

Reasonable Accommodation Policy

Section 1 - INTRODUCTION

Purpose

(1) This policy sets out the principles for the support of students with disabilities or long-term illness in participation in their programme and in assessment. It also assists Hibernia College to fulfil its legal responsibilities regarding the needs of these students.

Scope

To whom does the policy apply?

(2) The policy applies to students undertaking programmes validated by QQI leading to awards in the [National Framework of Qualifications \(NFQ\)](#).

(3) The policy applies to students with a disability or a long-term illness whether this is present at the commencement of the programme or arises during the programme.

(4) The policy does not apply where a student is seeking consideration for extenuating circumstances at the point of assessment.

Who is responsible for implementing the policy?

(5) The Department of the Registrar is responsible for implementing the policy, with the support of the Head of Student Affairs and in consultation with the relevant Programme Director, or nominee.

Definitions

(6) Reasonable Accommodation

'A Reasonable Accommodation is any action that helps to alleviate a substantial disadvantage due to an impairment or medical condition.' (AHEAD). In the context of supporting higher education students, a reasonable accommodation is any provision made for a particular student to allow them to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes of a piece of learning without any disadvantage which may arise on the basis of their having a disability or long-term illness.

(7) Disability or Long-Term Illness

In the context of providing reasonable accommodations, a disability or illness must be long-term, meaning it generally will last more than a year. The disability must be substantial, meaning that the impairment, whether physical or mental, must be more than minor. A substantial restriction is a restriction which is permanent or likely to be permanent, results in a significant difficulty in communication, learning or mobility, or in significantly disordered cognitive processes, and gives rise to the need for services to be provided continually to the person.

Section 2 - SECTION 2 - CONTEXT

Legal or Regulatory Context

Irish and European Law and Regulation

(8) This policy is intended to guide Hibernia College in meeting its obligations under [Equal Status Act 2000](#).

(9) The College is also cognisant of the need for careful treatment of data in relation to students' disabilities and illnesses. Therefore, the policy is designed with regard to Irish and European legislation in relation to the processing of sensitive personal information ([Regulation \(EU\) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council \(General Data Protection Regulation\) \(2016\)](#), [Official Journal of the European Communities](#); [Data Protection Act, 1998](#); [Data Protection \(Amendment\) Act 2003](#)).

Assessment and Standards

(10) Reasonable Accommodations granted by Hibernia College are granted in line with the sectoral conventions outlined in the QQI [Assessment and Standards](#).

QA Guidelines

(11) This policy is designed with regard to the [European Standards and Guidelines](#) and QQI's [Core Statutory Quality Assurance Guidelines](#), both of which set out the requirement for the College to implement policy and procedure and providing access and support for students with disability and long-term illness.

Effective Practice Recommendations

AHEAD

(12) The College has adopted and strives to implement the [Charter for Inclusive Teaching and Learning](#).

Dawn

(13) The College has adopted the Dawn guidance document [DAWN: Everything you wanted to know about Reasonable Accommodations and supporting students with disabilities but nobody bothered to tell you...](#) to inform our approach to providing reasonable accommodation and developing policy and procedure to support provision.

DARE

(14) Hibernia College also adopts and strives to facilitate the use of the [DARE: Disability Access Route to Education Handbook](#) in dealing with students with disabilities.

Section 3 - POLICY STATEMENTS

Part A - Principles for Reasonable Accommodation

Removing Disadvantage

(15) A reasonable accommodation removes any disadvantages.

(16) A reasonable accommodation does not provide advantages.

Disclosure

(17) Students seeking reasonable accommodation must disclose their rationale for seeking one.

(18) Normally, reasonable accommodation cannot be applied retrospectively to any assessment task and must be applied for in advance of assessment.

(19) Hibernia College may need to disclose to members of Staff and Faculty that a student has a disability in order to provide reasonable accommodation. Application for a reasonable accommodation implies consent for those that need to be made aware of the student's disability or long-term illness.

(20) Where disclosure of a disability or long-term illness is required to provide reasonable accommodation but this disclosure is not consented to, the College will not be able to provide reasonable accommodation.

Costs

(21) Normally, Hibernia College absorbs the cost of any reasonable accommodation provided they are agreed in writing with the College in advance of registration on the programme and/or in advance of any assessment task or participation in a learning activity in a particular physical learning environment.

(22) The College reserves the right to decide what is reasonable.

Student Responsibility

(23) Students are responsible for applying for reasonable accommodation; the College cannot be expected to seek to offer reasonable accommodations.

(24) Students must also provide verifiable evidence of their disability or long-term illness (for example, a medical cert or evaluation by a competent professional). The type of evidence and the age of the report should follow DARE guidelines (<http://accesscollege.ie/dare/providing-evidence-of-your-disability/>).

(25) The student is responsible for informing any Assessor or Supervisor of any reasonable accommodation granted.

Possible Reasonable Accommodations

(26) Applications for reasonable accommodation may result in provision of:

- a. Scribes and interpreters
- b. Assistive technology
- c. Extra time in assessment
- d. Changes to the examination environment
- e. Extra time in examination
- f. Any other reasonable accommodation agreed in writing with the College
- g. No reasonable accommodation

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	12th June 2023
Review Date	12th June 2026
Approval Authority	Quality Assurance Officer
Approval Date	12th June 2023
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Enquiries Contact	Eoin Crossen Quality Assurance Administrator <hr/> Quality Assurance

Glossary Terms and Definitions

"Disability or Long-Term Illness" - Hibernia College adopts the definition of disability as set out in the Equal Status Act 2000, which can be summarised as: i. The total or partial absence of a student's bodily or mental functions, including the absence, malformation, or disfigurement of a part of the student's body ii. A diagnosed chronic or potentially chronic disease iii. A condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction, or a condition which affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or which results in disturbed behaviour

"Policy" - Policies are principled statements adopted by the College at a high level to enable decisions about actions and desired outcomes to which the College is committed. They clearly articulate the formal position of the College on specific issues in order to guide internal decision-making. Policies set out 'what to do' on a given issue. They have a medium- to long-term review cycle.

"Reasonable Accommodation" - 'A Reasonable Accommodation is any action that helps to alleviate a substantial disadvantage due to an impairment or medical condition.' (AHEAD). In the context of supporting higher education students, a reasonable accommodation is any provision made for a particular student to allow them to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes of a piece of learning without any disadvantage which may arise on the basis of their having a disability or long-term illness.

"Extenuating Circumstances" - Extenuating Circumstances are unexpected factors or emergencies arising close to or during a summative assessment event (normally up to three days in advance) having a material effect on the student's preparation for or performance in that summative assessment task, where the student can provide evidence for them.