POLICY 056
REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS

If you have a disability which makes reading this document or navigating our website difficult and you would like to receive information in an alternative format, please contact: anddegree@acm.ac.uk

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The Academy of Contemporary Music (ACM) is committed to providing an inclusive environment which enables all students to achieve their potential.

1.2 This Policy sets out how ACM meets its obligations under the Equality Act (2010). It outlines ACM's approach to supporting disabled students and formalises areas of responsibility.

1.3 This Policy addresses the support available for students who may seek reasonable adjustments relating to their access to lesson content, assessment modes and submission deadlines.

1.4 This Policy should be read in conjunction with ACM's Additional Needs and Disability Policy.

2. POLICY DETAILS

2.1 ACM considers an adjustment to be reasonable when:

- It empowers a student to attempt an assessment or otherwise access their studies to the same degree as every other student;
- It does not provide the student with an unfair advantage over other students attempting the same assessment, or accessing other aspects of their studies;
- It fully considers and mitigates the barriers presented for that individual student.

2.2 ACM uses the social model of disability as being created by barriers within society rather than locating the disability within the individual.

ACM aims to address all of these barriers to ensure that disabled people are able to participate in all aspects of the ACM experience.

2.3 ACM recognises its responsibility to make provision as accessible as possible and will aim to do this by using inclusive approaches to provision or anticipatory reasonable adjustments wherever possible.

2.4 ACM aims to identify the most common barriers experienced by disabled students and, wherever possible, to identify appropriate anticipatory adjustments to overcome these barriers.

2.5 Where this is not possible and/or additional needs are identified, ACM will seek to implement appropriate individual reasonable adjustments.

2.6 Reasonable adjustments (individual and anticipatory) can be made to provisions and practices but not to competence standards. Competence standards are academic or other standards (such as proficiency at the principal instrument) required for the programme. There is therefore no requirement to alter the academic standards of a programme for a disabled student. However, it may be necessary to adjust the way in which a competence standard is assessed.

2.7 ACM has specialist, targeted and universal provision to support this approach. The Additional Needs and Disability Team, and Student Support Teams are the key point of contact and provision for disabled students.

2.8 ACM recognises two major categories of need which may lead to the provision of reasonable adjustments:

- permanent or long-standing disability, illness or special educational need, e.g. blindness, diabetes, dyslexia, borderline personality disorder;
- temporary disability, illness or indisposition, e.g. broken arm, chronic pain.

Applicants

2.9 ACM has arrangements in place for prospective students to declare a disability to ACM during the application process and through a pre-enrolment questionnaire following the acceptance of an offer. This will enable the best and most appropriate support to be implemented upon enrolment.

2.10 Prospective students will also be given the opportunity to declare any additional needs ahead of the audition stage, as this will enable appropriate access and support is available at the audition.

Further information can be found in ACM's Admissions Policy (POL_015)

2.11 In cases where a student becomes disabled, or is affected by an impairment, after their studies have commenced, ACM encourages students to disclose disabilities in confidence as soon as they are diagnosed. This will ensure that support can be made available at the earliest opportunity.

Consideration

2.12 ACM seeks to identify the most common barriers experienced by disabled students and provide appropriate anticipatory adjustments. A list of agreed anticipatory adjustments will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Reasonable Adjustments Panel.

2.13 Inclusive approaches and anticipatory adjustments will meet many of disabled students' needs, however some students will still require additional individual reasonable adjustments.

2.14 If a student has an independent Assessment of Needs report for DSA purposes or an Educational Psychologist's report, the recommendations from these reports will be considered when identifying individual reasonable adjustments.

2.15 Where the above documentation is not readily available, but other evidence of disability can be provided, ACM will consider applying reasonable adjustments based on and appropriate to the disability.

2.16 ACM will consider a number of factors when deciding whether an individual adjustment is reasonable. Factors may include, but not be limited to

- the perceived effectiveness of the adjustment,
- the time or resources required to implement the adjustment,
- the student's previous experience of the adjustment and whether the need could be met through an existing inclusive approach or anticipatory adjustment.

2.17 ACM is not obliged to offer the student their preferred adjustment, particularly if an inclusive approach or alternative reasonable adjustment is available which would provide appropriate support for the student.

2.18 Students who disagree with the proposed reasonable adjustments should be referred to the Complaints and Grievances Policy (POL_003)

2.19 Where students are able to access external funding for a reasonable adjustment, for example through DSA, ACM would expect the student to access such funding. The Additional Needs and Disability Team and/or Student Services Teams will support the student through this process where necessary.

Where such funding is not available, and the adjustment is agreed by the Reasonable Adjustments Panel to be reasonable, ACM will seek to fund this adjustment where possible.

Assessments

2.20 ACM advocates inclusive approaches to the design of assessment and encourages the anticipation of the needs of the range of individuals within the student body when setting assessment tasks.

2.21 Alternative assessment methods will be designed in a format which both adequately challenges students and also allows them to demonstrate their acquisition of knowledge and skills, commensurate to the programme, and modular, Learning Outcomes.

2.22 Proposed Reasonable Adjustments will only be granted where it does not:

- Provide the student with an unfair advantage over other students who are taking the same assessment;
- Affect the integrity of the assessment and/or qualification; or
- Influence the final outcome of the assessment decision.

