

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201907236, Heriot-Watt University  
**Sector:** Universities  
**Subject:** Special needs - assessment and provision  
**Decision:** some upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

C complained about the support they received as a disabled student while attending the university. C said that the university failed to put appropriate reasonable adjustments in place to meet their needs. However, the university were satisfied that appropriate support and reasonable adjustments were put in place.

We highlighted to C that the purpose of our investigation was not to assess each individual measure taken by the university or interaction C had with staff and decide whether they were reasonable. Given the circumstances, we considered it reasonable to expect that some measures may not be successful and that there may be disagreement over what actions were put in place or how they are delivered. We concluded that the university made appropriate efforts to assess what support and reasonable adjustments should be put in place. Where the university concluded that certain adjustments suggested by C went beyond what they considered reasonable, we were satisfied that appropriate explanations were provided. In light of this, we did not uphold this complaint.

C also complained about the university's handling of their complaint. We did not have any concerns about the thoroughness of the university's investigation or response. However, there were significant delays to the university's complaint handling at both stage 1 and stage 2 of the process. In addition to this, the university have acknowledged that they did not provide appropriate updates to C during this time. On the basis of the delays in handling C's complaint and providing updates, we upheld this complaint. However, as the university had already taken what we considered to be appropriate action, we did not make any recommendations.