of a Specialist/ Consultant may ask a GP to solely complete the Reasonable Accommodations Request form. In this case, the learner will be eligible for general support (e.g. extra time for assessment) but may not be eligible for supports that require extra funding. • Please note that GP-evidence-only cannot be accepted for students registering with Specific Learning Difficulty, ADD/ADHD, ASD, or dyspraxia/Developmental Coordination Disorder. |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Appropriate Professional Consultation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Practitioner • Consultant Psychiatrist • Psychologist • Neurologist • Ophthalmologist • Ophthalmic Surgeon • Audiologist • Occupational Therapist • Specialist Registrar • Orthopaedic Consultant • Endocrinologist |
|---------------------------------------|---|

| Section C – Instructions for Form Completion | |
|---|--|
| <p>A relevant Medical Consultant / Specialist who has training and experience with the particular condition/disability must complete this form.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Another health professional who either has a diagnosis on file from a consultant or specialist or can confirm that they are treating you for the disability that they describe on the form.</p> <p>This form must be stamped and signed.</p> <p>If you have an existing report, signed and stamped by an appropriate professional, you do not have to complete this form to apply for a Reasonable Accommodations request.</p> <p>If you are unsure about the documentation you require when applying for Reasonable Accommodations, please contact: dubliniscwelfare@studygroup.com</p> | |
| Section 1 – Learner Details | |
| Learner Name: | |
| Learner ID: | |
| Programme Name: | |
| Email: | |
| Phone Number: | |

Please confirm that you would like to request Reasonable Accommodations for assessments at Dublin International Study Centre:

Yes / No

Learner signature: _____

Date: _____

Please describe any previous Reasonable Accommodations you have received from previous educational bodies and/or during academic examinations:

Please tick the box which best describes your required Reasonable Accommodation:

- Extended Assessment Time
- A Scribe
- A Reader
- Assistive Technology
- Dyslexia Support
- Other

If you tick Other, please specify:

| Section 2 – Qualified Professional/Specialist | |
|---|--|
| Name: | |
| Professional Credentials: | |
| Phone Number: | |
| Address: | |
| Email: | |
| Date of report: | |
| <p>If you are a GP or other Health Professional (not a Consultant/Specialist), please tick the relevant box below:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I have a diagnosis on file from an appropriate Consultant / Specialist. N.B. A copy of confirmation of diagnosis must be attached to this form.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I can confirm that I am treating the named person for the disability described in this form.</p> | |
| <p>Disability Information (To be completed by a Health Professional)</p> <p>Please state the name of diagnosed disability <input type="text"/></p> <p>Please state the date of diagnosis <input type="text"/></p> | |
| <p>How does this diagnosis/health condition impact the learner's ability to participate in an educational setting?</p> | |
| <p>What recommendations would you make for Reasonable Accommodations to enable equal participation in education for named student?</p> | |

Where a consultant has completed this form, the consultant must complete the details below:

Consultant's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Official Stamp: This form should be stamped or accompanied by a business card/headed paper.

Where a GP has completed this form, a GP should complete the details below:

GP's Signature: _____

Date: _____

IMC Number:

| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Name of GP: _____

Official Stamp: This form should be stamped or accompanied by a business card/headed paper.

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Appendix 1.1 | Reasonable Accommodation Request Form |
| Description | A document designed to assist students in formalising their requests for accommodations to assessments and other academic practices. |
| Author | Head of Quality |
| Version | 1: 1 |
| Approved by | |
| Approval Date | |
| Date of Review | 06/03/2024 |

Appendix 1.2

| Section A – Learner Details | |
|---|--|
| Learner Name: | |
| Learner ID: | |
| Email: | |
| Phone: | |
| Programme: | |
| Grade Level | |
| Entry Date: | |
| SECTION B – History of Reasonable Accommodations in Education | |
| <p>The reasonable Accommodations form is complete:</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you tick No, please give an explanation:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> | |
| <p>Did the student applicant have any formal accommodations in place in a previous school/college?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If Yes, please indicate which Reasonable Accommodations were put in place for the student applicant:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> | |

SECTION C – Recommendation of Reasonable Accommodation(s)

Section 1 – Reasonable Adjustment Recommendations Summary

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Individual Assessment Session | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Assessment Time Extension | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Scribe | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Reader | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Enlarged Examination Paper | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Modified Examination Paper | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Colour Identifier | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Assistive Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If Other, please specify:

Section 2 – Educator Input

Please indicate which Reasonable Accommodations DISC should recommend for the named learner, and give an explanation below:

Section 3 – Formal Reasonable Accommodation Recommendation

DISC recommends the following adjustment(s):

| | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| For (Learner Name): | <input type="text"/> |
| DISC Staff Signature: | <input type="text"/> |
| Staff Position: | <input type="text"/> |
| Learner Signature: | <input type="text"/> |
| Date: | <input type="text"/> |

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Appendix 1.2 | Learner Educational Needs Summary Form |
| Description | This form should be completed to identify a student's educational needs. |
| Author | Head of Quality |
| Version | 1: 1 |
| Approved by | |
| Approval Date | |
| Date of Review | 06/03/2024 |