

## **Admissions**

1. Pearson College's recruitment and admissions policies are founded on the principles of selection according to merit and equality of opportunity and programmes will be promoted to encourage applications from as diverse a range of applicants as possible.
2. On selecting students, equitable consideration will be given to all candidates. Pearson College recognises disabilities are of a diverse nature and it does not tolerate discrimination on the basis of disability. Pearson College complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the amendments to the Act.
3. Invitations to Business Workshops or Creative Workshops, at which decisions will be made on whether to offer places on College programmes, include a request to applicants with disabilities or additional learning needs, to make these known so that reasonable adjustments can be considered, if required. Evidence will be required and applications for such adjustments will be considered by the Deputy Vice-Principal (Academic Affairs) or a member of the Student Services team. Adjustments may take the form of:
  - a) additional time for on-line tests or written assessments; and/ or,
  - b) provision of technological aids; and/or,
  - c) briefing to interviewers or assessors on the nature of an applicants' disability.

The above is not an exhaustive list and will depend on the individual circumstances of the applicant.

4. On being made an offer, a student with a disability or specific learning difficulty will be invited to discuss the support required to complete the programme with a specifically designated member of staff in order to:
  - a) ensure that the student is fully aware of the demands of the programme;
  - b) identify any resources or arrangements that the student requires, including additional learning support and reasonable adjustments with respect to assessments;
  - c) determine whether the College can reasonably provide these.

Students will be advised about the availability of Disabled Student Allowance and are expected to apply for DSA, if eligible. **Additional Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments (Special Examination Arrangements)**

**(i) Additional Learning support**

5. Additional learning support is additional support provided by the College during the student's studies but outside of an assessment situation (for which see Reasonable Adjustments, below). Depending on a student's circumstances, these may include:
- the use of mechanical and electronic aids; and/ or,
  - modification to the presentation of learning material; and/ or,
  - alternative ways of undertaking learning activities; and/ or,
  - use of access facilitators.

This is not an exhaustive list and additional support arrangements may be considered, depending on the individual circumstances of a student.

**(ii) Reasonable Adjustments (Special Examination Arrangements)**

6. A reasonable adjustment is any action that helps to reduce the effect of a disability or difficulty, which places the student at a substantial disadvantage in an assessment situation. Reasonable adjustments must not, however, affect the reliability or validity of assessment outcomes, nor must they give the student an assessment advantage over other students undertaking the same or similar assessments. The work produced following a reasonable adjustment must be assessed in the same way as the work from other students. Reasonable adjustments may include the following:
- a) changes to assessment conditions (such as extra writing time or rest breaks); and/ or,
  - b) the use of mechanical and electronic aids (such as a computer in circumstances where this will not jeopardise the security of the exam); and/ or,
  - c) modification to the presentation of assessment material; and/or,
  - d) use of alternative assessments for formal exams/presentations.

This is not an exhaustive list and additional adjustments may be considered, depending on the individual circumstances of a student.

**Conditions and Disabilities Eligible for Reasonable Adjustments and Additional Learning Support**

7. Conditions and disabilities eligible for additional learning support and reasonable adjustments fall into the following broad categories:
- a) Medically diagnosed disability or condition;
  - b) Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) which has been formally assessed and diagnosed;
  - c) Temporary illness or condition.
8. The following disabilities and conditions may be eligible for special examination arrangements:

- a) specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD);
- b) social/communication impairments (e.g. Asperger's Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder)
- c) mental health conditions (e.g. depression, anxiety);
- d) chronic fatigue;
- e) sensory or physical impairments (including mobility problems);
- f) chronic or acute medical conditions;
- g) effects of medication;
- h) neurological conditions (affecting co-ordination and movement, nerve injury and epilepsy);
- i) joint, limb and back conditions affecting the ability to sit comfortably for prolonged periods;
- j) conditions affecting the writing arm or hand, including cases where a student is required to use the non-dominant hand;
- k) accidents shortly before or during the examination period.

9. Students are encouraged to apply to Student Services even if their condition does not fall within one of the above categories as each individual case is different and will be treated as such. For example, a student does not have to be disabled (as defined by the Equality Act) to qualify for reasonable adjustment; nor will every student who is disabled be entitled to reasonable adjustments. A reasonable adjustment will only be approved if there is evidence to demonstrate that the student's disability or difficulty would place the student at substantial disadvantage in an assessment situation.

