

POLICY	
TITLE	<u>MEDICAL SCHOOL</u> Reasonable Adjustments for Disability policy
DOCUMENT NUMBER	MED07
AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS	Yes
DATE REVIEWED Highlighted text denotes amendments at last update	May 2022 Medicine Programme Board Faculty Academic Standards & Quality Enhancement Committee
NEXT REVIEW DATE	July 2023

EXCEPTIONS	This policy only applies to students undertaking the following programmes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBChB • MBChB with Foundation Year • MSc Physician Associate
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Medical School - Reasonable Adjustments for Disability

What is a disability?

The General Medical Council (GMC) (2019) defines disability as “*an impairment that has a substantial long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities*”. To be considered a disability it needs to be more than minor or trivial, has lasted or likely to last at least 12 months, and impacts on the things people do on a regular daily basis.

The definition covers:

- Fluctuating or recurring conditions (e.g. rheumatoid arthritis)
- HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis
- Other progressive conditions, such as motor neurone disease, muscular dystrophy, and forms of dementia
- A person who is certified as blind, severely sight impaired, slightly impaired or partially sighted
- Severe disfigurement

Disability thus includes a range of conditions. This can include sensory impairments, autoimmune conditions, organ specific conditions (e.g. asthma, cardiovascular disease), conditions such as ADHD, SpLD and autistic spectrum disorder, mental health conditions, and impairments by injury to the body.

This document should be read in conjunction with

- General Medical Council, 2019. Welcome and Valued
https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/welcomed-and-valued_pdf-78466923.pdf
- Medical School Council, 2022. Supporting and encouraging applicants with a disability
https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2945/supporting-and-encouraging-applicants-with-a-disability_a-guide-for-ms.pdf
- Medical School Council, 2022. A guide for prospective medical school applicants with disabilities or long-term health conditions
<https://www.medschools.ac.uk/media/2948/a-guide-for-prospective-medical-school-applicants-with-disabilities.pdf>

Reasonable Adjustments and students with a disability¹

The Edge Hill University Medical School is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion, widening access to Medicine and increasing the diversity and competency range of medical school students. It is committed to supporting students with a disability including mental health issues, and recognises that a person who has experienced a disability can make a unique contribution to patient care by providing direct experience and knowledge of particular health conditions or impairments. There are many examples of people with a disability having successful medical careers.

The Edge Hill University Medical School supports and encourages those with a disability to apply to study Medicine. It has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments to help learners with a disability to meet the standards of competence required and defined in the General Medical Council (GMC) *Outcomes for Graduates* and for GMC registration. The standards of competence themselves cannot be changed, however, reasonable adjustments may be made to the way the standards are assessed or performed (except where the method of performance is part of the competence to be attained), and to how curricula and placements are delivered.

In the case of students on the MSc Physician Associate Studies programme, reasonable adjustments will be considered in relation to the core competency framework set by the Faculty of Physician Associates. This will be reviewed when PA's become registered by the GMC, expected in 2023, to incorporate the latest guidance for the profession, which is likely to follow existing guidance for medical students and doctors.

EHUMS will make positive steps to make sure students with a disability can fully participate in education and other benefits, facilities and services. This includes:

- Expecting the needs of learners with a disability
- Avoiding substantial disadvantage for learners with a disability
- Assessing if an adjustment has been effective
- Consider support on a case-by-case basis and deciding on what adjustments are “reasonable” for each person’s circumstances and associated barriers (GMC, 2019)

Edge Hill University Medical School will thus consider all requests for reasonable adjustments, but only have the obligation to make the adjustments deemed as reasonable. The Medical School will look at the impact having a disability is having on the person’s ability to practice medicine safely, on a case-by-case basis.

This policy has been informed by the following GMC documents:

Welcomed and valued: Supporting disabled learners in medical education and training:
<https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/guidance/welcomed->

¹ Reasonable adjustments related to protected characteristics other than disability within the Equality Act 2010 will be considered initially by the Health, Conduct and Wellbeing Lead.

