

Guidelines for inclusive teaching and for the management of training courses and examinations for students with recognised special educational needs

Of the 14.07.2025

The Rectorate adopts:

Chapter I – General provisions

Art. 1 Principles and definitions

- ¹ Based on its Statutes (Art. 50) and Code of Ethics (Art. 6(a)), the University of Lugano (USI) rejects any form of direct or indirect discrimination against members of its community on the basis of their physical or mental condition. It recognises the equal dignity of all members of the university community by promoting diversity and inclusion.
- ² In order to ensure fair and inclusive service, in accordance with the provisions of Art. 2(5) of the Federal Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (LDis), Università della Svizzera italiana supports students who have been recognized by a specialist in accordance with cantonal guidelines¹ or equivalent guidelines in the country issuing the relevant certificates as having special educational needs falling within one of the following categories:
 - a. disabilities (according to the international category 'A/Déficiences')², permanent or temporary, diagnosed as disorders of organic origin (related, in particular, to sensory, motor or neurological deficits, disorders of a psychological nature);
 - b. diagnosed developmental disorder (according to the international category 'B/Difficultés')³ with behavioural or emotional difficulties, or with specific learning difficulties (in particular: specific learning disorder, such as dyslexia, dysorthographia, dyscalculia, language disorders).
- ³ USI may grant students with recognized special educational needs one or more of the measures listed in the following articles. The granting of such measures must also be assessed considering the requirements of the specific course of study and its objectives, as well as the type of courses.
- ⁴ In this text, masculine or masculine plural forms also include feminine or feminine plural forms.

Art. 2 Universal Design for Instruction

- ¹ USI recommends that its academic staff apply, where possible, the principles of Universal Design for Instruction to ensure an inclusive learning environment for all students. For further information, please refer

to the relevant guidelines available on the dedicated page of the USI website.

Chapter II – Support measures

Art. 3 Course recording

- 1 USI may facilitate the active participation of students with special educational needs through teaching support measures, such as video and audio recording of courses and the timely sharing of teaching materials (e.g. lecture slides, handouts and other useful aids).
 - 2 Recordings are provided, in cases deemed appropriate by the Examination Board (see Art. 14), for ex-cattedra courses and are made available to students who request them in accordance with this Guidelines. Recordings are not permitted for seminar-based courses.
 - 3 It is the responsibility of the professor or course coordinator or the person designated by the Faculty to manage and distribute the recording to those who request it.
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Art. 4 Exams, papers and presentations

- 1 USI may grant students with recognised special educational needs the opportunity to:
 - a. agree on a personalized schedule for the submission of individual written assignments and papers;
 - b. replace a written examination with an oral examination;
 - c. replace group assignments or presentations with alternative formats equivalent to group work.
 - 2 The content of the substitute examinations referred to in paragraph 1 must be equivalent to the content of the originally planned examinations.
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Art. 5 Additional time

- 1 USI may grant students with recognized special educational needs an additional 25% of time for each examination (15 minutes extra per hour). For example:
 - i. 1-hour exam → 75 minutes granted
 - ii. 2-hour exam → 150 minutes granted
 - iii. 3-hour exam → 225 minutes granted
 - 2 During oral examinations for which no preparation time is provided, a 10-minute preparation period may be granted, after which the oral examination may proceed.
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Art. 6 Use of computers

- 1 USI may grant students with recognized special educational needs the opportunity to take written examinations on a computer in accordance with the procedures defined by the Student Administration Service.
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Art. 7 Speech synthesis or dictation

- 1 USI may grant students with recognized special educational needs the possibility to take written examinations using speech synthesis and/or voice dictation systems in accordance with the procedures defined by the Student Administration Service.
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Art. 8 Use of monolingual dictionaries

