

Assessment Policy Office: Statement of Assessment, Policy and Procedure

Exceptional examination arrangements for non-disabled students

1. Introduction

The Open University recognises its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 not to discriminate against students who are carers for a disabled person or who are pregnant or breastfeeding. In addition, the University seeks to make arrangements for students who are disadvantaged as a result of a temporary illness or accident. The University offers to provide additional examination arrangements for these students in order that they may be facilitated to take examinations in line with other students.

The examination arrangements booklet invites students to contact their student support team if they need additional examination arrangements because of their caring responsibilities (including students who are breastfeeding babies) or because of temporary illness or injury.

2. Carers of a disabled person

A carer is defined as someone who is providing unpaid care and support to ill, frail or disabled friends or family members. If a student has caring responsibilities they are entitled to request an examination at home or another suitable location. If the person they are caring for needs to be accompanied at all times, the student must ensure that there is another person present in the home to accompany them whilst the student is undertaking their examination.

If a student is required to attend to the ill, frail or disabled person at particular times (eg. to administer medication, or for personal care) they may be allowed rest breaks in order to attend to their needs. Rest breaks of up to 60 minutes are normally allowed for this purpose. The invigilator is not required to supervise the student during this time, but should ask to check any rooms the student may need to use before the start of the examination.

In order to apply for exceptional examination arrangements as a carer, a student must provide their student support team with evidence of their status, for example:

- A note from a GP, nurse, social services department, community care practitioner, or other appropriate professional confirming that they are the primary carer of an ill, frail or disabled person
- A copy of the carer's allowance approval awarded to the student

3. Pregnancy and maternity

A student who is pregnant at the time of the examination would normally be expected to attend a main centre, unless suffering from pregnancy-related illness or the examination is within 4 weeks of the pregnancy due date. Pregnant students may ask for rest breaks of up to 30 minutes at main centres. Pregnant students with an expected due date which falls

within 4 weeks of the examination may request a home examination. Pregnant students suffering from a pregnancy-related illness which prevents them from taking part in the examination may request a deferral of the examination (see SAPP 5.3).

Students who have given birth within the 26 weeks preceding the examination, or mothers who are breastfeeding their babies after this date, are entitled to request a home examination. The student should ensure there is another person present in the home to look after the baby whilst the student is undertaking their examination.

Students may be allowed rest breaks, normally up to 60 minutes, in order to breastfeed their baby or attend to its needs. The invigilator is not required to supervise the student during this time, but should ask to check any rooms the student may need to use before the start of the examination.

In order to apply for exceptional examination arrangements for pregnancy and maternity, a student must provide their student support team with appropriate evidence, for example::

- A note from the student's GP, midwife or consultant confirming the pregnancy, pregnancy-related illness or birth
- A copy of form MATB1
- A copy of the student's pregnancy notes, confirming the due date
- A copy of the child's birth certificate.

4. Temporary illness or injury

Students suffering from temporary illnesses or injuries may be permitted to have exceptional examination arrangements such as rest breaks, additional working time, home examinations, use of a PC or an amanuensis. Whilst the University recognises that the nature of these temporary arrangements is such that the student is unlikely to be able to give the University as much notice as we would normally require, it is extremely unlikely that arrangements will be able to be put in place less than three weeks prior to the examination date. In circumstances where their student support team is unable to make suitable arrangements in the time available, students should be recommended to apply for a deferral.

In order to apply for exceptional examination arrangements for temporary illnesses or injuries, a student must provide their student support team with appropriate evidence, for example:

- A note from the student's GP or consultant confirming the illness or injury, date of onset and likely duration
- A copy of the 'fit note' from the student's doctor.