

# Diverse Learning, Diverse Support

—Examples of support for students with disabilities—



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## Introduction

A variety of students study at Ritsumeikan University. Providing support and accommodations that are appropriate to the student when learning makes for an environment in which it is easier to learn. The types of support and environment that students need varies greatly, so a one-size-fits-all approach like assuming that all students with hearing impairments need help with note-taking is not suitable. In providing support, it is important to talk with students not only about the diagnosis and the name of the disability, but also about what is bothering them and how to support them. In order to make the provision of support as natural as possible, and before accepting letters of requests for consideration from students to make accommodations, we would like to inform you here of what kinds of classes we already provide support in.

## The Position of the Disability Resource Center and Support it

Ritsumeikan University established the "Committee for Supporting Students with Disabilities" chaired by a vice-president and set the "Disability Resource Center as a specialized institution to establish an university-wide support system in 2006, and has been working on this support in cooperation with departments and graduate school offices.

The Disability Resource Center provides services including (1) acting as a general contact offering support for students with disabilities, and (2) a center for the accumulation of support technology and related support information resources.

We not only support students with disabilities, but also student support staff and instructors. When supporting students with disabilities, coordinators permanently stationed in the Disability Resource Center collaborate with the staff from the administration office of each department; assistants from related organizations; and class instructors. To support students with disabilities to attend school, the Disability Resource Center ensures the provision of information through activities such as assigning student staff to provide written interpreting (computer and hand written note-taking) or to copy the blackboard; providing transportation; preparing study materials (translating to braille or editing texts etc.). In short, providing the support required for students to be able to attend regular classes. In addition, we prepare documents asking for the cooperation and understanding from instructors, distribute them to the students, then follow up to explain the necessary accommodations.

## Eligible Students

Support is aimed at Ritsumeikan University students with various disabilities, including vision impairment, hearing impairment and physical disabilities (including students who are temporarily disabled due to illness or injury) who wish to receive support, and whose need is recognized by the

## Scope of Support

Support encompasses measures necessary for taking regular classes (support attending school).

Please note that the support listed below is provided in conjunction with the departments and graduate schools as outlined in the separate support proposal.

- \*Provision of information regarding class registration and office procedures
- \*Consultation and liaison with instructors regarding accommodations to be made.
- \*Support for use of information devices (training seminars etc.)
- \*Maintenance of facilities and equipment
- \*Adjustment of classroom assignment
- \*Securing car parking
- \*Securing multi-purpose space (for breaks etc.)

## Examples of support (For reference only)

Here are some examples of classroom support by disability type. The type of support will vary depending on the state of the student's disability, the content of the class, and the method of study easiest for the student. If you have any questions or concerns please consult the Disability Resource Center. If your class will be taught by multiple instructors or a guest speaker is to be invited to speak, please ensure that they are also informed of support provided.

## Vision Impairments



The level of students' vision impairment can vary greatly from blindness to having low vision. The type of accommodations required also varies.

### 1) Using blackboards

Methods to make it easier for vision impaired students to understand classes include reading the writing on the blackboard aloud and giving the spelling or explaining how the kanji characters of technical terms and proper nouns are written. Please also avoid pointing to the blackboard and saying words like "this" or "that". Instead, try to explain in terms that are as clear as possible.

### 2) Materials Used in Classes

#### • Textbooks, Summaries, and Materials

The sections that are used in class will need to be converted to text data (\*). From this, the text data can be converted to a format that suits the vision impaired student's learning style. (E.g. the text may be enlarged; it may be read aloud by text-to-speech software; or converted to braille.)

Class instructors may be asked to decide which parts of the textbook will be used or to provide summaries or other data, or text data in advance.

**(\*) Due to audio software and braille translation software connection requirements, the most common data format used by the vision impaired is text (txt).**

#### • PowerPoints, OHCs

Similarly, if PowerPoint and OHC content is can be provided in text format prior to the class, students with vision impairments can prepare for the class (by converting data to audio, braille format, or enlarging it.) Instructors may be asked for their cooperation in providing text data in prior to the class.

In the case that you will incorporate the use of photos, diagrams or graphs in your class, as when using blackboards, avoiding the use of words like "here" and "there" and using concrete vocabulary to explain will make it easier for sight impaired students to understand.