- 1 During written examinations, USI may grant students with recognized special educational needs the possibility to consult a monolingual dictionary, with the exception of language examinations and those aimed at assessing language proficiency.
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| Art. 9 Use of non-scientific calculators | <p>¹ During the written examination, USI may grant students with recognized special educational needs the possibility of having a non-scientific calculator at their disposal. This measure cannot be applied to examinations aimed at assessing the student's acquisition of specialist knowledge of the subject matter of the examination and for which a calculator cannot be used.</p> |
| Art. 10 Assessment of written examinations | <p>¹ In the assessment of written examinations, students with recognized special educational needs shall not be penalized for spelling and morphological-syntactic errors. This measure does not apply to examinations specifically designed to assess the correct use of language.</p> |
| Art. 11 Minimum support system | <p>¹ The measures indicated in Articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 constitute a minimum support system that must be guaranteed by all Faculties to students who request it on the basis of the necessary documentation submitted in accordance with Articles 12 et seq. and which are granted by decision of the Examination Board (see Article 14).</p> <p>² On the basis of proven medical needs, students may request additional support measures.</p> <p>³ The measures indicated in Articles 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 do not apply to the OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) practical examinations of the Master of Medicine programme of the Faculty of Biomedical Sciences.</p> |

Chapter III – Procedure and decision

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| Art. 12 Application | <p>¹ In order to access support measures, students must submit their request to the Student Administration Service at the time of enrolment at USI. Alternatively, the request may be submitted no later than two months before the start of the semester, if teaching support measures are requested, or no later than two months before the start of the examination session, if examination-related measures are requested.</p> <p>² Applications submitted after these deadlines, or following a diagnosis made after enrolment, will still be considered. However, any teaching support measures can only be applied from the following semester, while exam-related measures will be valid from the first available session.</p> <p>³ In the request, the student must indicate one or more measures from those listed in Articles 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10, attaching a certificate issued by a recognized specialist, in accordance with cantonal guidelines⁴ or equivalent guidelines of the country in which the documentation was issued. The certificate must attest to the presence of a specific disorder and a special educational need, and must not be more than two years old at the date of the request.</p> |
| Art. 13 Limits | <p>¹ The cancellation or revision of an examination cannot be requested on the basis of a request submitted after the fact.</p> |
| Art. 14 Examination Board | <p>¹ An Examination Board is established to evaluate applications.</p> <p>² The Examination Board shall be composed of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">the Vice-Rector for Education and Students' Experiencetwo representatives of the Education, Student life and Internationalisation Services:a representative of the Equal Opportunities Service. |

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- ³ The Examination Board may seek the opinion of a third-party expert.
 - ⁴ Each Faculty shall appoint one or more academic representatives to whom the Committee may refer for advice on requests received from students belonging to the Faculty in question.
 - ⁵ In all circumstances, all requests received shall be treated confidentially and in compliance with personal data protection legislation.

**Art. 15
Assessment and
decision**

- ¹ The Student Administration Service receives the request and the relevant documentation and forwards it to the Examination Board.
- ² The Examination Board shall assess the request on the basis of the documentation received and decide whether to grant the measures. The support measures referred to in Art. 11(2) shall be provided subject to an assessment of the availability of the necessary material and financial resources (in particular: financial, infrastructural and human resources).
- ³ The measures ordered remain valid for the entire duration of the course of study at USI, unless the student submits a request for changes or additions within the time limits specified in Art. 12.

**Art. 16
Communication**

- ¹ The Student Administration Service shall notify the student in writing of the decision of the Examination Board.
- ² The Student Administration Service shall notify the lecturers and assistants concerned of the decision and ensure that the measures granted are implemented.
- ³ For any questions regarding the application of support measures, lecturers may, upon request, seek the advice of an expert designated by USI.

Chapter IV – Final provisions

**Art. 17
Disputes**

- ¹ Students may lodge a complaint with the Rector's Office against the decision of the Examination Board (see Art. 63(4) of the USI Statutes). The Pro-Rector for Education and University Life shall abstain from deliberating in the Rector's Office, having already participated, as a member of the Examination Board, in the adoption of the contested act.
- ² Students may appeal against the decisions of the Rectorate to the Cantonal Administrative Court (see Article 63(5) of the USI Statutes).

Disclaimer: These Guidelines have been drawn up in Italian. A non-legally binding English translation has been provided for information purposes only. The Italian version shall prevail over the English translation.

¹ Diagnostic criteria and cantonal guidelines for the assessment of specific learning disorders

² OECD (2008), Students with Disabilities, Difficulties and Social Disadvantages: Policies, Statistics and Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264027640-fr>

³ Idem

⁴ Diagnostic criteria and cantonal guidelines for the assessment of specific learning disorders