

GUIDELINE: DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL ACCESS PLANS

The University has chosen to adopt and adapt the principles of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF; WHO, 2001) when developing individual educational access plans for students with disability. Functioning and disability are viewed as a complex interaction between the health condition of the student and the contextual factors of the environment, as well as personal factors.

With a focus on the individual experience of impairment, the assessment process is carefully designed to be relevant across cultures as well as age groups and genders, making it highly appropriate for the heterogeneous Macquarie University student population. All aspects of a student's life (development, participation and environment) are therefore incorporated into the assessment of current functioning instead of solely focusing on their diagnosis.

Figure 1 (below) illustrates the processes involved in the development of individual educational access plans. The assessment of the potential impact of a disability on a student's experience of University is treated as interactive and dynamic across domains rather than linear or static. The process allows for an assessment of the degree of disability, although it is not dependent on a measurement instrument. It is applicable to all students, whatever their health condition(s).

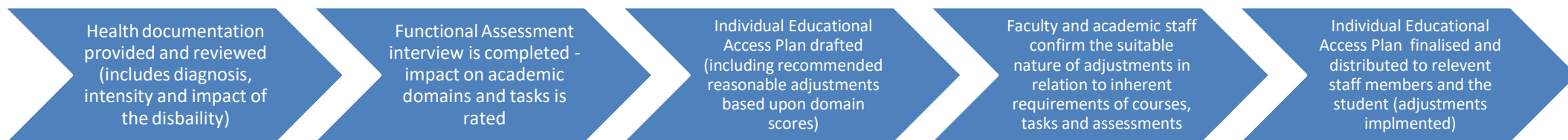


FIGURE 1: INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL ACCESS PLAN ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

In assessing a particular adjustment for a student with a disability, the Disability Service requires current, relevant and appropriate medical or specialised documentation to substantiate the impact of a disability on the student's level of functioning. To assist the assessment, the supporting documentation must:

- identify and describe the disability;
- explain the severity and impact of the disability;
- clearly describe how the disability may adversely impact on the student's capacity to undertake educational tasks; and
- state whether the disability is temporary, permanent/unchanging, or likely to fluctuate over time

For conditions that are indicated to be temporary or fluctuate over time, the Disability Service may need to request updated disclosures, via new supporting documentation from the student's health professional, prior to completing their assessment and recommending reasonable adjustments to be implemented.

TABLE 1: COMMON IMPACTS OF DISABILITY ON DOMAINS OF ACADEMIC FUNCTIONING

Domains of functioning	Physical Disability	Chronic Medical Condition	Mental Health Condition	Neurological Impairment	Vision Impairment	Deaf or Hearing Impairment
Cognition	Unlikely – Possible in conditions where symptoms involve recurring pain or medications with side effects	Unlikely - Possible in conditions where symptoms involve recurring pain, seizures, injuries to the brain, or medications with side effects	Highly Likely to some extent for most mental health conditions	Likely to some extent for most mental neurological conditions. Can be a feature of specific learning disorders	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely without comorbidity
Behaviour	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely - Possible in conditions involving emotional dysregulation or trouble identifying/responding to social cues	Unlikely - Possible following brain injury	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely without comorbidity
Vision	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely - Possible in severe cases	Unlikely - Possible in specific learning disorders and following brain injury	Highly likely	Unlikely without comorbidity
Hearing	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely without comorbidity	Unlikely - Possible in severe cases	Unlikely - Possible in specific learning disorders and following brain injury	Unlikely without comorbidity	Highly Likely
Handwriting / Typing	Likely when dominant hand is injured or if there is damage to vertebra	Unlikely – Possible where symptoms affect mobility and control	Possible – particularly in reference to time taken to produce when cognition is affected	Possible – particularly for learning disorders	Highly Likely	Likely - particularly for deaf students – English as second language
Communication	Possible: severe cases / following certain treatments	Possible: severe cases / following certain treatments	Unlikely – Possible in severe cases / following certain treatments	Unlikely – Possible in severe cases / following certain treatments	Likely to require adjustments to inform them of the content produced (written content) in an alternate format	Highly Likely – particularly for spoken content
Physical / Mobility	Highly Likely	Likely - particularly where fatigue or pain is a symptom	Possible - a moderate impact on energy levels is most	Unlikely -Some restricted mobility in severe cases	Unlikely -may require some environmental training in severe cases	Unlikely without comorbidity

			common. Some restricted mobility in severe cases			
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Seven domains of functioning are reviewed by the Disability Service during the functional assessment interview with the student:

- A. **Cognition** - Memory (retention of content); Concentration (attending to content); Processing (manipulating and applying content); Organisation (planning and prioritising tasks)
- B. **Behaviour** – Interacting with other people
- C. **Vision** – Accessing visual content
- D. **Hearing** – Accessing auditory content
- E. **Handwriting/Typing** – Physically producing written content
- F. **Communication** – Developing and producing spoken or written content
- G. **Physical / Mobility** – Accessing and completing tasks within academic environments

Each of the above domains of functioning has a significant impact on a student’s ability to meet the inherent requirements and expected learning outcomes of course units, tasks and assessments. Table 1 (Page 2) provides a guide to the likely impacts of common disability types on the domains of academic functioning.

