
A Series of Fact Sheets for Students

Learning Access Plans (LAPs)

This Fact Sheet is to provide an overview and helpful information for students who have applied for a Learning Access Plan (LAP), including how it can be used and hints to ensure that it is as useful as possible.

Please use this information as a guide only, and please contact any of the Disability Services Team if you require any further information.

General Communication Tips

Always try to use your UTAS email account rather than personal email accounts. When sending emails or leaving phone messages, always include your full name and Student ID Number. This will make it a lot easier for the staff member when working with you.

What is a LAP and how do I apply for one?

A LAP application is the formal document that is developed through Disability Services. It is developed in conjunction with a Disability Adviser and yourself.

The LAP details the specialist services, study and assessment accommodations that you will require for your study. Recommendations are made based on advice from your treating health professional, by assessing your individual circumstances, and by addressing course outlines and inherent academic requirements.

Who gets to see my approved LAP and my medical documents?

Apart from the Disability Services Team, the only staff who automatically see your approved LAP are Exams – they just see the relevant exam section (see related section on Distribution of your LAP to relevant staff). Apart from Exams, the only academic staff that see your LAP are those you forward the documents to.

No-one apart from Disability Services staff can access your medical documentation. There is no need for anyone else to view this information.

And what about when I graduate?

Your graduation is exactly the same as every other student. Your degree is not annotated/changed in any way.

Disability Services does not give out any information to any external people, unless we have your prior release to do so, nor will they even confirm or deny that you have accessed the service.

How do I know if my LAP is “current”?

All LAPs have a VALIDITY date in a specific course and respective course code.

Validity Dates will be either 30th June or 31st December of a specific year.

If it is past this time, then you MUST get a new LAP organised.

If your **Course Title** or **Course Code** has changed, and either of these are different to your LAP then you need to organise a new LAP.

What should I do if I change my course?

Your LAP is no longer valid if you change your course. You must contact Disability Services and make a new appointment to organise a new LAP.

What do I do if I am now doing a second course, at the same time as my original course for my LAP?

Your LAP is still current for the 1st course. However, you need to get a new LAP that will include both courses. Please contact Disability Services and they will then get this organised for you.

What if my course or disability/health condition changes and this is affecting my study?

Sometimes your disability/health condition may change or a new unit that you commence may present a different challenge that you have not met before.

You may need to get your LAP reviewed to include this. Generally, it is always effective to obtain further medical documentation supporting this change of circumstance before you meet with your Disability Adviser. If you are at all unsure, please email your specific Disability Adviser and seek clarification.

What do I do if the accommodation that I need is not listed on my LAP?

As detailed in the previous paragraph, you can get your LAP changed to reflect this need. However, at times, this will take too long. It may be more realistic to obtain supporting medical verification and seek a short-term solution directly with the Unit Coordinator. Once you have done this, you might then meet with a Disability Adviser and request that your LAP is changed accordingly.

Time Frames for getting a new LAP

It may take a few weeks to process a new LAP application. Please try and contact Disability Services as soon as possible if you need to get a new LAP organised.

What do I do if I have lost the copy of my approved LAP or if I am unsure if my LAP is current or not?

Please contact your Disability Adviser or Disability Services and ask for a copy to be emailed to you. Remember to always include your full name and Student ID Number.

Similarly, you can ask whether your LAP is current or not. If it isn't current, then take steps immediately to organise a LAP renewal.

What if I need to make a new appointment with a Disability Adviser and/or provide further medical documents?

To make an appointment with a Disability Adviser, you can either:

- Phone 1800 817 675 and make an appointment time and email your completed documentation to: Disability Services Disability.Services@utas.edu.au;
- Come in to one of the U Connect areas, make an appointment time and lodge your medical documentation; or
- Via the online appointment system at: www.utas.edu.au/appointments

To book an online appointment:

Step 1: Select the appointments tab

Step 2: Select a Disability Adviser

Step 3: Select an available time for an appointment.

When booking an appointment, you will be given an opportunity to upload documents. You must upload your HPR/Medical Documentation when booking an appointment with a Disability Adviser. If you cannot upload these documents, you must provide the HPR and/or Learning Disability Assessment as a PDF document in an email which is sent to Disability.Services@utas.edu.au. In the email, ensure you include your full name, UTAS Student ID No., and a contact phone number.

When I have a LAP, what is the best way to ensure that I get what I need?

It is your responsibility to ensure that your LAP gets to all relevant staff. When you received your LAP, you would have read the included information about your LAP Distribution.

It is very important that you try to meet with relevant staff and give them a copy of your LAP directly. Please find an appropriate time to approach or meet with staff. At the end of a lecture isn't necessarily the best time as there may be other students present and the staff member may be a little pressed for time. Find a time that works for you and the staff member. This way you will have time to discuss what you need and a little about the course.

Sometimes emailing the relevant staff member will work as they will then have an electronic copy of your LAP on file.

Requests for Extensions

Can I automatically get an extension because I have a LAP?

Some students will have LAPs that include a statement that will allow application for extensions without the support of a medical certificate. If this is in your LAP, and if you require an extension you will:

- Need to provide adequate warning that you will require an extension;
- Need to follow academic school application procedure;
- In some situations, where staff deem it appropriate, you may be required to provide some reason as to why the extension is required, e.g.:
 - Student with a learning disability needed extra assignment preparation time
 - Exacerbation of ongoing mental health condition
 - Chronic pain episode
 - Change of medication

Other factors may impact upon the staff members decision to grant an extension, such as: proof of progress; engagement with other aspects of the course; or if the assignment answers are about to be handed back to your colleagues.

In some instances, staff may request further medical verification if the extension request is somewhat out of the usual requested time-frames.

