INCLUSIVE LEARNING POLICY

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Summary:

This Policy sets the baseline expectations incumbent on all programmes, and those supporting student learning, in order to ensure that the University sustains a culture of inclusive learning.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This list summarises the changes since 2016/17. The date confirms when the changes were implemented.

Implementation date	Changes Approved by Senate
February 2020	Inclusion of references to the University Strategic Vision (section 1) Clarification about requesting typed feedback if not provided as standard (section 3.1)
May 2024	Change of name to Inclusive Learning Policy Removal of outdated information relevant to previous strategies and insertion of mention of APP (section 1). Updating of reference to 'mainstreaming' to inclusive practice (sections 2 and 3). Insertion of new requirements for Canvas Programme Homepage courses (section 3.1) Insertion of new requirements for information about lectures and preparatory work (section 3.2) Insertion of new content about digital accessibility (section 3.3) Updating of content about recording of teaching to align with Recording of Teaching policy (section 3.4) Insertion of reference to video feedback (section 3.5) Updating of requirement for EC information (section 3.5) Updating of responsibilities for timetabling (section 3.6) Updating of Library responsibilities (section 3.7)

1.   Introduction

At the University of Winchester, we aim to create an environment that is accessible to anyone who has the ability to succeed with hard work and effort. We want all our students to benefit from the widest possible range of opportunities that higher education offers and are committed to providing the support required at each stage of the university journey.

The University is mindful of its obligations under the Equality Act (2010), to make reasonable adjustments and take positive, proactive steps to ensure that disabled students can participate fully in the student experience. This policy is also informed by the Office for Students (OfS) B conditions which state that that 'each cohort of students registered on each higher education course receives resources and support which are sufficient for the purpose of ensuring a high-quality academic experience for those students' (B2). It should be read in conjunction with our [Access and Participation plan](#).

This Policy shall normally be applied to all programmes unless there are statutory reasons not to do so. Such a reason must be clear to applicants via the prospectus and other course information and to students in the Programme Homepage Course, or Canvas Module Handbook. For example, in some subjects it may not be possible to put certain materials online or allow certain teaching sessions to be recorded because they contain confidential or sensitive information (e.g. information relating to clients in Social Work).

2.   Definitions

'Inclusive Practice' is understood to mean the systematic consideration of the effects of learning, teaching and assessment with regards to accessibility and inclusivity. This includes incorporating specific adjustments universally to benefit all students. Inclusive Practice is most effectively carried out at the design, implementation and review stage of a programme. It is an anticipatory way of teaching in a manner inclusive of all students.

'Adjustments' are understood as the types of academic support or accommodations recommended to the programme team by the Disability Team in Student Support and Success. It is a reactive form of response to particular student's learning disabilities.

3.   University expectations

Programmes and those who support student learning shall consider the following when designing, delivering and evaluating their provision (the following applies to all students, in spirit with this policy's emphasis on inclusive practice):

3.1 Programme information

a) Each programme should maintain a Programme Homepage course, using the University's approved Canvas template.

b) The Programme Homepage course should be reviewed each year, to ensure that students have access to up to date and accurate information about:
- the programme team,
- assessment guidelines,
- degree structure.
- learning outcomes and key reading lists for all their modules.

c) Key reading and resource lists should usually be made available to students no later than 2 weeks before the first teaching week of the programme. Where possible, reading lists should indicate priority and/or relevance.

d) Access to information about learning outcomes and reading lists can be provided via a link to the catalogue of module descriptors. Programme Leaders should ensure that new students are aware of this link as part of a welcome announcement.

e) Programme Homepages and the welcome announcement from the programme leader should be published on Canvas no later than 2 weeks before the first teaching week of the programme.