2.23 A request for reasonable adjustments must be made and arranged prior to the summative assessment deadline, unless reasonable adjustments are sought as a remedy through an Academic Appeal or Complaint, where authoritative, supporting and compelling evidence is provided and where ACM considers proposed adjustments are equitable and appropriate to the student's needs, as an outcome or remedy in response to a complaint or appeal.

Extenuating Circumstances

2.23 Extenuating circumstances are personal circumstances which have affected a student's performance in an assessment and are brought to the attention of the Assessment Board when considering academic performance.

An application for extenuating circumstances will only be considered if the circumstances meet the following criteria:

- The circumstances are exceptional;
- they are outside of the control of the student; and
- original supporting documentary evidence is provided.

2.24 Students who submit an application for Extenuating Circumstances relating to an ongoing, long term condition may be referred to the appropriate ACM teams to discuss reasonable adjustments, where the circumstances are not considered to be appropriate to be considered through the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and through consideration via the Extenuating Circumstances Panel.

Review of Adjustments

2.25 A record of Reasonable Adjustments will include information on all applications, whether the adjustment was proposed by the student or staff; the outcome of any decision and a list of approved adjustments as amended over time.

2.26 The record will be used to further best practice in this area and to inform the design stage of assessments, ensuring that the need for individual reasonable adjustments is reduced over time.

2.27 Adjustments put in place will be reviewed on a cyclical basis.

2.28 Should a review of the adjustments determine that, in spite of all possible support being in place, the student is still not able to fully engage and participate in their programme of study, ACM's Fitness to Study Policy may be invoked.

Supporting documentation and evidence

2.29 All applications for Reasonable Adjustment must be supported with appropriate supporting evidence, through the availability of:

- Documentation from health care providers;
- Documentation from external supportive services with whom the student is in liaison;
- EHCP documentation;
- Disability Needs Assessments;
- Documentation from external agencies, where applicable.

Review of decision

2.30 ACM is committed to providing services to a high standard and in a way that is fair and non-discriminatory. If an applicant for reasonable adjustment/s is dissatisfied with ACM's response to a request for reasonable adjustments, they may consult the relevant ACM policy for information about how to make a complaint or request a review of ACM's decision.

2.31 Should any adjustments be found to be inappropriate, the Reasonable Adjustments panel must find alternative, more appropriate adjustments for the student.

3. POLICY SCOPE

3.1 This Policy applies to students studying at Foundation Level, and FHEQ Levels 4, 5, 6 & 7 at ACM Guildford, ACM Birmingham and ACM London.

4. RELATED POLICIES

- Additional Needs and Disability Policy
- Extenuating Circumstances Policy
- Student Engagement and Participation Policy
- Fitness to Study Policy
- Learning, Teaching, Assessment and Attainment Policy
- Admissions Policy
- Student Complaints and Grievances
- Academic Appeals

5. POLICY DOCUMENT RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

5.1 The Student Experience and Opportunity Board is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented appropriately and fairly, and delegates operational responsibility to the Additional Needs and Disability department. The responsible Committee will ensure the cyclical review of this Policy is carried out under ACM's Quality Assurance Framework.

5.2 The policy lead is responsible for the cyclical monitoring and review of this policy in liaison with the Policy Review Committee. The Reasonable Adjustments policy lead is:

- Additional Needs and Disability Coordinator

5.3 Decisions and appropriate actions in support of the implementation of the Policy will be authorised by the following designated staff:

- Additional Needs and Disability Coordinator
- Head of Assessments
- Programme Operations Manager
- Disability Support Officer

6. DEFINITIONS

6.1 **Anticipatory reasonable adjustments:** provisions identified and available to reduce the impact of barriers commonly experienced by disabled students. This includes established policies and practices such as the provision of additional time in examinations and alternative assessment modes.

6.2 **Disabled students:** all students who have a disability as defined in the Equality Act (2010). The Equality Act states that 'a person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

6.3 **Equality Act:** under the Equality Act (2010), institutions have a duty to anticipate and make reasonable adjustments for disabled people to ensure they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled people. Institutions also have a duty to promote equality between disabled and non-disabled people known as the general duty.

6.4 **Impairment:** the state of being diminished, weakened, or damaged especially mentally or physically. An impairment is defined as long term if it has lasted for longer than 12 months, is likely to last longer than 12 months or is likely to last for the rest of the life of the person.

6.5 **Inclusive Approaches:** approaches which consider the needs of disabled students as part of the wider student body. Inclusive approaches which meet the needs of disabled students are also likely to meet the needs of other student groups. For example, embedding mindfulness and other mental wellbeing support into the curriculum.

6.6 **Individual reasonable adjustments:** individual adjustments for needs which cannot be met through inclusive approaches or anticipatory adjustments.

7. PROCEDURES

7.1 The relative procedures to this policy can be found at acm.ac.uk/policies

8. DOCUMENT HISTORY AND NEXT REVIEW

Version:	2.1
Approved on:	01 September 2025
Approved by:	Student Experience and Opportunity Board
Next Review:	August 2026