



January 2017

Studying with Visual Disability

For students with restricted sight, using various tools from glasses, a magnifying glass, a telescope to a computer with enlarging software and screen reader could help them study effectively. Students with strong visual disability read and write with an individually set up Laptop with Screen Reader and/or Braille script. The Screen Reader has its limits: it cannot read graphics, tables, forms or pictures. These must be additionally described or written in a suitable program such as LaTeX. Depending on the assistive tools and the field of study, necessary support may vary. Required support will be clarified at the Disability Office- see attachment.

How Lecturers can support

When asked, please take some time for a meeting with the students.

In the Seminar/ Lecture

- Providing oral information is indispensable for taking part in a seminar.
- Talking clearly or if applicable, using a microphone is helpful.
- Eliminate all unnecessary sounds by staying quiet, closing windows and doors, etc.
- An optimal lighting in the room is also important for students with a visual impairment
- Inform the students with strong visual impairment about how the seminar room looks like, who is present, etc.
- Avoid statements that are visually oriented: "As you can see over there...", "If you combine this figure with that..." etc.
- Write bigger and if possible, with high contrast on the board, overhead projector and power point slides.
- If necessary, support student assistants in taking notes, literature research, reading aloud and so on for visually disabled students. Costs arising from this will be funded through the Disability Office or Disability Insurance. You can help us to find suitable assistants.

Others

- When asked, make lecture notes, slides or scripts available in advance for students with visual disability. These should be in a form legible by reading devices. Students will inform you which specific form are needed.
- In case you use your own teaching materials or books in class, send a digital version to visually disabled students. To protect copy right, the Disability Office will issue a copy right agreement between you and the students.
- Support students in purchasing study materials by providing a reading list (with authors, secondary literature, etc.) if possible before the semester starts. Based on this, the Disability Office will demand a digital copy from publishers, which takes time.
- For an obligatory internship, your personal involvement in finding a position that fits students' needs will be helpful.

Possible Adjustments for Course Assessments

- Alternative assessment may be needed based on the field of study or available assistive tools.
- Exams: documents should be written in suitable font size, having a personal writing tools should be allowed, exam questions prepared in digital format, and if applicable, extra time should be allowed.

For questions and organizational matters, please contact the Disability Office.

Attachment

Process for clarification of individual adjustments



According to paragraph 17 “Studying with Disability” in the regulation of admission at University of Zurich stated below, the impact on study-related activities caused by health problems or impairments will be clarified at the Disability Office.

In complex situations, the lecturers and/or program coordinators concerned will join in the clarification process.

The Disability Office will document the individual adjustments in the form of CIRA¹. Depending on the faculty, either the Disability Office or the student will request for the implementation of adjustments to a responsible person according to each faculty’s regulation.

After the proposition has been authorized, the lecturer, the Disability Office or the student him/herself will inform of the accommodations to the responsible person.

The Disability Office will eagerly support in carrying out the measures.

§ 17. Studium und Behinderung

¹ Bei Vorliegen einer ärztlich bescheinigten Behinderung oder chronischen Krankheit (gemäss UNO-Behindertenrechtskonvention, UNO-BRK, Art. 1) ist während des Immatrikulationsverfahrens bei der Beratungsstelle Studium und Behinderung ein Gesuch zur Prüfung der Auswirkung auf studienrelevante Aktivitäten einzureichen.

² Allfällig den Nachteil ausgleichende Massnahmen können nur nach erfolgter Prüfung semesterweise gewährt werden.

Verordnung über die Zulassung zum Studium an der Universität (VZS) vom 18. April 2011

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¹ CIRA stands for “Certificate of Individual Reasonable Accommodation”.