If you have a disability that makes reading text difficult, we can arrange to have your exam paper or course material converted into an alternative format such as larger font size, different coloured background or Braille. This could be either in electronic format or on paper.

It is essential that you take responsibility for your alternative formatting requirements. Reformatting your books can take many weeks before you will receive the material, therefore you must start planning before semester starts. Leaving it until the last minute will cause you unnecessary delay and stress.

Any delay could also mean you may not have your textbooks or course readers available for the start of semester.

**Note:** Eligibility for alternative formatting support is assessed by the documentation provided by your Doctor or Health Professional and in consultation with your Disability Adviser. If you need assistance, please [register for support](mailto:).  

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**How long does alternative formatting take?**

There are four key things that influence how long alternative formatting takes:

1. When you bring your material in to be formatted – the sooner the better.
2. Availability of electronic versions of material – publishers can take 6 weeks or more to turnaround a request.
3. Quality of the material to be formatted.
4. In-house resources for alternative formatting are limited.

Converting any published material into an alternative format is very time-consuming, particularly textbooks.

For some publications we are able to obtain them electronically direct from the publisher. Not all publishers respond to requests for electronic copies in a timely manner. In some cases it can take 6 weeks or more for a publisher to send through an electronic copy of a publication.

For some publications we are able to reformat them in our office.

The longer you leave it to make your request, the longer it will take to receive your textbooks. You risk serious delays in receiving your material if you allow less than four weeks before you bring in your alternative formatting requests.

**How to arrange alternative formatting**

If you require alternative formatting of your course readers/study kits or text books please ensure that you:

1. Plan what material you need for the semester and let Disability Services know.
2. Make your request for formatting at least four weeks before the text is required.
3. Purchase course readers and textbooks and be able to provide Disability Services with a copy of the receipt.
4. Notify Disability Services if there are any problems.
5. Use the [disabilities@unsw.edu.au](mailto:disabilities@unsw.edu.au) email address for all correspondence or enquiries about your alternative formatting. Delays could occur if you email your Educational Liaison Officer and not Disability Services.
How to arrange alternative formatting

- Enrol in your courses as soon as enrolments open.
- Contact the relevant academics and ask them for details of textbooks, course readers and Moodle readings.
- Find out if any of your course materials are available on Moodle or Lecture Recordings.
- Obtain the reading and required text lists from the lecturer as soon as possible.
- Purchase your books and course readers as soon as they are available.
- Disability Services will need a copy of the receipt before processing formatting requests.
- Fill out the request for alternative formatting form (located below on this page) for each book or course reader. Or email disabilities@unsw.edu.au
- Bring in the form, book and the receipt to Disability Services at least four weeks before semester starts.
- All formatting will be processed on a ‘first in, first served’ basis.
- You will be advised by Disability Services when the material is ready for collection.
- You will need to sign a form to confirm the material has been collected.

Who to contact regarding your alternative formatting

- All contact regarding your alternative formatting must be made through email to disabilities@unsw.edu.au
- Please do not email your Educational Liaison Coordinator regarding requests, enquiries about alternative formatting, or sending in material to be formatted.
- Delays may occur if you email your Educational Liaison Coordinator about processing of your material.
- All alternative formatting requests will be dealt with on a ‘first in, first served’ basis.
- Check your emails regularly – even during semester breaks – for information about your alternative formatting as all communication will be sent to your student email address.
- Ensure your formatting requirements are in place before you go on extended leave.

If you are not able to fill out the alternative formatting request form

If you are unable to fill out the alternative formatting request form or have any problems with the form, please email disabilities@unsw.edu.au with the following information for each textbook or course reader you require to be formatted and the format you require.

Please ensure you include your name and student number in the email.

Textbooks:

- Course code
- Course name
- Textbook name
- ISBN #
- Author
- Publisher
- Year
- Edition
- Date book required

Course readers/Study kits

- Course code
- Course name
- Course reader name
- Chapters or sections required
- Dates of when chapters/sections are required

Please also advise your preferred format.

