



Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy

Purpose of Policy

The Policy seeks to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching for all students by mainstreaming a small number of adjustments. "Adjustments" in this context describes types of academic support which are recommended for disabled students by the Student Disability Service. See full purpose below.

Overview

The policy outlines an approach to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching for all students.

Scope: Mandatory Policy

The policy applies to all students of the University and all staff who teach and support students. See full scope below.

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Document control

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Approving authority	Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)				
Consultation undertaken	The proposal was developed from work of a Task Group of the Quality Assurance Committee, at the request of LTC. The Student Disability Service, Edinburgh University Students' Association and the Assistant Principal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance led the consultation. A scoping exercise established current internal and external practice.				
Section responsible for policy maintenance & review	Student Disability Service				
Related policies, procedures, guidelines & regulations	Guidance: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/institute-academic-development/learning-teaching/inclusive/mainstreaming				
UK Quality Code	UK Quality Code Chapters B1 and B4				
Policies superseded by this policy	The Policy was reviewed in May 2016 (no changes were made)				
Alternative format	If you require this document in an alternative format please email Academic.Services@ed.ac.uk or telephone 0131 650 2138.				
Keywords	Accessible learning, inclusive, audio recording, recording lectures, equality, disability.				



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Full Purpose of Policy

The University aims to help students maximise their academic potential and get the most benefit from their programme of study and university experience. In line with our strategic goal of excellence in learning and teaching, we seek to enhance the student experience by creating a learning and teaching environment, and culture, that is dynamic, accessible and inclusive.

The Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy seeks to increase the accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching for all students by mainstreaming a small number of adjustments.

“Adjustments” in this context describes types of academic support which are recommended for disabled students by the Student Disability Service. The duty to make reasonable adjustments requires education providers to take positive steps to ensure that disabled students can fully participate in the education and enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services which education providers provide for students.

The University of Edinburgh intends that all of our students should have equal access to their course of study.

“Mainstreaming” in this context means the systematic consideration of the effects of teaching, learning and assessment practice and policy at the point of planning, implementation and evaluation to ensure that teaching and learning is inclusive of and accessible to all students.

Full Scope of Policy

The policy applies to all students of the University and all staff who teach and support students. Unless there is a justified pedagogic reason for not doing so, the policy applies to all courses. A justified pedagogic reason must be made clear to students in advance in the course handbook. For example, for some subjects it may not be possible to put some material on the Virtual learning Environment (VLE) because it is confidential or sensitive (i.e. information relating to patients in medicine). In other subjects it may be necessary that students prioritise reading lists for themselves – in such cases this should be reflected and clearly stated in the learning outcomes of the course and should be assessed, otherwise it is not justified.

1. Course outlines and reading lists shall be made available at least 4 weeks before the start of the course.

- 1.1 This means providing an outline of the course in terms of the indicative content, nature of assessments and indicative reading.
- 1.2 Reading lists at this stage may focus on the core texts only (where they are used). Additional reading may be provided nearer to the start date of the course (see following point).
- 1.3 The provision of this information will facilitate course choices, where available, and provide students with an early opportunity to engage with the course requirements and familiarise themselves with the reading.
- 1.4 This information is likely to be communicated in course handbooks or on the appropriate VLE. It should be stressed that this is an outline and further course details will be provided at the start of the course in the course handbook or equivalent or on the VLE.

2. Reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.

- 2.1 The key purpose is so that students can prioritise their own reading.
- 2.2 Where reading lists are provided to students these should clearly indicate to students those readings that are considered to be key to the course or particularly relevant to a session or theme within the course. It is not necessary for the whole reading list to be ordered. Neither is it



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expected that students should read only from the reading list provided; they will be expected, through their own research, to identify further readings.

- 2.3 In some subjects, the compilation of a reading list may be central to the assessment task. Where this is the case it shall be signalled clearly to students as there may not be a set reading list provided.

3. Lecture outlines or PowerPoint presentation slides for lectures/seminars shall be made available to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.

- 3.1 The key purpose is to inform students of what they will be taught so that they can prepare in advance in their own time.
- 3.2 Where Powerpoint (or similar) presentation slides are used as the basis for the lecture/class, these shall be made available to students 24 hours in advance of the class, preferably on the appropriate VLE, for all students to access as required.
- 3.3 Where a VLE is not used, students must be informed of how to access the materials. Teaching staff will not be expected to produce Powerpoint slides if these are not normally used. In other cases an outline of the lecture will be required. This may take the form of a bullet-pointed list of the key themes/content of the lecture/class: it is not required that detailed notes are provided.
- 3.4 Judgement will need to be exercised in such cases where confidential or 'spoiler' information is contained within materials so as not to compromise confidentiality or impinge on the pedagogical experience. In such cases students should be informed of the presence of such information and may only be provided with partial PowerPoint slides in advance of the class; the full materials to be made available following the class.

4. Key technical words and/or formulae shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the class.

- 4.1 The key purpose is to ensure that students fully understand the terms/formulae in use in the class and to facilitate their participation.
- 4.2 Where technical words/terms and/or formulae are used in class, these should be made available at least 24 hours in advance of the class that they are being used in, preferably on the appropriate Virtual learning Environment (VLE).
- 4.3 Where the VLE is not used, students must be informed of how to access the materials. In many cases technical words/formulae are likely to be embedded in the lecture/class presentation and are likely to be covered by the provision of lecture outlines/PowerPoint slides (see point 3 above). In other cases it may be necessary to produce a supplementary hand-out for students.
- 4.4 The use of technical words/terms and/or formulae will not affect all subjects and judgement needs to be exercised.

5. Students shall be notified by email of changes to arrangements/ announcements such as changes to courses/room changes/cancellations.

- 5.1 The key purpose is to ensure students do not miss important information and have sufficient time to respond to changes.
- 5.2 Students should be notified of changes to courses/classes as soon as possible.
- 5.3 The official form of communication is the University email system and should be the primary method of communication. This may be supplemented by other forms of communication (such as plasma screens, lecture announcements etc.) as available and appropriate.

6. Students shall be permitted to audio record lectures, tutorials and supervision sessions using their own equipment for their own personal learning.



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- 6.1 The recording is only used by the individual student for the purposes of personal study (it shall be a disciplinary offence to use the material for any other purpose, or to distribute the material).
 - 6.2 Video recording shall not be permitted without the explicit permission of the member of staff involved.
 - 6.3 All Intellectual Property Rights in the recording remain with the University and the lecturer.
 - 6.4 The recording is done in an unobtrusive manner by the student using their own equipment.
 - 6.5 The recording is destroyed once its purpose has been met (this will always be before the student leaves the University and shall normally be by the end of the exam diet to which the course relates).
 - 6.6 Teaching staff have the right to insist that recording stops in certain circumstances (for example to protect confidentiality where sensitive or personal information is being discussed).
 - 6.7 Students agree to these terms and conditions as part of the contract between the University and its students and assent to it on matriculation.
- 7. All teaching staff shall ensure that microphones are worn and used in all lectures regardless of the perceived need to wear them.**
- 7.1 Where radio microphones are made available in teaching rooms these must be worn and used by all teaching staff regardless of the perceived need to wear them. Table-top microphones are not always sufficient on their own, particularly when lecturers walk around whilst talking. The benefit of amplified sound reduces the effort involved in concentrating in the class for all students, not only students with a hearing impairment, and improves attention.
 - 7.2 Maintenance of the microphones is the responsibility of the Learning and Teaching Spaces Technology Section.

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* This Policy may be reviewed earlier than 2018-19 if issues are raised by the University's 2016 Review of Disability Support.