Following review of the health documentation received, the Disability Service practitioners are able to tailor the functional assessment interview with the student based upon the likely impacts of the experience of their identified disability. Disability Service practitioners rate of the level of impairment in each of the seven domains of functioning. A five-point scale (0-4) is applied to levels of impairment:

0 - <i>No impairment</i> : no problem; unlikely to interfere with the student’s academic functioning.
1 - <i>Mild impairment</i> : a problem that is present less than 25% of the time; has an intensity the student can tolerate, which minimally interferes with their academic functioning, but not to a degree beyond the experienced of a student without a disability; happens rarely over the last 30 days.
2 - <i>Moderate impairment</i> : a problem that is present less than 50% of the time; has an intensity that is likely to interfere in the student’s academic functioning; happens occasionally over the last 30 days.
3 - <i>Severe impairment</i> : a problem that is present more than 50% of the time; has an intensity that is likely disrupting the student’s academic functioning; happens frequently over the last 30 days.
4 - <i>Complete impairment</i> : a problem that is present more than 95% of the time; has an intensity that is totally disrupting the student’s academic functioning; happens every day over the last 30 days.

Appendix 1 (page 5) has been produced to aid the development of individual educational access plans following the functional assessment interview. Adjustments considered reasonable based on an assessed level of functioning are presented for each domain.

GUIDELINES WHEN USING THE REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT GUIDE FOR FUNCTIONAL IMPAIRMENTS (APPENDIX 1):

1. Many academic assessments have been allocated time and submission periods by learning and teaching staff members who have set the tasks in consideration of universal design principles.
2. It is not expected that a student will receive all adjustments as a result of being assessed at a particular level of functioning.
3. Students are not recommended adjustments that address the same impaired function (e.g. Notetaking, captioning and transcription services).
4. An adjustment applied in response to one academic domain of functioning may similarly assist a student in one of the other domains of academic functioning. As per guideline 3 (above), adjustments will not be recommended that duplicate function.
5. An assessment rating of **1** (Mild) on a single domain of academic functioning is not linked with an expected adjustment, however, if there are instances of mild impairment across multiple domains, Disability Service practitioners may still assess and recommend an adjustment to be implemented due to a likely cumulative impact.
6. Adjustments are recommended based on an interaction between current levels of functioning and current task requirements. In many cases the recommended adjustment will vary based on course unit content and even the tasks within a course unit.
7. Double time is considered the maximum cumulative time adjustment recommended for an assessment task (i.e. examinations).
8. Scores of **3** (Severe) and **4** (Complete) often involve impairments across multiple domains. In these circumstances it is not unusual for the assessment process to require considerable feedback from course convenors related to the expected academic outcomes and inherent requirements of a course unit or task prior to the finalisation of recommendations and the individual educational access plan.
9. Timeliness, availability, access and encouraging agency are considered as first principles when developing an individual educational access plan.
10. A student who is an associate of a person with a disability may be entitled to an individual educational access plan. Such students need to demonstrate and provide supporting documentations as to how their responsibilities in that relationship impact on their capacity to function (i.e. the seven domains of functioning will similarly be rated following a functional assessment interview).

Appendix 1: Reasonable Adjustment Guide for Functional Impairments

A: Cognition

[Memory (retention of content) / Concentration (attending to content) / Processing (manipulating and applying content) / Organisation (planning and prioritising tasks)]

MODERATE IMPAIRMENT -

- Note-taking (where there is no access to audio content or adequate iLearn notes)
- Access to assistive technology software and devices (e.g. WYNN; alarm clocks and planners, etc.)
- Q room access
- Additional **5-10** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration
- Permission to administer prescribed medication or bring food and drink into the exam
- Referral to services focussed on adjustment to the university environment, learning skills and the use of assistive technologies

SEVERE IMPAIRMENT -

- Permission to pre-record assessment tasks involving presentations.
- Permission to have earlier or later examination start times (if required due to the affects of medication)
- Permission to have one exam per day
- Permission to split exams.
- Additional **15-20** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests

COMPLETE IMPAIRMENT -

- Consider up to **30** minutes additional time per hour in exams and class tests where there are multiple cognitive impairments