[and-valued/welcomed-and-valued-supporting-disabled-learners-in-medical-education-and-training](#)

Gateways to the professions: <https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/guidance/gateways-to-the-professions>

Outcome for Graduates <https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/standards-and-outcomes/outcomes-for-graduates>

Good medical practice <https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/good-medical-practice>

Professional behaviour and Fitness to Practise <https://www.gmc-uk.org/education/standards-guidance-and-curricula/guidance/professional-behaviour-and-fitness-to-practise>

1. Pre-admissions

Candidates are advised to contact the Medical School to discuss the course requirements and any concerns they may have at the earliest possible stage via AskMedSchool@edgehill.ac.uk. Applicants with a disability may also wish to contact the Medical Schools Council www.medschools.ac.uk who can provide an informative guide 'Into Medicine'. The GMC advisory guidance *Gateway to the Professions* can be located at: www.gmc-uk.org. All candidates will be considered in an equitable manner with reference to institutional regulations and the Equality Act 2010.

At Edge Hill University Medical School, we are committed to the principle of equal treatment of learners with a disability and the correct application of the Equality Act 2010 during all stages of their journey, from application to becoming a student and graduating as a doctor. This will include an opportunity for pre-application discussion with the Medical School Disability Liaison Lead (DLL), and/or the Health, Conduct & Well-being Lead. Candidates are welcome to request a pre-application discussion about their disability via: AskMedSchool@edgehill.ac.uk

2. Admissions: interviews and offers

In terms of the admissions process, those applicants who have a disability or medical condition that may impact upon their ability to meet the requirements of the programme and the GMC's 'Outcomes for Graduates' should disclose this on their UCAS application at the outset. Such disclosure will have no impact on the selection process itself. That is, throughout the interview process, staff conduct will be consistent, and the numerical scoring of all candidates will be based on the same pre-determined criteria. All candidates will be treated fairly and consistently to ensure parity. Staff involved in interviewing candidates are trained in the principles of equality, diversity and inclusivity, and do not permit a declaration of disability to influence their scoring of a candidate's performance.

<https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/courses/files/Medical-School-Admissions-Policy.pdf>

The University will consider, and implement as fully as possible, all requests/requirements (on a case-by-case basis) for reasonable adjustments for any candidate selected for interview to allow them to successfully participate in the interview process. These requests/requirements need to be received by the University by the date indicated on the interview invitation letter. At the interview stage all reasonable adjustment requests will be considered by the admissions team in liaison with the appropriate student services (e.g. inclusion) and the Medical School Disability Liaison Lead (DLL). In exceptional circumstances (where admissions seek guidance on suitable reasonable adjustments specific to medical admissions) the Reasonable Adjustments for Disability Panel will convene.

Admission offers to the Edge Hill University Medical School are subject to a satisfactory health clearance for the individual concerned. Here, those candidates that receive a provisional offer will be required to complete a University-based Declaration of Health questionnaire. Candidates will be contacted by the University's nominated Occupational Health Service provider and may be required to attend an appointment with them to assess their needs and whether reasonable adjustments would be required to undertake the relevant programme. The Occupational Health Service will also advise the Medical School of any potential adjustments that would be necessary for the student to join that Programme. This will be assessed via the Medical School Reasonable Adjustments for Disability panel².

The Medical School Reasonable Adjustments for Disability Panel will comprise:

- Medical School Disability Liaison Lead (Chair)
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead
- Student Support Lead
- Medical School Admissions Lead
- Programme Lead/Phase Lead (as appropriate)
- Student's allocated Personal Academic Tutor
- Representative from Learning Services
- Clinical Placement Learning Development Lead
- Clinical doctor or practising Physician Associate

Final offers for entry into the Edge Hill University Medical School are conditional upon the ability to meet the requirements of the programme and GMC Outcomes for Graduates after any reasonable adjustment(s).