Obtaining electronic copies from publishers
After we have received your request for alternative formatting form (located below on this page), purchase receipt and the book, Disability Services will contact the publishers on your behalf – with the exception of books published by The Federation Press.

To obtain an electronic copy of the textbook, all publishers will require:
- confirmation from Disability Services that you are a registered student
- proof of purchase of the publication
- copyright authorisation which Disability Services will manage.

If your book is published by The Federation Press

- Federation Press have changed their processes from previous years.
- Fill in the Disabilities Services alternative formatting request form detailing the texts you require
- Disability Services will make the request to Federation Press to confirm you are a registered student
- Federation Press will send us an invoice for the publication
- We will forward the invoice to you
- As soon as you pay the invoice, Federation Press will release the electronic files of the publication
- We will contact you regarding collection of the files as soon as we receive them
- Federation Press will NOT give us the electronic versions until you have paid for them
- If you require both electronic and hard copy versions of the textbook, you will need to purchase both versions from The Federation Press.

Formatting course readers and Moodle material

Formatting course readers

Purchase your course readers as soon as they are available.

- Fill out the request for alternative formatting form (located below on this page) or email disabilities@unsw.edu.au
- Bring the form and course reader to Disability Services.
- Disability Services will obtain an electronic copy of the course readers if available.
- You will be contacted by email to collect the material.

If you are unable to fill out the alternative formatting request, please email disabilities@unsw.edu.au with the following information for each textbook or course reader you require to be formatted. Please ensure you include your name and student number in the email.

Textbooks

- Course code
- Course name
- Textbook name
- ISBN #
- Author
- Publisher
- Year
- Edition
- Date book required

Course readers / study kits

- Course code
- Course name
- Course reader name
- Chapters or sections required
- Dates of when chapters/sections are required

Quality of material to be formatted

- If electronic copies are not available, some course readers and books have to formatted manually by Disability
Services.

- Be aware this can take more than four weeks, depending on the size of the book.
- The software that is used to format printed material scans each page of the course reader, text book or publication.
- The quality of course readers and some books varies considerably. Marks on the page, including handwritten notes scribbled in the margins, poor photocopies, faded pages, etc prevent the software from scanning accurately and can make the scanned pages unusable.
- We will do our best to give you the best quality the formatting technology will allow.
- If we are unable to format any part of the course reader due to poor quality, Disability Services will notify you via email.
- **You may be required to go back to your academic and request that he or she provides you with legible material so that you can continue your studies.**
  - Once you have obtained a clear copy, bring it to Disability Services for formatting.
  - You will be notified when your material is ready for collection.
  - Please check all formatted material you have been sent or collected within 48 hours of receiving it to make sure you can access the information. If we do not hear from you within 48 hours, we will assume the material is accessible.
  - In the event you have problems with the formatted material, please email disabilities@unsw.edu.au immediately

Course material on Moodle

If you require material to be formatted that has been posted on Moodle by the academic, download the material and email it to disabilities@unsw.edu.au for formatting.

If you are unable to download the material, please notify us immediately. You must provide Disability Services with course code details of all the courses on Moodle which require formatting as soon as possible.

Please be aware, it is necessary for Disability Services to apply for access to Moodle for each course. This may result in a delay in forwarding material to you until access is set up.

Braille formatting

- Braille conversion is managed by an external agency.
  - If you require material to be formatted into Braille, contact us as soon as you have the relevant material.
  - You must discuss your Braille requirements with your Disability Adviser, as conversion to Braille can take many months to complete.
  - Please note Disability Services is unable to provide entire books in hard copy Braille.
  - Only materials which cannot be accessed electronically, are generally converted into Braille.

Support during Summer Semester

If you are planning on studying in Summer Semester and need support make sure you read about [Summer Semester support](https://student.unsw.edu.au/summer-semester-support).

Alternative formatting request form

To request alternative formatting, please complete the following form.

If you have difficulties filling in this form, send an email to disabilities@unsw.edu.au