B: Behaviour

(interacting with other people)

MODERATE IMPAIRMENT -

- Note-taking (where there is no access to audio content or adequate iLearn notes)
- Permission to administer prescribed medication or bring food and drink into the exam
- Q room access
- Own or room with fewer students for exams and class tests
- Additional **5-10** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration
- Referral to services focussed on adjustment to the university environment, learning skills and the use of assistive technologies

SEVERE IMPAIRMENT -

- Permission to complete alternative assessment tasks where group work is not possible or may cause undue hardship to other group members.
- Permission to pre-record assessment tasks involving presentations.
- Support staff to liaise and attend meetings with the student with academic or faculty staff.
- Permission to undertake alternative on and off campus activities such as fieldwork, interviews or industry visits where this does not compromise the learning outcomes of the unit
- Permission to have earlier or later examination start times if required due to the affects of medication
- Permission to have one exam per day
- Permission to split exams
- Permission to take unpenalised breaks up to **30** minutes to regulate mood and behaviour during exams.
- Additional **15-20** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests

COMPLETE IMPAIRMENT -

- Recommend external enrolment where possible (i.e. no on-campus sessions)
- Permission to have earlier or later examination start times if required due to the affects of medication
- Own room for exams (**Consider:** off-campus sittings)
- Up to **30** minutes additional time per hour in exams and class tests

C: Vision

(accessing visual content)

MODERATE IMPAIRMENT -

- Advanced access to unit readings where possible
- Tailoring of reading lists to identify key texts where possible

- Class seating that provides unobstructed line of vision, for students who have some vision
- Permission to sit class tests and exams in rooms with specified lighting (e.g. natural)
- Q room access (if access to software required)
- Note-taking (where there is no access to audio content or adequate iLearn notes)
- Examination and study materials in a font size that can be read by the student where use of a magnifier or large screen is not sufficient
- Permission to use a computer or reader during exams and class tests
- Additional **5-10** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration
- Orientation to university environment and classrooms
- Referral to services focussed on adjustment to the university environment, learning skills and the use of assistive technologies

SEVERE IMPAIRMENT -

- Photocopying and/or book retrieval assistance in the library
- Permission to use adaptive technology (e.g. close circuit TV, magnifier or computer, screen reader or Braille display in class tests & exams)
- Provision of a study support assistant in practical settings to facilitate access to visual or audio information that is inaccessible to the student and/or the completion of mechanical tasks associated with conducting experiments or activities in computer labs
- Permission to use lined paper or larger examination booklets/answer sheets for large print users
- Provision of alternative assessment tasks that require physical representations such as models where this does not compromise the learning and assessment outcomes of the unit
- Permission to have one exam per day
- Provided with sufficient working space in class test and exam venues to work with large print materials, adaptive technology and/or interpreters/reader/scribe, if required
- Additional **15-20** minutes per hour to complete exams/class tests

COMPLETE IMPAIRMENT -

- Permission to split exams or have day gaps between exams
- Permission to undertake alternative on and off campus activities such as fieldwork, interviews or industry visits where this does not compromise the learning outcomes of the unit
- Interpreter for students who are Deaf-blind
- Modification of start and finish times of academic tasks (exams/practical placements) for students with night vision impairments
- Permission to answer alternate questions where the content is of a visual nature and is inaccessible to blind or deaf-blind students where this does not compromise learning outcomes for the unit
- Additional **30-60** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration

D: Hearing

(accessing auditory content)

MODERATE IMPAIRMENT -

- Class seating that facilitates best reception of hearing (i.e. line of sight, distance to presenters or access to hearing technology)
- Adaptive hearing technology, such as infra red or real time captioning
- Q room access (if access to quiet study space required)
- Note-taking (where there is no access to audio content or adequate iLearn notes)
- Permission for student with a hearing disability to use a computer with spelling and grammar check enabled and dictionary or thesaurus during exams and class tests
- Permission to use flash card instructions prior to and during exams and class tests
- Additional **5-10** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration

SEVERE IMPAIRMENT -

- Advanced access to unit readings
- AUSLAN interpreter (NAATI registered)
- Captioning of audio and/or video for students who are unable to hear the audio; Note-taking (if not using captioning)
- Provision of a study support assistant in practical settings to facilitate access to audio information that is inaccessible to the student
- Permission to answer alternate questions where the content is of a audio nature and is inaccessible to Deaf students where this does not compromise learning outcomes for the unit
- Permission to have own room with reader or interpreter, if required
- Additional **15-20** minutes per hour to complete exams/class tests
- Referral to services focussed on adjustment to the university environment, learning skills and the use of assistive technologies (if no closed captioning is used)

COMPLETE IMPAIRMENT -

- Permission to undertake alternative on and off campus activities such as fieldwork, interviews or industry visits where this does not compromise the learning outcomes of the unit
- Interpreter for students who are Deaf-blind
- Up to an additional **30** minutes per hour to complete exams/class tests (where there are verbal instructions used throughout the assessment task).

