



## *Law Society of Ireland*

### **Disability Policy and Guidelines**

The Law School is committed to providing an equal opportunities learning environment, which meets the specific and diverse needs of all of our learners.

This policy applies to Professional Practice Course (PPCI and PPCII) students. It aims to enable students with disabilities to participate fully in their chosen programme of education and/or to undertake examinations and assessments without experiencing any significant disadvantage arising from their disability.

The Law School accepts and draws upon the guidelines and policy devised by the Association for Higher Education Access & Disability (AHEAD).

#### **1. Notification of Disability**

While it may be difficult for some students to come forward and discuss a disability, it is the surest way of ensuring a swift and understanding response. Ideally this should happen as soon as you confirm your intention to attend a Law School course or to undertake an examination/assessment.

Applicants are required to complete a Disability Registration form and to provide relevant medical/assessment documentation. The Law School will then assess your circumstances and help you to access appropriate adaptations.

#### **2. Learning Support**

Certain Professional Practice Course students with specific learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, may benefit from learning support.

Additional support in certain core subjects may be arranged given prior notice.

#### **3. Examinations**

The Law School seeks to minimise the stress and pressure associated with the examination process. Students are invited to discuss specific needs with the appropriate staff member at least three weeks in advance of all examinations. This timeframe may only be reviewed in exceptional circumstances<sup>1</sup>.

The following arrangements are all possible, and permission to employ them will be considered by the Law School.

#### **Additional Time**

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<sup>1</sup> Exceptions include accidents and bereavements.



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An additional allowance of 10 minutes per hour of an examination<sup>2</sup> will be granted in the following situations:

- Where the average speed of communication and/or reading of the candidate is below that of candidates without disability
- Where a candidate's communication is affected because they tire easily, or have limited strength or flexibility
- Where disability worsens due to stress and /or climate variations (e.g. psychological/psychiatric conditions, epilepsy, arthritis)
- Where candidates experience pain and/or muscular spasm

#### **Dictation to an Amanuensis/Scribe**

An amanuensis/scribe may be assigned to students to write down answers dictated by a candidate. This facility may be required by those students who:

- Are visually impaired
- Have orthopaedic impairments, which affect writing
- Tire easily
- Have muscle weakness
- Have limited dexterity

A amanuensis/scribe shall not provide any factual or organisational help to candidates.

#### **Use of Technological Aids**

Students may be granted permission to use dictaphones, personal computers/lap-tops and/or relevant software, as appropriate.

#### **Presentation of Examination papers**

The following alternative presentations are allowable and The Law School will endeavour to provide them on request:

- On coloured paper or supplemented by colour transparencies
- Enlarged to A3
- Audio-tape versions

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<sup>2</sup> This may be reviewed in exceptional cases, such as in the case of students with multiple disabilities.



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- Delivered by interpreters
- Braille
- Speech synthesiser
- Readers

### **Alternate Exam Location**

Students may be facilitated to undertake examinations in an alternate setting e.g. here at the Law Society in a small group setting or in a room alone.

### **Specialist Furniture**

Students may apply to have the use of specialist furniture while participating in lectures/tutorials or undertaking examinations.

### **Notification of Disability to Examiner**

The Law School may notify examiners of your disability at your request.

### **4. Assessments**

Students with disabilities will be assessed in the same way as all other students. However, the conditions of the assessment may vary. Possible alterations, which include extended deadlines, can be discussed with relevant Law School staff.

### **5. Traineeships**

Should trainees have specific disability-related requirements regarding traineeships, these are to be made known to the Trainee Executive, whose role it is to liaise between trainees and their placement firms.

### **6. PPCI and PPCII Lectures**

PPCI and PPCII students may wish to have access to the written notes of two of their peers, by special arrangement. This will be facilitated upon request.