Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy

March 2021 revised final version

Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy

Rationale

A key motivation of our community is that we believe all learners should be facilitated in reaching their academic potential. To this end The University of Glasgow is committed to ensuring that all students can equally participate in every aspect of the learning and teaching process by mainstreaming adjustments in teaching practice. We aim for our learning environment to be as inclusive as possible, so that individual interventions are the exception and not the rule.

Aim

The aim of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy is to meet the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and the UK Quality Code through the provision of accessible and inclusive learning, teaching and assessment materials and methods. This will provide support to students who must ensure they meet the learning outcomes of their courses, regardless of disability.

Scope

The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy applies to all provision and all members of the University community including;

- All students, including research, visiting, placement and distant learning students*.
- All members of staff holding a contract of employment, and staff from other institutions on placement at, or visiting the University.
- Individuals with honorary or affiliate status.
- All learning opportunities, credit-bearing and non-credit bearing, provided by the University.

The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy

1. The University community will endeavour, wherever possible, to ensure that all **teaching materials** are made available to students in advance.

   a. For reading lists: four weeks in advance of the start of the course, using the University Library's Reading Lists @ Glasgow facility (see appendices E & F).
   b. For teaching materials that support learning throughout the course: one working day in advance of the teaching event they relate to.
   c. For follow up or additional teaching material: within three working days after the last delivery of the teaching event.
   d. Teaching materials should be provided in an electronic format, where appropriate and possible. All electronic materials must be produced in line with the University's Digital Accessibility Guidance.

*The AILP applies to all teaching activities including online teaching to ensure the learning experience in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and reflecting the Scottish governmental advice on physical distancing (2m at time of drafting), the University has decided that most teaching in Semester 1, 2020, will be delivered remotely and this position may yet be extended into teaching in 2021.

2. The University community will attempt, wherever possible, to ensure that all **learning, teaching and assessment methods** are accessible to all students (for course/programme design guidelines and examples of accessible teaching material see appendices A & B)

Course and/or Programme Information documents and/or handbooks must include method of course delivery, assessment information, including assessment type, indicative marking criteria and prospective assessment dates, and should be available in electronic format.

    a. Course Conveners must recommend e-books when possible to be available alongside printed copies for all core texts.

    b. Where it is necessary to change assessment methods to ensure accessibility for individuals, Course, Programme or PGR Conveners should liaise with the Disability Service to explore possible adjustments. In exceptional cases, where non-standard arrangement may be indicated, Disability Service should approach the Clerk of Senate to discuss and seek permission for the changes or to arrange a case conference at the earliest opportunity.

3. Where it is not possible to comply with 1 and 2, there must be a justifiable pedagogic reason (for example relating to accreditation or national competency standards) or relates to an accreditation requirement or similar, that is justified to the School's Course Approval Committee, and is made clear to all students, in advance, through the course or programme handbook.

4. The University community will endeavour, wherever possible, to notify students in writing (e.g. Moodle, Microsoft Teams, email) of alterations to their timetable and accommodation that do not appear within My Campus to assist with planning.

5. Audio recording of lectures (online and face to face) will be permitted (as per the Lecture Recording policy).

6. The use of lapel or other portable microphones by staff is mandatory where the technology is available.

7. Complaints will be handled via the framework in place to deal with concerns or complaints raised by any member of staff or student (see Complaints Procedure).

8. Students are encouraged to raise any issues or concerns they may have with regards to digital accessibility (including computer hardware) with their course coordinators at the first instance.

Roles and Responsibilities

Responsibility for implementing the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy falls to (see Appendix D):

- Academic/Course Convenors
- Students
- The Disability Service
- Disability Coordinators
- Advisers of Studies
- The Disability Equality Champion
- The Equality and Diversity Unit
- The Learning Enhancement and Academic Development Service

Implementing the Policy

The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy must be implemented at the point of course design or redesign from the start of the academic session 2017-18. Academic staff are encouraged to review other existing provision and consider adjustments to comply with the Policy at the earliest opportunity.