E: Handwriting / Typing

(physically producing written content)

MODERATE IMPAIRMENT -

- Note-taking (where there is no access to audio content or adequate iLearn notes or it is painful to write)
- Use of computer for exams and in class tests with written answers (not required or not appropriate for multiple choice or math formats)
- Additional **5-10** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration

SEVERE IMPAIRMENT -

- Use of assistive technology (e.g. Dragon dictate)
- Scribe or use of computer for exams and in class tests with written answers
- Permission to have one exam per day
- Extra time to complete typed assessment tasks (e.g. essays/reports)
- Additional **15-20** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests
- Referral to services focussed on the use of assistive technologies

COMPLETE IMPAIRMENT -

- Permission to split exams or have day gaps between exams
- Up to **60** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests

F: Communication

(developing and producing spoken or written content)

MODERATE IMPAIRMENT -

- Access to assistive technology software and devices (e.g. WYNN; alarm clocks and planners, etc.)
- Permission to use communication aids in class and during assessment tasks
- Additional **5-10** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration
- Alternative assessment task for public speaking (as required)
- Referral to services focussed on adjustment to the university environment, learning skills and the use of assistive technologies

SEVERE IMPAIRMENT -

- AUSLAN Interpreter (if appropriate)
- Permission to pre-record assessment tasks involving spoken content
- Permission to have earlier or later examination start times if required due to the affects of medication
- Permission to use a computer with spelling and grammar check enabled, and dictionary or thesaurus, during exams and class tests
- Permission to have one exam per day
- Permission to split exams
- Extra time to complete written assessment tasks (e.g. essays/reports)
- Additional **15-20** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests

COMPLETE IMPAIRMENT -

- Up to **30** minutes additional time per hour in exams and class tests

G: Physical / Mobility

(accessing and completing tasks within academic environments)

MODERATE IMPAIRMENT -

- Permission to lodge all assessment tasks electronically
- Q room access (if access to ergonomic furniture or adaptive software is required)
- Provision of a locker if unable to carry educational materials on campus
- Permission to administer prescribed medication or bring food and drink into the exam
- Access to a mobility scooter, subject to an assessment by an Occupational Therapist/Disability Assessment Advisor
- Further practice with scooter use with an Occupational Therapist as required
- Level access to class and assessment venues
- Assistance with timetabling changes if their rooms are inaccessible/does not meet their needs
- Environmental assessment and adaptation if required
- Lift access provided in restricted buildings such as C10A
- Permission to stand during classes or learning activities should their disability cause difficulty with extended sitting
- Recognition that the student may run late to classes when there is some distance between teaching venues

- Physical assistance may be required with opening doors
- Provision of ergonomic furniture in educational environments (including exams/tests)
- Permission to use a slope board for assessment tasks
- Permission for the student to use their own aids (e.g. cushions)
- Permission to sit assessment tasks with a small number of other students or in own room
- Permission to sit assessment tasks in a temperature controlled environment if their symptoms are exacerbated by heat or cold
- Students with a temporary disability may need to apply for Special Consideration and if successful sit a supplementary exam with relevant exam provisions
- Additional **5-10** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests of more than 60 minutes duration

SEVERE IMPAIRMENT -

- Note-taking
- Permission to administer prescribed medication or bring food and drink into the exam
- Permission to have earlier or later examination start times if required due to personal care and/or transport arrangements
- Use of assistive technology (e.g. Dragon dictate)
- Permission to have one exam per day
- Permission to split exams
- Additional **15-20** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests
- Referral to services focussed on adjustment to the university environment and the use of assistive technologies

COMPLETE IMPAIRMENT -

- Provision of a study support assistant to assist with mechanical tasks such as those found in computing, science and language laboratories when the students disability significantly impacts on their dexterity, co-ordination, balance and/or communication
- Permission to undertake alternative on and off campus activities such as fieldwork, interviews or industry visits where this does not compromise the unit learning outcomes
- Permission to have an assistant when completing an exam if unable to read, hold or manipulate exam materials
- Permission to have a carer, provided by the student, available to provide personal care during class tests and exams (if required)
- Permission to complete no more than one exam per day (with rest days between)
- Unpenalised rest breaks for toileting and eating for exams of greater than 2 hours duration
- Up to **60** minutes per hour to complete exams and class tests