#### • Video Teaching materials (DVDs, videos, images etc.)

In the case that audio visual materials are used, it may be necessary to include audio guidance such as reading subtitles or explaining images, so please be sure to inform the visually impaired student or support office beforehand. If we are notified a week in advance, it is possible for the Disability Resource Center to organize student support staff.

In the case that programs taped from the television are used as teaching materials, ensuring that the program is recorded with the audio guidance setting on is also effective.

### 3) Discussions/ Group Work

If it is expected that there will be multiple speakers, making a rule that each person says their name before speaking can help vision impaired students to keep up with what is going on and understand what progress has been made.

### 4) In-class submissions

Instructors may be asked to give accommodations regarding the submission method and deadlines of communication papers and other in-class submissions.

**E.g.: allowing submissions to be written by a proxy; allowing submission the following week; or submission within that day via email etc.**

## 5) Exams, assignments (Final exams, reports, quizzes and final class exams)

Exams for students who use braille will be given (and submitted) in braille. At that time, accommodations such as extending the exam time and allowing the student to take the exam in a different rooms are required.

Report type assignments will be written and submitted in conventional writing using the student's own computer (with text-to-speech software).

In all cases, support provided will be based on individual student's level of impairment. For details please consult with the administrative office of one of the colleges. For information on methods of support for exams and assignments please consult with the Disability Resource

## 6) Bringing in and using support devices

### ▪ **Bringing in support devices**

Depending on the level of their vision, students may make use of devices such as magnification reading machines, portable braille devices, braille electronic notebooks, computers (compatible with text-to-speech software) to confirm written information, write and take notes. Instructors may be asked to approve students bringing these types of support devices to class.

### ▪ **Recording**

Notes are written using tools such as portable braille devices.

However, often, students often have trouble keeping up when inputting blackboard data into tools such as portable braille devices, so in some cases instructors may be asked to give permission for students to use IC recorders to tape classes.

## 7) The Assignment of Student Support

Depending on the level of assistance required by the student, a student support staff member may be assigned to provide voice guidance or take notes from the blackboard etc. for the student.

## Column 【Print Disability】

The term "print disability" is used to refer to any disorder that causes significant difficulty in reading printed materials, including not only visual impairment but also physical disabilities, dyslexia, and higher brain dysfunction. In recent years, with the development of support equipment based on ICT, it has become easier for people in print disabilities to read books and materials using digital tools. At the same time, progress is being made in the reform of laws.

### ■ Partial Revisions to the Copyright Laws (From January 1, 2019)

These measures are in line with the "Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled" adopted in June 2013 by the World Intellectual Property Organization in order to facilitate access for people who have difficulty deciphering printed materials. In particular, the regulations will be revised mainly with regards to the following four

- 1 Adjustment of regulations limiting rights to provide flexibility in dealing with progression in digitization and networking (\*)
- 2 Adjustment of regulations limiting rights to handle the computerization of education
- 3 Adjustment of regulations limiting rights in order to enhance opportunities for people with disabilities to access information.
- 4 Adjustment of regulations to limit rights to facilitate the use of archives

\* Regulations to limit rights: Regulations limiting the rights of the copyright holder in order to allow use of copyright materials without the permission of the copyright holder in stipulated, exceptional cases.

References: ● KONDO Takeo, "Is it possible for children who cannot read and write to go to prestigious universities?" NAKAMURA Kenryu, Satoru FUKUSHIMA, eds., *Barrier free / conflict - the future of the struggles of the body and symbiosis* Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2012, p. 96

● Partial Amendment of the Copyright Law (Act No. 30 of 2018)

Agency for Cultural Affairs webpage:

[http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/chosakuken/hokaisei/h30\\_hokaisei/](http://www.bunka.go.jp/seisaku/chosakuken/hokaisei/h30_hokaisei/)

## Hearing Impairments

Hearing impairment is defined as having difficulty hearing or not being able to hear surrounding sounds or conversations at all. Different people have different hearing levels and ways of hearing, and wearing a hearing aid doesn't ensure they can hear. There are also many ways to communicate, including sign language, lip-reading and written communication. The level of accommodations required also vary.