3. Clinical and University based Reasonable Adjustments

The MSC and the GMC provide guidance on professional behaviour for medical students in the document *Achieving good medical practice*. In this guidance it says: 'As a medical student, you must tell your medical school about any serious health problems, or any aspect of your health or personal circumstances that could affect your training (especially your placements) or your relationship with colleagues. This is so that your medical school can support you, and it can only do this if it knows that you have a problem. Telling your medical

² Please note that membership of the panel may alter depending on the nature/stage where reasonable adjustments are requested (e.g. clinical placements or assessments), to ensure that appropriate consideration is given.

school shows you have insight into the impact your condition may have on patients, your fellow students and yourself. This is a crucial factor that medical schools consider in relation to health and fitness to practise.'

Once a student with a declared disability or long-term health condition has commenced on the programme, the student will be encouraged to meet with the Inclusion Team, based in Student Support Services. The Inclusion Team will make a full assessment of the reasonable adjustments they advise the Programme to consider for each student in the form of a Student Support Plan (SSP). The SSP is sent by the Inclusion Team to the Disability Liaison Lead, who reviews it for suitability on the programme. The Disability Liaison Lead then cascades the SSP to the programme lead and the practice education lead, for dissemination to the relevant colleagues involved in student education.

The ability to make reasonable adjustments in both the University setting and on placement will be considered by the Medical School Reasonable Adjustment for Disability panel. It is important to note that adjustments cannot be made to the GMC outcomes themselves, however, they may be able to be made to teaching and assessment methods. It is important to remember that some adjustments that are reasonable to make in an academic setting may not be reasonable in a clinical setting. Through partnership agreement planning, the Medical School will make every effort to work with placements to facilitate reasonable adjustments, where this isn't possible, a meeting will be held with the student to discuss options.

A named member of staff employed at Edge Hill University central services (Disability Officer located within Central Student Support) will work closely with the Medical School Disability Liaison Lead (DLL) and be the first point of contact to provide appropriate information. The named contact and the Medical School Reasonable Adjustments for Disability panel will ensure the needs of the student(s) are fully met throughout the duration of the programme to ensure parity between all students participating on medical school programmes. During such active review, the exposure to associated risks for all concerned will be considered (i.e. risk management) such that the teaching / learning environment is safe and fit for purpose. Aspects for consideration, for example, may include the modification of internal / external provision, changes to physical features within the teaching / learning environment and offering auxiliary aids to those students concerned.

The panel will assess which reasonable adjustments can be made and if, with these in place, a candidate's disability or medical condition will impact negatively on their ability to meet the requirements of the course and the GMC's 'Outcomes for Graduates'. This will be completed via the process outlined in the *Reasonable Adjustments for Disability flowchart*, with reasonable adjustments being considered on a case-by-case basis. If reasonable adjustments are possible, an action plan will be arranged to fully support the student concerned. This will be overseen and monitored via the Reasonable Adjustment for Disability panel in collaboration with the Central Student Support Team (Inclusion Team <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/studentsservices/inclusive/>).

Reasonable adjustments for an individual student will be reviewed as appropriate, and at least annually. Assessment of reasonable adjustments related to clinical placement will involve the Clinical Placement Learning Development Lead visiting and meeting placement

staff prior to commence of the placement. Students with Student Support Plans which cover academic or placement learning environments are encouraged to complete a Health Passport with the support of their PAT or Health, Wellbeing and Conduct Lead. The Health Passport allows students the opportunity to consider what they wish to communicate about their health needs to ensure that their needs are met in a satisfactory manner in each educational setting. The Health Passport is held by the student, who is the primary author of the document. It is at their discretion what information they chose to share in what context.

Potential Fitness to Practise issues are those which impact on the student's ability to meet the GMC *Outcomes for Graduates* and the requirements of the University. Fitness to Practise concerns will be reviewed initially by the Medical School Health, Wellbeing and Conduct Lead and where appropriate the Health, Wellbeing and Conduct Panel who may seek additional advice and guidance from central Student Services and/or Occupational Health. Where potential Fitness to Practise issues are identified, the student will be referred to a Fitness to Practise panel, via the University policy.

