

Good Practice Guide: Inclusive Teaching for Students with Unseen Impairments and Medical Conditions



Why make your teaching more inclusive, why make reasonable adjustments?

- The School's Strategic Objectives¹ encourage departments to "...lead in the provision of excellent disciplinary and interdisciplinary education", (ensure) that "...graduates are well informed, critical, analytically sophisticated and globally employable", and (ensure) that "...students and staff interact to build a dynamic learning community that reflects the School's distinctive identity."
- Reflecting on inclusion and reasonable adjustments in your teaching provides an opportunity to refresh your practice ensuring it is accessible to students with diverse study experiences as well as disabilities.
- Meet the needs and requirement of diverse student body including disabled students ensuring the School meets its legal 'anticipatory' duty to students under the 'Equality Act (2010)
- "... in the midst of rapid change in higher education, a crucial priority is to ensure that our students have the benefit of great teaching and a rewarding educational experience." Dame Minouche Shafik.

Unseen Impairments & Medical Conditions

Unseen impairments and medical conditions cover a wide range of diagnoses including cancer, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, pain conditions, Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME)/ chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS), and Crohn's disease. Their effects may include fatigue, pain, general ill health, and a need for more frequent access to food or bathroom facilities. As well as the impacts on academic study, students often miss out on valuable opportunities for social and cultural capital.

Impact on Study

Unseen impairments and medical conditions can fluctuate – a student may be well one day and be very unwell the next because of a sudden 'flare-up' in their condition, in some cases exacerbated by periods of high intensity required around deadline(s), assessment periods and the resumption of study following summer, spring and winter vacation periods. Students may need support in the areas of:

- Managing fatigue and energy levels
- Breaks for symptom management
- Sitting or standing for extended periods
- Managing exposure to environmental triggers
- Strategies to address periods of poor concentration

Who can I work with to help my teaching and what resources are available to me?

- Your Department's dedicated Teaching and Learning Centre departmental adviser listed at <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Support-for-LSE-Departments/Support-for-LSE-departments>
- Make use of the 'Assessment Toolkit' at <https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/Teaching-and-Learning-Centre/Assessment-Toolkit/LSE-Assessment-Toolkit>
- To discuss **My Adjustments**, seek advice on reasonable adjustments and **Central Exam Adjustments** contact the Disability and Wellbeing Service <https://info.lse.ac.uk/current-students/student-services/disability-and-wellbeing-service>

FOR EXAMPLES OF REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS AND INCLUSIVE TEACHING EXAMPLES SEE OVER

¹ <http://www.lse.ac.uk/about-lse/Image-assets/PDF/Education-Strategy.pdf>

Inclusive Teaching examples

- Provide clear written feedback even when a face-to-face feedback discussion takes place. Students with impaired concentration can thus avoid having to record feedback while discussing it and can have a helpful point of reference for later.
- Timetable should take account of fluctuating impacts throughout the academic year and which enable students to access support.
- Avoid penalising or making judgements because of disability related absences.

‘inclusive learning and teaching recognises all student’s entitlement to a learning experience that respects diversity, enables participation, removes barriers and anticipates and considers a variety of learning needs and preferences’ [HEA]

Reasonable Adjustment examples

- Provision of reading lists and lecture/teaching materials (includes handouts, notes, slides, and articles for discussion) in advance enabling adequate time for the student to prepare in light of their disability.
- Permission to record lectures or take notes on a computer, and access to lecture capture.
- Library adjustments including extended loans.
- Give clear information in advance about field work, study abroad and proactively offer named staff to help with ensuring access to study related activity.
- Examination adjustments: such as extra time, use of a computer, or rest breaks.
- Signpost to Assistive Technology training via the IT Help Desk
- Signpost to the Disability and Wellbeing Service for mentoring and study skills support – as appropriate but often to enable successful management of fluctuating conditions, balancing study, social and medical appointments/commitments.
- Proactively ensuring students aware of Office Hours provision and Disability and Wellbeing Service so as to keep relevant colleagues informed of issues (if any) and to enable difficulties to be addressed prior to reaching a crisis.