Progress and feedback on implementation will be gathered via the Periodic Subject Review process and from Student Representative Council Disability Representatives to the Equality and Diversity Unit and the Disability Equality Group.

Review

The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy will be formally reviewed by the Disability Equality Group, and the Learning and Teaching Committee in three years' time (2023).

Relevant Documents

- Equality Act 2010

Links to other relevant policies and processes

Lecture Recording Policy

Accessible Events Policy

Absence Reporting or Good Cause Claim

Assessment Policy

Course and Programme Design Approval

Complaints Procedure

Digital Accessibility Guidance

Assessed Group Work Policy

Appendices

Appendix A. Course Design guidelines

In designing programmes and courses, academic staff members are expected to attend to good practice in creating accessible provision from the outset.

Course Convenors, prior to the commencement of the course, must ensure that they know which students on their course require adjustments. In addition to implementing these agreed adjustments, academics also have a duty of care to provide relevant information on these adjustments to those who need to know (for example teaching colleagues and GTAs) to support the student learning experience, whilst respecting confidentiality.

On occasion the adjustments may pose a challenge for the School and the academic staff member who is responsible. The Disability Coordinator is an effective source of support in the first instance, while advice on good practice in design can also be obtained from Academic and Digital Development. Complex or exceptional cases should include a discussion with both the Disability Service and Academic and Digital Development. Measures for adjustments to assessment methods of a course or programme should be discussed via a case conference with the Clerk of Senate.

The Senate Office provides policy, regulations and resources for programme and course design.

The Teachability materials provide a wealth of resources for the design of learning experiences, considering the impacts of these on disabled students.

This inclusive teaching toolkit from University College London is also a useful general resource.

JISC resources provided through TechDis are also a useful reference for the integration of technology into learning, teaching and assessment.

IT Services provides advice on Digital Accessibility.

Staff should be aware of the need to conduct an accessibility audit of their reading lists. This can be undertaken in conjunction with the University Library.

Appendix B. Examples of accessible teaching

Inclusive and accessible teaching materials

All electronic materials must now meet the requirement of [Digital Accessibility guidance](#).

Accessibility for learning experiences outside the classroom

Accessibility for learning experiences outside the classroom: Academic Schools will be aware of disabilities which have been disclosed by students through the course of their studies, and will take these into account when planning placements, visit and field courses. However, students should also be encouraged to disclose (in confidence) medical conditions which during the normal course of their studies would not present any inconvenience to themselves, peers or teachers, but in external environments may present a hazard that they may be taken into account in planning. If students chose not to disclose but undertake academic and other experiences outside the classroom during their University career they are expected to undertake a risk assessment by evaluating the potential risks to their own personal safety and health that may occur as a result of a projected activity.

Examples could include:
- Students who have undisclosed diabetes. Their condition may be well-controlled in the University environments, but problems may occur in areas that do not have sufficient refrigeration, or where local conditions may result in them having poor and/or intermittent nutrition.
- Students who have epilepsy.
- Students who have mental health issues. The additional stresses which can be brought about in external environments can exacerbate particular conditions such as anxiety or depression.
- Students who have asthma or other respiratory illnesses. Respiratory complaints may be aggravated in particular environments, and may require medical attention.

Appendix C. Examination arrangements

The Disability Service assesses the needs and agrees the appropriate support that is required for a disabled student for their exam diet or viva and this is then implemented by Registry and Schools. Registry, Schools and Disability Coordinators share the responsibility for making examination arrangements for disabled students.

The most common recommendations include additional time and/or organising the use of a scribes and/or readers. If a student requests irregular or unusual examination provisions, including for the PhD research viva, please tell the student to contact the Disability Service.

