

Reasonable accommodations while studying

To assist you in creating a support plan for a student who stutters, we've compiled a list of challenges that people who stutter may encounter while studying. The suggested accommodations are not exhaustive, and both you and the person who stutters can explore additional accommodations tailored to their needs and the specific learning environment.

When accommodations are provided that cater to the specific needs of the person, you're helping them to feel more comfortable, participate more, and achieve their potential.

Introductions

For someone who stutters, saying their own name can be particularly tough. It's a word that can't be easily changed or skipped, especially when meeting someone new. There's often a bit of time pressure involved in introductions, which adds to the challenge.

- Instead of having them introduce themselves, have someone else assigned to introduce them
- Agree on the order of introductions beforehand, and find out whether they'd prefer to go first or last
- Utilise written names or the chat function in online meetings for introductions
- For larger group meetings, consider using name tags as an additional aid

Presentations

Oral assessments can create high-pressure situations, which may exacerbate stuttering and make speaking more challenging for people who stutter. There can be a fear that their stuttering or how they handle it will be misunderstood, potentially impacting their grades.

- Inform the examiner about the person's stutter and how it may present
- Provide extra time or no time limit
- Allow written or visual material to supplement an oral presentation
- Debrief with the person who stutters immediately following the oral exam or presentation to check they were able to say everything they wanted to
- Reduce the audience size to examiners only or a small group

In class - tutorials - lectures

The expectations to speak in class can vary significantly depending on the course and the educator. For people who stutter, being put on the spot to speak, participating in group discussions, and speaking in front of others can be particularly challenging. As a result, some individuals may choose to opt out of these situations, whether that's in person or in online classes.

- Allow the student to contribute when they signal that they want to contribute, rather than putting them on the spot
- Encourage turn taking during group discussions
- Allow use of the chat function during online classes
- Consider using paired work or small group work as an alternative to large group discussions