3.2 Curriculum content

a) Lecture outlines, learning resources and information about preparatory work that students are expected to undertake should be provided on Canvas for each week of study.

b) Consideration should be given to the organisation of this material, which should positively promote accessibility and engagement and should align with the University's approved approach to the presentation of curriculum content on Canvas.

c) Students should expect to have core information and resources that are essential for preparation for each week of study one week in advance (these may include an overview of topics/ content covered and any preparatory reading or activities).

d) Resources that support teaching (handouts, slide-decks etc.) should normally be available at least 24 hours in advance of the session. Following provision to students, presentation slides may undergo minor updates, e.g., the addition of answers to class questions but the general content outline should be preserved as much as possible.

3.3 Learning and teaching materials

a) All learning and teaching materials, including those indicated on programme reading lists, should be available in an accessible, digital format. Advice should be sought from library colleagues where necessary, for example where there are pedagogical reasons for using materials that are not available in suitable digital format.

Creating accessible digital materials to support learning includes, but is not limited to, consideration of access through screen readers, the appearance of text and images, captions or transcripts where appropriate, and including a statement which tells students how to request the information in an alternative format should they require it.

b) Staff should also visit Developing and Enhancing Learning, Teaching and Assessment (DELTA) canvas pages for more information about creating accessible learning and teaching materials, and request further training if required.

c) Students are entitled to request any digital resources created by the tutor or the University to be provided in an alternative digital format, if required due to disability. Tutors are obliged to respond to all reasonable requests of this sort and any refusal must be justified. Where a request for alternative format cannot be met, tutors should attempt to agree a different remedy with the student.

d) Students who are concerned about wider accessibility issues in Canvas are encouraged to email accesscanvas@winchester.ac.uk and can find out more information about accessibility issues and tools in the Canvas Accessibility statement.

3.4 Recording of teaching and learning activity

By staff

a) The University requires timetabled teaching activities to be recorded in line with its Recording of Teaching policy.

b) Students will be able to access transcripts of these recordings and may view automatically generated closed captions to make the content more accessible.

c) These recordings are intended to support the consolidation of learning and revision. As such, they only capture the teacher's presentation and students should not expect wider activities or interactions to be recorded.

d) Nevertheless, where the quality of the transcript or the closed captions create specific accessibility issues, students should seek support from their programme leader.

e) Students shall be permitted to audio record tutor-led lecture sessions and individual supervision sessions using their own equipment for their own personal learning.

f) The use of such recording must be in accordance with the guidance set out in the University's Recording of Teaching Policy.

By students

a) Where the teaching session is led by students or includes presentations by students, agreement from student contributors should be sought. Where a student has a Learning Agreement in place that outlines the need for a recording, agreement is not a requirement, but other students must be informed.

b) There may be exceptional circumstances in which the recording of a portion of a teaching session is not appropriate, e.g. where a portion involves children or vulnerable adults or where client confidentiality is an issue.

3.5 Assessment

a) The bunching of assessment deadlines shall be avoided where possible.

b) Feedback on summative assessments shall be provided in a typed, audio or video format. Where feedback is not provided in typed format (as standard or in addition to audio/video feedback), students should be provided with clear instructions about how to request this, before and at the point of submission. Clear communication to all students about the Exceptional Circumstances Policy shall be available on the Programme Homepage Course on Canvas and as a link in module assessment briefs.

3.6 (Re)Validation Panels:

At the point of (re)validation attention shall be drawn to equality issues and appropriate anticipatory adjustments shall be captured in the documentation. The extent to which programme teams have considered inclusive approaches to their learning, teaching and assessment strategy shall also be assured.

3.7 Knowledge and Digital Services:

a) In conjunction with programmes, KDS shall clearly publicise help and support to students concerning IT and Library matters.

b) KDS has an e-only policy and endeavours to make essential texts digitally available to all students. In the event this is not possible, a printed copy will be made available.

c) Where possible, computers for student use (including those used for exams) shall have assistive technology installed as standard.

3.8 Estates and Facilities Services (Timetabling)

a) Shall respond to accessibility issues for students and staff as an acceptable reason for post-publication timetabling changes.

b) Once the semester has started, shall ensure that when changes to teaching rooms are made with less than 14 days' notice programme teams are emailed with notification of changes.