For any exam taking place on campus and where a student has been recommended the use of a computer there is a centralised facility in the University Library for students in this category. This computer cluster is the responsibility of IT Services and Registry organises the booking of places for this facility.

Invigilators for any on-campus exam are provided centrally, and the Disability Service is involved in their training. It is vitally important that all invigilators are made aware of approved examination adjustments for disabled students, whether in the main examination hall or in a separate room. Additional comments for invigilator awareness are included in the MyCampus Disability entry.

In cases of emergency, for example students becoming unwell or injured shortly before examinations and for whom reasonable adjustments need to be made, the Clerk of Senate has authority to recommend and approve such adjustments for the examination diet concerned. The Clerk of Senate may take this action whether or not the student is registered with the Disability Service. It is important that all cases are referred to, and adjustments determined by, the Clerk of Senate. If the effects of the temporary disability continue, the student should be referred to the Disability Service for a needs assessment and normal procedures followed to establish continuing adjustments.

Appendix D. Clarification of the responsibilities of individuals that will implement the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

Academic Programme Convenors

Academic Programme Convenors are responsible for reviewing the curriculum of their programmes and identifying appropriate inclusive approaches. There is an expectation that academic programme conveners will give due consideration to students with disabilities. Where there are educational experiences outwith traditional lectures and seminars, reasonable adjustments should be made on a case by case basis in consultation with the student wherever possible.

School Course Approval Committees (or Director of Learning and Teaching)

School Course Approval Committees (or Directors of Learning and Teaching) are responsible for reviewing courses and programmes submitted for approval for inclusive approaches.

Students

All students who wish to access support have a responsibility to inform the University Disability Service, as soon as possible, of disabilities or medical conditions so that support can be provided. Students may provide feedback via the Disability Advisor and/or the Course or Disability Coordinator.

The Disability Service

The Disability Service is responsible for providing advice to students and staff on disability related matters. They will provide an individual needs assessment report for those who are eligible for Disabled Students' Allowance. Additionally, they will engage with and receive consent from students to create, store and/or communicate information on student disability and support needs to all relevant parties. The Disability team will approve the Disability Entry on My Campus, which is stored under health information. After approval, an email alert is sent to the student, the student's Adviser of Studies or supervisor(s), Registry, the Library, Residential Services (when appropriate) and the relevant Disability Coordinator for the School or College. The Disability Coordinator is responsible for forwarding the information on a 'need-to-know' basis to tutors and course coordinators. Confidential information in medical letters or educational psychologist reports is never divulged to academic Schools and Colleges.

Disability Coordinators

The Disability Coordinators are School-based academic staff with responsibility for ensuring relevant academic and administrative staff are aware of students' disability provisions and responsible for coordinating School-based support.

The Disability Equality Champion

The Disability Equality Champion is responsible for reviewing compliance with this policy and making recommendations to the Disability Equality Group for amendments to policy and practice.

The Equality and Diversity Unit

The Unit is responsible for promoting best practice in equality and diversity and embedding all aspects of equality and diversity within the University community.

Academic and Digital Development

Academic and Digital Development can provide advice on course design guidelines and direct people to guidelines for developing accessible teaching materials.

IT Services

To enable Echo360 recordings on-campus and ensure lapel microphones are available and reliable for staff to use in teaching delivery rooms wherever possible.

Space Management and Timetabling Team

Support staff to schedule (or reschedule) events into accessible locations as required for on-campus teaching.

Library

Responsible for identifying and providing links to e-Book alternatives to reading materials suggested by staff (see appendix E).

Links to other support services
[Counselling and Psychological Services](#)

Appendix E: The Reading Lists @ Glasgow service and procurement of material for reading lists

Reading Lists @ Glasgow is the University's online reading list service. Using a cloud-based system, Talis Aspire, the service ensures required teaching resources are accessible and available to students.

The Reading Lists @ Glasgow team liaise closely with academic staff to ensure timely sourcing of material and is happy to consult further to support the delivery of the Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy.

