

MEDICAL STUDENTS – HEALTH, DISABILITY AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

Students who require extra support and/or adjustments due to a health or disability condition

1. Applicants should inform the University of any impairment, disability, or health related condition at the application stage. Examples include mental and physical health conditions and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia. Declaring a health condition or disability is very important because it will enable the school to understand how it may affect the student's medical training and will allow the school to review, agree and implement any support or reasonable adjustments that may be required.
2. Once students have registered this, they will have an opportunity for any adjustments that may be put in place to be reviewed every academic session.
3. Please note that if an impairment, disability, or health related condition develops or is diagnosed after the application stage or during the medical degree, we ask that you please declare this as soon as possible so we can discuss this with you to provide appropriate support. Offer holders with injuries or scheduled health appointments that you anticipate may interrupt your studies should be brought to the attention of the School of Medicine as soon as possible by contacting the Medical Student Support Team at medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk
4. All students will be screened by occupational health at the beginning of their studies and recommendations can be made at this stage. At any point in their studies students can be referred to occupational health by the medsupport team. Following occupational health appointments reports are shared with the medsupport team, with consent of the students, and meetings arranged to discuss any recommendations. Reports are not shared with the central university disability team from either occupational health or the medsupport team. Students will need to discuss these separately with the central university disability team. Recommendations which require adjustments for assessments, if deemed reasonable by the disability team, are then updated on the students MMS record.

Students who require extra support or advice

5. Applicants with an impairment or disability or health related condition should contact the Disability team. The team can offer a wide range of advice and support from needs assessment, exam arrangements, liaison with academic schools to contact with student accommodation. Support is available regarding reasonable adjustments within the university setting and clinical placements, with the university liaising with clinical partners where appropriate. You can also contact the ASC team if you require advice before submitting your application to study medicine. <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/advice/disabilities/>

Registering with a health or disability condition

6. **Where an impairment, disability, or health related condition develops.** To register a health or disability condition with the University, students at entry to their course and whilst on their course should follow these steps:

- a. Update your personal details on the student record system (e-vision) where it asks about any disability.
- b. Make an appointment with a St Andrews University Disability Adviser: <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/students/advice/disabilities/>
- c. Provide evidence of your disability e.g., report from a GP, Consultant or Educational Psychologist.

For further advice, please contact one of our University advisors on: disability@st-andrews.ac.uk

The University publish a checklist for students starting at St Andrews <https://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/orientation/before-you-depart/disability/>

Information about reasonable adjustments

7. According to the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments should be made for individuals with a disability, although this Equality Act accepts that for specific professional requirements some adjustments may be unreasonable and inappropriate. The GMC require that Medical Schools only award degrees to individuals who are fit to practice medicine as doctors. Guidelines on supporting students with mental health have been published by the General Medical Council (GMC) and the Medical Schools Council (MSC), and this guidance applies equally to physical disability concerns. Importantly, reasonable adjustments that are made to support students due to a health or disability condition must follow the overriding principle that students must be able to work safely and independently in clinical practice.

8. Reasonable adjustments can include additional time allowance in academic written examinations (commonly no more than 25%), lecture handouts being made available prior to lectures, technological aids such as recording lectures in the academic environment or no lone working in clinical environments.

9. Examples of adjustments which are unlikely to be regarded as reasonable and not compatible with medical fitness to practise include requirement for a scribe or a person to take notes (Medical Schools Council, National transfer of information, 2017, page 9), or requirements for private rooms for written exams (HEOPS, General guidance on adjustments, 2016, page 2). This having been said we realise this is a complex area and decisions would be made following careful review on a case by case basis so please do not hesitate to contact the Medical School Disability Co-ordinator if you have any questions.

Further advice

10. Students and applicants may also wish to contact the following advisors at the School of Medicine:

- a. Medical Student Support Team (academic and pastoral information): medsupport@st-andrews.ac.uk
- b. Disability Co-ordinator (general disabilities information): meddisability@st-andrews.ac.uk
- c. Admissions Officers (admissions procedural information): UG: medical.admissions@st-andrews.ac.uk Graduate entry: scotgem-admissions@st-andrews.ac.uk

11. For additional information please see:

- [HEOPS – Medical Students - Standards of medical fitness to train](#)
- [HEOPS – General Guidance on adjustments for students training in regulated professions](#)
- [Medical Schools Council- Transfer of Information Guidance](#)
- General Medical Council website - <http://www.gmc-uk.org/>
- Medical Schools Council website - <http://www.medschools.ac.uk/Pages/default.aspx>

Author:	ProDean	Approval Committee:	Pro Dean
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