Students are required to formally declare any reasonable adjustments annually via the Declaration of Good Health, Good Character and Disability Declaration form.

4. Reasonable Adjustment for Assessment

Students with a disability can request reasonable adjustments to assessments in line with processes and procedures outlined in the Edge Hill University Academic Regulations, <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/documents/academic-regulations-2020-21-appendix-6-guidelines-on-reasonable-adjustments-and-the-assessment-of-disabled-students-2020-21/>

Whilst the assessment of knowledge or clinical competence may be modified, the GMC professional standards cannot be changed. Importantly, all assessments must ensure the standards required in the GMC *Outcomes for Graduates* are met. The Medical School Assessment Lead will ensure that any specified reasonable adjustments or support required by a SPLD Support Plan for an individual student are considered and actioned as appropriate. In considering whether a reasonable adjustment is appropriate, the Assessment Lead will consider the type of assessment, GMC requirements and the nature of the adjustment in line with Edge Hill University Academic Regulations. The ability to undertake different forms of assessment will be included in all Reasonable Adjustments for Disability panel discussions, in conjunction with the Assessment Lead. Edge Hill University Medical School will support all requests for reasonable adjustments to assessments as fully as possible. Here, we believe that open dialogue is key and as such will work in closely with those students who require our support.

Medical School: Reasonable Adjustments for Disability flowchart

Pre-application

Opportunity for pre-application discussion. Candidates are welcome to request a pre-application **discussion** about disability via this link: AskMedSchool@edgehill.ac.uk

Application

Declaration on UCAS

No impact on Stage 1 and Stage 2 of selection process

Invite to interview/MMI

Candidates who are invited to interview are asked reply to admissions with on line form declaring whether they have any additional needs

(<https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/admissions/interviewreply/>).

This is included with the admissions invite.

On-line form updated in Reasonable Adjustments for Disability policy and displayed on [website](#)

Reasonable adjustment for interview considered by the admissions team in liaison with the appropriate student services (Inclusion, SpLD Support) Admissions Lead and Department (DLL). In exceptional circumstances (where admissions seek guidance on suitable reasonable adjustments), the Reasonable Adjustments for Disability Panel will convene. The panel comprises:

- Representative from Learning Services (Inclusion)
- Medical School Disability Liaison Lead
- Clinical Placement Learning Development Lead (if appropriate)
- Clinical doctor (if appropriate)
- Student Support Lead
- Programme Lead/Phase Lead
- Medical School Admissions Lead
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead

MMI performance after reasonable adjustment considered the same way as that of other candidates

All candidates complete Declaration of Health Questionnaire and attend Occupational Health (OH) appointment before/during enrolment.

Candidates who self-declare or who are cleared by OH with conditions/recommendations are considered by Reasonable Adjustments for Disability Panel

Further option to refer students to the Health, Wellbeing and Conduct Lead, other student support and inclusion services as appropriate

Students annual declaration of any disability via the annual Professionalism and Learning Declaration form and/or the Health Passport.

Requests considered for disability related reasonable adjustments by the panel.

Requests not related to disability referred to the Health, Wellbeing and Conduct Lead

Monitoring & implementation (panel remit)

All outcomes for Reasonable Adjustments for Disability recorded within the panel
An Action Plan for support for the student provided in conjunction with the student, Disability Liaison Lead, Learning services, Practice Education Lead & Student Support Lead (panel remit). If reasonable adjustments for disability required as part of the admissions process (e.g. MMI) the DLL will liaise with the Medical School admissions lead & central admissions.

If reasonable adjustments for disability required for students on placement, the PEL will visit the placement setting prior to the panel meeting

Effectiveness of reasonable adjustments monitored during/after clinical placement (Practice Education Team) and annually for academic/university-based adjustments (student, Disability Liaison Lead, Personal tutor & Learning Services) (report to panel)

The panel will review any concerns raised (see Raising Concerns policies) potentially related to Reasonable Adjustments for Disability.