

# **ENABLING ACCESS TO EFFECTIVE LEARNING IN HLS: A policy on deadline extensions for students with dyslexia.**

## **Introduction**

The DDA requires the Faculty to ensure that its learning, teaching and assessment strategies include consideration of the requirements of disabled students. It is often recommended by Educational Psychologists that 'deadline flexibility' should be exercised for students with dyslexia. This sometimes causes confusion for both staff and student and it is important that everyone is aware of the expectations being placed on them.

As a Faculty we need to ensure that we are being anticipatory towards students' needs and making reasonable adjustments where necessary.

The following policy will provide the starting point for approaching each individual case of an extension request.

## **Setting Assignments**

We should be aiming to make our students as aware as possible of the expectations that will be placed on them throughout the year.

- Deadlines should be set as far ahead as possible.
- Students should have the maximum time available to plan and complete an assignment.
- Study timetables that include coursework deadlines, given out at the beginning of the year are an example of good practice.
- Some students use mentors and this information is invaluable to them in supporting the student to develop effective study management skills.

## **Extending Deadlines**

Students may require an extension for a number of reasons. Whilst students with dyslexia are adapting to working in a HE environment they will be developing strategies to support effective study. These strategies often involve accessing funding which can be time consuming. When the student is awarded assistive software becoming familiar with this can also take time. These circumstances mean that without an extension the student with dyslexia may be at a disadvantage to their peers.

How and when to extend?

- An extension is not automatic for a dyslexic student, they will need to request it in the usual way. However a dyslexic student who is known to us should not be asked to provide evidence of their dyslexia. This can be checked either via the Public Folders or through the Disability Co-ordinator.
- It should be within the University regulations and for a maximum of two weeks.
- The student needs to apply before the original deadline cut off unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- It is vitally important not to further disadvantage the student by extending one deadline into another and creating a knock on effect.
- It is important to ensure that students are not using extensions as a form of time management and are being supported to develop more effective strategies.
- Sometimes even a student who has long been using their methods of support will be disadvantaged because of their dyslexia in a way their peers won't be. This should not be overlooked and in some circumstances an extension should be considered.

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Faculty Disability Co-ordinator

- An extension is there to accompany other support and to ensure that a student has the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to meet the learning outcomes.

### **Evidence required for an extension**

Students will often approach their tutor to request an extension on the grounds of dyslexia. In some cases these students will not have had a formal assessment. If this happens the student should be referred to the Faculty Disability Co-ordinator. The student may indeed be dyslexic and we will need to have them properly assessed to ensure that they have the appropriate support. For all other dyslexic students the following should apply:

- We should not view dyslexia (and other disabilities) in the same way we view a cold, students should not be continually asked to 'prove' their disability.
- If the student is known to the University as being dyslexic we will have a copy of their report on file.
- Tutors do not need to see this report and if they are given one by a student they should forward it to the Faculty Disability Co-ordinator.
- Staff can check whether a student is known to the Faculty on the disability spreadsheet available through the public folders.
- Please note if a dyslexic student is requesting an extension on the grounds of illness or other extenuating circumstance (not relating to their disability) they will need to provide evidence of this in the usual way.

### **Programme Ownership**

This policy is intended to ensure parity across the faculty when giving extensions to our students. There will be some alterations and specific exceptions for individual programmes. Any amendment to the policy should be submitted to the programmes relative SMB for discussion with a view to be added to this policy.