Note – if a circumstance occurs that impacts upon your assignment time-frame that isn't documented in your LAP, then you will need to get verification of this. For example:

- Fractured hand; or
- Sporting injury, etc.

I need an extension and my LAP doesn't include a statement about extensions?

You will need to follow the usual guidelines from the College and apply as early as possible. In most situations, you will need to provide supporting documentation as to why you need an extension.

Because I have a LAP, what extension can I ask for?

Just because you have an approved LAP does not mean that an extension will be automatically granted. You need to apply to relevant staff, and negotiate. As per previous points above, this will depend on several factors.

If I need an extension, should I contact Disability Services?

No, you need to contact relevant staff. This is usually the Unit Coordinator. Disability Services do not contact staff regarding extensions.

What about group-work, if I need an extension?

If you need to ask for an extension and your assessment/presentation involves other students, then you must:

- Let the students in your group know that you are not able to keep the time-frames that have been allocated; &
- Inform relevant staff as soon as possible and discuss options for this piece of assessment.

Try to make these discussions happen as early as possible as this will decrease the impact upon other students. They will understand that issues do occur and will respect you, as long as you try to give as much warning as practical.

I need to apply for an extension after the due date has already passed?

If the due date has already passed and you have not previously requested or been granted an extension, then you will need to follow the College guidelines. You cannot use your LAP as supporting documentation to gain a retrospective extension. This will be dealt with on an individual basis and you may need to provide further supporting documentation as to why you did not lodge the assessment on time.

What if I haven't met the mandatory attendance requirements of a unit?

Some students will have LAPs that allow some flexibility regarding non-attendance of classes, without the support of lodgement of medical verification. However, these students will still need to meet the minimum attendance requirement for that course as stated in the Unit Outline. You can make a case to the Unit Coordinator/Head of Discipline – but the LAP should not be used as the sole piece of supporting documentation as to why you have not met this attendance requirement.

If I miss a mandatory class and my LAP details this?

Again, some students will have LAPs that allow some flexibility regarding non-attendance of classes without the need for lodging medical verification. If you do miss a class with an attendance quota, then you need to contact the relevant staff member and acknowledge that you weren't able to attend. Additionally, you should ask how you are able to catch up and what material you may have missed out on.

In-Class Tests and Examinations

Does my LAP cover me if I miss an in-class test/exam?

If you miss an in-class test for whatever reason, you will need to get supporting documentation as to why you missed that test, and then apply to the Unit Coordinator and discuss possible options. Your LAP does not cover you for this.

End of Semester Examinations – Alternative Arrangements

If your LAP includes alternative arrangements for examinations, then this will be organised automatically and should appear on your exam timetable. Please see Alternative Examination Arrangements Fact Sheet:

<http://www.utas.edu.au/exams/exam-and-results-forms>.

During Semester / In-Class Tests

It is the responsibility of the School to organise and provide supervision for students who require extra accommodations for in-class tests, as stated in your LAP. This may include online assessments and quizzes.

IMPORTANT: It is up to you to contact staff in a timely manner to alert them to your need for alternative arrangements.

It is good to discuss this with staff at the start of each unit. However, it is effective and polite to remind staff a few weeks before each test. Remember, staff may be teaching multiple units and may have several students with differing LAPs in each unit. Try to make it as simple as possible for the staff you are working with to ensure you get the arrangements that you require.

Time-Frames for Adjustments for In-Class Tests

Unit Coordinators will often make announcements at the start of each semester regarding students who need alternative arrangements for any in-class tests. There may even be a cut-off date where you must have contacted the Unit Coordinator to confirm any arrangements required.

It is not discriminatory for a staff member to disregard the approved arrangements in your LAP if you have not contacted the Unit Coordinator within the announced time-frame.

If you are at all concerned, please contact the Unit Coordinator at the start of semester, when you have read the Unit Outline and you see that there are tests where you will require alternative arrangements.

What should I do if I know I am going to have issues with presentations or other facets of the course, as detailed in my LAP?

Some students will have LAPs that detail certain aspects of the course that may present issues for that student. This might include:

- Participation in tutorials;
- Presentations and group-work;
- Completion of timed assessments;
- Access to material that is presented in lectures – visually or verbally.

You must discuss these issues with relevant staff. You shouldn't just email a copy of your LAP to the staff member and expect that they will have time to read it thoroughly or follow up with you.

Remember, you are the one person who knows your situation the best and you are the person who can ensure that you get the supports and accommodations that you require.

What if I am not able to get my LAP to staff within prescribed time-frames?

As all students are advised, you must forward the LAP to academics as per the following procedure:

- LAP Distribution

Student is required to provide copies of their Learning Access Plan to all current Unit Coordinators and other relevant staff in accordance with the following deadlines:

- Within 10 days of receiving confirmation; OR
- By the end of week 2 of each new semester.

Null and void statement – Failure to meet these deadlines can result in the student having to make another Learning Access Plan application.

If you haven't met these time-frames, it is up to the individual staff member to make a call as to whether you should be allowed your accommodations.

Where do I go for help if I require LAP related assistance?

You can talk with any of the Disability Services Team about your LAP or any of the information in this fact sheet. Other staff that can provide relevant information include:

- UTAS Counsellors
- College based Student Advisers

Is the information in my LAP confidential or sensitive? What staff can see my LAP?

The medical documentation that is lodged at Disability Services is confidential and is not accessed by anyone apart from Disability Services staff. The information contained within your LAP has been signed off by yourself and your College as sensitive information. It can be passed on to any other relevant staff members within any of your enrolled. It is never passed on to any of your class-mates.

Contact details

For further information, feel free to contact your specific Disability Adviser or Disability Services at:

Phone: 1800 817 675 or 03 6226 7267 (Hobart only)

Email: Disability.Services@utas.edu.au