### 1) Progression of Classes

For students whose hearing ability is improved through the use of hearing aids or those who have learned to read lips, clear enunciation and mouth movements can make it easier to understand. When checking attendance verbally, please signal your intentions with your eyes or other body language.

### 2) Materials Used in Classes

- **Textbooks, Summaries and PowerPoints**

Providing key words, important phrases, explanations in visual forms such as textbooks, summaries or PowerPoints, in advance, can help students with hearing impairments greatly in understanding the content and points handled in the class. Additionally, having student support staff join the class and do written interpreting (written and digital note-taking) helps instructors to provide students with more information.

- **Video Teaching materials (DVDs, videos, images etc.)**

If you use video materials, providing materials to help students to understand them better, such as subtitles, summaries, and scenarios improves students' depth of understanding. In addition, we also provide character transcription services. (Please allow a week or more for this process.) Please consult with the Disability Resource Center for details.

When recording TV programs for use as teaching materials, setting the recording device to record subtitles will ensure that the materials are effective for students with hearing impairments.

### 3) Using blackboards

Writing important information, proper nouns and technical terms, not included in handouts, on the blackboard is very helpful to the hearing impaired. Additionally, amongst hearing impaired students there are those that understand what is being said by lip reading. Writing on the blackboard while talking will lead to the student not being able to see your mouth and therefore not being able to understand what is being said, so please try to make sure that your mouth can be seen when talking.

### 4) Discussions, work groups

If there will be multiple speakers in a discussion or during groupwork, making a rule that each person puts their hand up before speaking, and making sure that the interpreter has finished conveying the previous comment before moving on, can help hearing impaired students to keep up with what is going on and understand what progress has been made. In addition, written interpreters (hand and computer written note-takers) allow instructors to provide more information beforehand.

### 5) Exams, assignments (Final exams, reports, quizzes and final class exams)

If, during exams you give instructions verbally, please also write them on the blackboard or in a note and give them to the student. If you have any questions please consult with the College Administrative office or Disability Resource Center.

## 6) The Assignment of Student Support Staff

In some cases student support staff will be assigned to provide written interpretation support such as hand and computer written note-taking.



### Column 【Hearing Support System】

To help provide an environment that makes it that little bit easier for students who live with a hearing aid or cochlea implant to understand the content of lectures, situations in which hearing assistance systems are utilized are increasing.

The Roger Digital Wireless (FM System) is a classic example of such a hearing assistance system.

■ The Roger System is a system in which voices and sound picked up by the Roger Microphone (transmitter) are streamed to the Roger My Link (receiver) on a (2.4GHz) digital signal. The student will give the portable Roger Mic to the instructor at the beginning of each class, so please use it. The mic will belong to either the student themselves or may have been borrowed from the Disability Support Center.



Phonak Hearing Support Roger System:  
<https://www.phonak.com/jp/ja.html>

Reference webpage:

## Physical Disabilities

Physical disability refers to conditions in which a person has an impairment in one or a number of limbs (upper limbs, lower limbs, and trunk) resulting in a difficulty walking, writing, or performing other daily life activities. Necessary accommodations depend on the part of the body and the degree of disability experienced.



### 1) Classrooms

Classrooms may be changed after class registration is finalized if necessary for a student with a whe

### 2) Air Conditioning

In some cases students may register for your class who have difficulty regulating their body temperature due to dysfunctions in the autonomic nerves. The Disability Resource Center monitors which classroom(s) require consideration regarding air conditioning each semester and manages use of air conditions, including granting permission for out-of-season use. We would appreciate your help in notifying students in such cases.

Please note that in some cases the Disability Resource Center may loan heating appliances to students with disabilities.

### 3) Class Materials (Summaries and PowerPoints)

When students with upper limb disabilities use computers or tablets, data versions of materials are required. We may ask class instructors to cooperate in providing data versions of class summaries in advance.

#### 4) Bringing in and using support devices

- **Bringing in support devices**

In cases where upper limb disorders make it difficult for students to write or turn the pages of reference materials, they will bring tablet PCs or laptops in to the classroom and use them to check materials and prepare notes. Instructors may be asked to approve students bringing these types of support devices to class.

