

University of Glasgow

## Academic Standards Committee – Friday 19 May 2017

### Additional Time/Related Arrangements for Students with Disabilities for Short Examinations/Class Tests

Dr Jack Aitken, Senate Office

The view of Academic Standards Committee is sought on the following issue, both on the desirability of a change to policy in the area and on associated practicalities.

The Disability Equality Group has discussed the question of the granting of additional time to students with relevant disabilities for exams and class tests of one-hour or shorter duration. The standard amount of additional time granted at the University of Glasgow in all but very rare exceptions is 25%. It had been reported to the Disability Equality Committee that there were concerns that in short exams the value of the additional time was reduced. The Senate Office has carried out consultation within and outside the University.

Within the University, Disability Services report that there is very isolated feedback on this issue only, with this mainly from the perspective of Schools struggling to comply with exam arrangements for local exams/tests, rather than from students. The position at Glasgow is that extra time for class tests/exams is (NB) **at the discretion of the School or course leader**. In practice, most follow the recommended 25%, with some arranging separate accommodation for those requiring extra time to simplify administration of the assessment. Disability Services are unaware of any complaints by students, and report that 'most students appreciate the logistics of adaptations to timetabling if extra time [extending beyond] the lecture hour is granted'.

Outside Glasgow, 25% is the norm for both centrally organised/degree examinations and, with one exception, class tests/examinations among Russell Group universities and generally across the sector. This was confirmed to be so among all but two of the universities which responded to survey questions (see list below) – those universities grants varying amounts of additional time **up to** a 25% maximum. A few confirmed that, very exceptionally, greater amounts of additional time may be granted – like Glasgow, up to 50% (though in two cases more than 50% is permissible). One university reported that it does not allow **any** additional time in class exams/tests. The rationale for this is that, if they permitted additional time, they would also have to provide other adjustments made for students with disabilities, such as special rooms with computers, readers and scribes, and that this is not feasible. No university reports providing more time beyond the additional 25% in short examinations, however, other than one, which rounds up additional time to the nearest five minutes.

#### Potential policy changes

ASC is requested to comment on the following potential changes to policy (some of which might operate in combination):

1. Additional time granted to students with relevant disabilities is provided in all locally arranged class tests/ exams as well as for centrally organised/longer duration exams

(i.e., this becomes a University requirement, rather than a matter at the discretion of the School/course leader)<sup>1</sup>.

2. The additional time provided for relevant students in class exams/tests is standardised at 25%.
3. The additional time is increased beyond 25%.
4. Additional time is rounded up to the nearest five minutes.
5. Additional time is standardised at (say):

60-minute exam	→	Additional 15 minutes
45-minute exam	→	Additional 15 minutes
30-minute exam	→	Additional 10 minutes

(It is understood that most class tests are of 30 minutes' duration.)

6. Are there other approaches/considerations?

**Responses were received from:**

University of Warwick  
University of Nottingham  
University of Dundee  
University of the West of Scotland  
University of the Highlands & Islands  
Scotland's Rural University College  
Heriot-Watt University  
Robert Gordon University  
University of Surrey  
University of Winchester  
Anglia Ruskin University  
University of St Mark & St John  
University of East Anglia  
University of East London  
Edge Hill University

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<sup>1</sup> This would raise the question of the potential impact on accommodation, if it also resulted in a significant increase in demand for separate exam rooms for students requiring additional time. However, of the c. 1,000 students entitled to additional time for centrally arranged exams, it is understood that only 200 use separate space and that the number requesting separate space for class tests is markedly lower still.