Main features of the service include:

- Academics can create, manage and update course lists online, or get the support of the Reading Lists @ Glasgow team to create lists on their behalf.

- Online reading lists can be added as resources to Course Moodles.

- The online system is accessible 24/7 and can be accessed on mobile devices. It meets Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (WCAG) at Level AA and is compatible with screen readers.

- Online lists provide easy access to electronic resources as well as information, live availability and location of physical stock in the Library.

- Reading importance levels can be set for texts to eliminate doubt amongst students as to which texts are essential and which are optional. See Appendix F for more information on reading lists expectations and terminology.

- E-books, when available for institutional purchase, are purchased in line with the Library's Course Materials Collection Policy. It should be noted that institutional e-book purchase is not always possible due to licensing reasons, e.g. some core textbooks are only licensed on an individual basis. Essential chapters can be highlighted and academics can request digitisation of book chapters (subject to copyright licensing restrictions) using the Note to Library field or by email.

- The Request Review feature within the system ensures adequate copies of texts are purchased (following the Course Materials Collection Policy) and assists in allocating material to the High Demand Collection.

- Published lists can be viewed by all via the Web or accessible only to University of Glasgow staff and students via GUID.

- Online reading lists can be set with Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 Licences (CC-BY).

To support academics the Reading Lists @ Glasgow team can offer training on online list creation. If academics opt for the Reading Lists @ Glasgow team to create the online list on their behalf it is recommended that lists be sent to the team at least 6 weeks before the course materials are required for teaching. This would allow time for the addition of lists and the procurement of any course materials not already in stock. More information about the service is also available on the website.

Support for developing reading lists
College Librarians can advise on the wide range of electronic, physical and multimedia resources available for students when developing and creating reading lists.

Support service for students' course materials requirements under the Equality Act (2010)

The Business Relationship Management team (Information Services) work with Student Disability Services to support disabled students when using the Library. For print disabled readers, publishers are contacted to obtain, where possible, an electronic file for any essential texts where the Library does not have an accessible electronic copy. Texts can be then transposed into a suitably accessible alternative format for the student.

Reading list: reading expectations and terminology

Standard terminology on reading lists is useful to eliminate doubt amongst students as to which texts are essential and which are optional. As students move into postgraduate study there may be more emphasis on autonomous learning. Thus, students may be encouraged to supplement essential reading, by finding their own materials. The following is a guide to best practice, to build on the standard set for undergraduate courses.

- Where reading materials are essential, including those suggested for purchase, the standard language used in the undergraduate space should be used to avoid confusion.
- Students should be given written and oral guides at the start of each course to help them make a decision about how much reading they should do, to help them navigate lists of optional materials.
- Students should be informed whether they should be using the optional materials to supplement their learning each week, or whether these materials are listed as an aid if the student chooses to complete an assignment on that topic.
- Students on post-graduate taught and research courses may be encouraged to identify optional reading of their own where it meets the learning and teaching outcomes but relates more to their particular field of interest. Guidance should be provided in writing at the start of each course.

To help guide students, the online reading list system (Reading Lists @ Glasgow service) has a menu of standard terms – importance levels.

Online reading lists importance levels and related services

The online reading list service, Reading Lists @ Glasgow, allows academics to select an Importance level for each item on a list (or leave blank). These importance levels are then used by the Library to make course materials available. The importance levels are

- Suggested for Student Purchase
- Essential
- Recommended
- Further

The Reading Lists @ Glasgow service manages these importance levels in the following ways:

- *Suggested for Student Purchase* and *Essential*: used by Library staff to influence purchasing procedures for courses and to move copies of key print monographs to the High Demand Collection in the Library.
- *Recommended* monographs: single copies are purchased for the Library, if not already in-stock.
- *Further* monographs: single copies are purchased for the Library, if not already in-stock.

Note: If the importance level is left *blank*, it is treated as a Recommended item.