- **Recording**

In cases where upper limb disorders make writing difficult, instructors may be asked to give permission for students to record classes with devices like IC recorders to supplement notes or

- **Photographing the Blackboard**

If students with upper limb disorders have trouble keeping up with copying down the blackboard, instructors may be asked to allow them to photograph the blackboard with a smartphone or tablet computer.

#### 5) Assigning Caregivers or Student Support Staff

Some students who use wheelchairs need caregivers (physical assistants) to help with such things as adjusting the angle of their seats in order to disburse the pressure on their bodies. In the case that students have upper limb disorders, student support staff (note-takers) may be assigned to prepare writing implements, textbooks etc. and take down the information on the blackboard.

#### 6) In-class submissions

Instructors may be asked to give accommodations regarding the submission method and deadlines of communication papers and other in-class submissions.

E.g.: Allowing submissions to be written by a proxy; allowing submission the following week; submission within that day via email etc.

#### 7) Exams, assignments (Final exams, reports, quizzes and final class exams)

In regards to final exams, answers may be written by the student themselves, or by computer, or may be dictated (written by proxy). As a result, the exam may need to be taken in a different classroom and accommodations such as a time extension may be necessary. Report type assignments will be written by the student in conventional writing using a computer and submitted as usual. The way of handling individual students may vary depending on the degree of their disability. For details, please consult with the administrative office of one of the colleges.

## Learning Disabilities

The term Learning Disability refers to the situation in which students have significant difficulties learning or using the specific skill(s) of listening, speaking, reading, writing, calculation and/or reasoning although their intellectual development is otherwise not fundamentally delayed.

Students needs differ depending on the level of their disability. Conditions that fall under the heading of learning disabilities include dyslexia which is the difficulty to read and write.

#### 1) Using blackboards

- **In the case that it is difficult for students to read and write**

In the case that it is difficult for a student to read and understand what is written, please read the content of the blackboard out aloud as much as possible. In some cases it will also be difficult for students to come to the front of the classroom and write on the blackboard.

## 2) Materials (summaries and PowerPoints) Used in Classes

### ▪ For students who have difficulty reading

The sections of materials used in classes will need to be converted to text (\*). With this text data, text can be enlarged or audio software prepared in line with the student's learning disability.

Class instructors may be asked to decide which parts of the textbook will be used or to provide summaries or other data or text data in advance.

If PowerPoint and OHC content is provided in text data prior to the class the student can prepare for the class in advance (by listening to the audio material etc.). Instructors may be asked for their cooperation in providing text data in prior to the class.

**(\* Like students with hearing impediments, most of the audio software that students with learning disabilities use requires text (.txt) format.**

### ▪ For students who have difficulty listening

In the case that students have difficulty listening, providing information prior to the class, such as keywords, important phrases or explanations regarding the content of the class in a visual format such as textbooks, summaries and power points will help them greatly in their understanding of the content and points covered in the class.

## 3) Discussions, work groups

### ▪ In the Case of Students who have difficulty talking.

If it is difficult for the student to take part in the discussion, instructors may be asked to make accommodations by using written communication or assigning students a different role through which they can participate.

## 4) Bring in and using support devices

### ▪ Bringing in support devices

In the case that it the student has difficulty taking hand written notes or reading materials they may bring a tablet computer or laptop to class to check the materials and write notes with. Instructors may be asked to approve students bringing these types of support devices to class.

### ▪ Recording

In the case that students have difficulty writing, instructors may be asked to allow them to compensate by recording classes and bringing IC recorders or other devices to class to keep records of the class and to use for revision.

### ▪ Photographing the Blackboard

As it is difficult to take notes from the blackboard, instructors may be asked to allow students to take photos of the blackboard using smartphones or tablet computers.

## 5) In-class submissions

Instructors may be asked to give accommodations regarding the submission method and deadlines of communication papers and other in-class submissions.

**E.g.: Allowing them to be written by a proxy; allowing submission the following week; or allowing submission within that day via email etc.**

## 6) Exams, assignments (Final exams, reports, quizzes and final class exams)

With regards to final exams, it may be necessary to enlarge question and answer sheets or make other accommodations such as submitting answers via computer, taking the exam in a separate room, or extending the exam time. Report type assignments will be written by the student in conventional writing using a computer and submitted as usual. The way of handling individual students may vary depending on the degree of their disability. For details, please consult with the

administrative office of one of the colleges.