**Applying for Additional Learning Support and Reasonable Adjustments (Special Examination Arrangements)**

10. When completing online enrolment, students will be asked to declare if they have any additional learning needs and will have the option of booking a meeting with the Student Support Administration Manager to discuss their individual learning support requirements. After this consultation, if students do wish to apply for additional learning support they will be required to submit a *Request for Reasonable Adjustment form*, available on the College website and from the Student Services Office, accompanied by the following supporting documentation:

Specific learning difficulties eg: dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, Asperger's Syndrome.	A full diagnostic assessment carried out by a chartered or practitioner Educational Psychologist or specialist teacher holding a current assessment practising certificate.
Health condition, physical disability or mental health condition.	A recent certificate from a suitably qualified medical practitioner who has seen the student during the period of the condition.

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11. Once Pearson College has received this completed form with acceptable supporting documentation, an Additional Learning Needs Panel will be convened to consider the application and approve appropriate learning support arrangements and/ or reasonable adjustments for examinations. .
12. Following the Additional Learning Needs Panel, Pearson College will give the student a clear record of the adjustments to be made and additional learning support to be provided in the form of a Learning Support Contract. The Learning Support Contract shall set out:
  - a) a precise listing of adjustments to be provided by the College and any additional learning support;
  - b) a contact point for the student during their studies;
  - c) the College's stated expectation that the student will keep the College expeditiously informed as to any alterations in their condition and its effects on their academic study.
13. Upon receipt of the Learning Support Contract outlining the reasonable adjustments and learning support proposed by the College, the student is expected to review and agree to the arrangements. If they do not agree with the arrangements that have been allocated, have any concerns or do not wish to avail themselves of all or any component of the arrangements, the student must contact the Student Support Administration Manager within seven days of receipt of the contract and a meeting will be arranged to discuss the matter. If during that meeting, agreement cannot be reached, the student will be advised to apply for a re-consideration of their Learning Support Contract.

#### **Requests for Re-consideration of Learning Support Contract**

14. A student may request that their Learning Support Contract be reconsidered on one or more of the following grounds:
  - (a) that there is new documentary evidence to be taken into account which the student could not with reasonable diligence have disclosed at the time of the original application;
  - (b) that there is evidence of administrative or procedural error, which might cause reasonable doubt as to whether the outcome would have been the same if the error had not occurred.
  - (c) the original conclusion reached by the College in respect of reasonable adjustments was unreasonable given the evidence presented.

A written application for reconsideration on any of the above grounds should be submitted to Student Services. An Additional Learning Needs Panel will be convened to consider the student's case and make a determination. The student will be informed of the Panel's decision in writing and invited to agree any revisions to their Learning Support Contract.

#### **Continuation of Reasonable Adjustments (Special Examination Arrangements)**

15. Special Examination Arrangements will normally remain in place for the duration of a student's period of study. Students only need re-apply for special examination arrangements if their circumstances have changed since the previous year and the student thinks his/her arrangements should be altered. In the case of certain medical conditions, the College may deem it necessary to ask for a review and update of the student's condition. In the latter case, the student will be contacted by Student Services in the Autumn Term with a request for an update.
16. If a student does not need to re-apply, a written communication will be sent to the student by Student Services prior to assessments, confirming the student's eligibility for special examination arrangements and details of the same.

#### **Late Disclosure of a Disability or Learning Difficulty**

17. Where a student does not reveal any disability or additional learning needs requirements until after registration, Pearson College shall not be obliged to provide additional learning support, make reasonable adjustments, or take account of adverse performance in assessments resulting from the absence of such support or adjustments. However, Pearson College will take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances (reasonableness to be informed by the stage in the programme at which the disability/condition is revealed) to provide additional learning support and reasonable adjustments (where appropriate) and to establish a L Support Contract.

#### **Students with Temporary Conditions/Disability in Assessment Periods**

18. There may be occasions when a student may suffer from an injury or accident close to an assessment which requires reasonable adjustments to reduce the detrimental effect of such an injury on his/her performance.
19. In these circumstances, the student can apply for Special Examination Arrangements by submitting a *Request for Reasonable Adjustment (Temporary Condition or Illness) Form* available on the College website or from the Student Services Office. This form, which requires certification of his/her condition or temporary disability by a qualified medical practitioner, should be submitted as soon as possible after the onset of the condition/disability, to the Student Services Office. Pearson College will endeavour to provide such appropriate Special Examination Arrangements as are available within the time constraints.

#### **Students Choosing Not to Avail Themselves of Allocated Reasonable Adjustments**

20. If, on the day of the assessment, the student chooses not to avail themselves of all or any of the reasonable adjustments allocated to them, they must complete and sign a *Disclaimer Form for Students Declining Support Arrangements*. If they decline special examination arrangements on the day of the assessment, they will waive any right to claim extenuating circumstances related to their condition or disability for that assessment.

#### **Monitoring and review**

21. Student data under this procedure will be monitored on an annual basis to identify trends and areas for improvement across the College.
22. The Additional Learning Needs Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Person responsible	Deputy Vice Principal (Academic Affairs)
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