## Higher Brain Dysfunction

There is a chance that students may meet with an accident of some sort while they are university students. If that happens, they may suffer a head injury or ischemic stroke resulting in brain damage in the form of higher brain dysfunctions such as disturbances in memory, attention, executive function and social behavior.



Disabilities can be difficult to recognize just by looking at the person and in some cases the student themselves may have difficulty becoming aware of the issue, making it difficult for the people around them to know how to handle them when they return to school. On the other hand, when the person is aware of their disability they may worry about it deeply once they return to their normal lives.

### 1) Using blackboards

If the writing on the blackboard is deleted too quickly, they may not be able to keep up. We would appreciate your cooperation in allowing them to take photos of the blackboard.

### 2) Bringing in and using support devices

- **Recording**

To compensate for memory loss and to help review the content, instructors may be asked to allow such students to record classes using IC recorders or other devices.

- **Photographing the Blackboard**

As it is difficult for such students to store information in their memories, instructors may be asked to allow the use of smartphones or tablet computers to photograph the blackboard.

### 3) Exams, assignments (Final exams, reports, quizzes and final class exams)

Final exams will need to be held in a separate classroom. Report type assignments will be written by the student in conventional writing using a computer and submitted as usual. If a number of deadlines accumulate, students may become confused so in some cases we may approach instructors to discuss the submission deadline. For details, please consult with the administrative office of one of the colleges.

## Students with Health Issues/Weak Constitution

In many cases, it is impossible to differentiate healthy students from those that have health issues or weak constitutions without the student coming forward and sharing that information. In addition, as there are few students nearby who are in the same situation, students can easily start to feel isolated when they are unwell or when life isn't going well due to a variety of limitations or restrictions. It is important that we work to create an environment, in conjunction to medical institutions, where students can have peace of mind in their student life.

### ● Epilepsy

Epilepsy is a chronic brain disorder with its main symptom being reoccurring seizures (epileptic seizures). There are a number of different types of epilepsy seizures, but the type most often seen is the tonic-clonic (grand mal) seizure in which the sufferer loses consciousness.



- **When a seizure occurs**

In the Classroom:

Lay the student down and don't put anything around them. Please don't shake them or shout at them. \*For emergency contacts and such, please follow the contents of the student's Request for Academic Accommodation.

During Laboratory Work:

Please allow the student to be placed in a group at the edge of the room and if possible restrict their use dangerous chemicals or equipment.

- **Food Allergies (Anaphylaxie)**

Food allergies refer to skin, respiratory or digestive organ reactions that people have after eating a particular food. Allergic reactions which result in rashes or other skin symptoms, abdominal pain or vomiting or other digestion related symptoms, wheezing or difficulty breathing or other such respiratory symptoms or a mixture of these are known as anaphylaxis (anaphylactic shock). Anaphylaxis is known to be induced by being stung by an insect, taking medications, touching latex (natural rubber) and more. In severe cases the victim may go into shock, sometimes to the extent that it becomes life threatening.

1) Classrooms

Other students need to be informed of the measures to be taken including not bringing allergenic foods into the classroom. Additionally, because anaphylaxie may also be caused by medications or latex (natural rubber) so it is important to consider whether, depending on their major, students are at risk of coming into contact with the cause of their allergy while participating in practical experience or lab work.

- **When a seizure occurs**

In some cases students may be carrying an adrenalin self injector (Product Name: EpiPen) prescribed by their doctor. Both instructors and the surrounding administrative staff need have a common understanding of its use.

### Column 【Help Mark】

The help mark was created to make it easier for people with difficult-to-notice impediments like those with prosthetic legs, artificial joints, internal ailments, rare diseases, or the early stages of pregnancy to ask for help or to receive others consideration.

The help mark was created in Tokyo and is spreading over the country little by little.

If you see a student with a help mark badge we hope that you will ask them if they need help or at least be mindful of them.



Reference webpage: Kyoto, "Do you know the help mark?"

<http://www.pref.kyoto.jp/shogaishien/helpmark.html>

References: The Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), "Guide for staff and faculty supporting students with disabilities (2014 revised edition)"