

Title: Policy on Inclusive Teaching and Learning Materials

Contents

Title: Policy on Inclusive Teaching and Learning Materials 1

1. Introduction 2

2. Intended learning outcomes and competency standards 2

3. The Policy 3

3.4. Documents 3

3.5. Electronic materials 3

3.6. Powerpoint presentations 3

3.7. Recording lectures 3

3.8. Reading lists 4

3.9. Marking the work of disabled students 4

4. Sources of support & further guidance 4

 4.1. Documents 4

 See also: 5

 Creating Accessible documents in word 5

 Creating Accessible PDF Documents 5

4.2. Powerpoint presentations 5

4.3. Reading lists 5

 Delivering Accessible Digital Learning 6

 RNIB Guidance 6

 HEA Asperger Guidance 6

5. Useful Tools 6

 Outline view 6

 Table of contents 6

 Navigation pane 6

 Text-to-speech (TTS) 6

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to standardise practice across the University in terms of the anticipation, identification and promotion of good practice in the preparation and presentation of teaching materials for the general benefit of all students, but particularly for the support of disabled students by mainstreaming a small number of adjustments. In this context, 'adjustments' refers to types of academic support that are typically and frequently recommended by the Disability Support Office (DSO). An agreed minimum level of provision will minimise the adjustments required for individual students, easing any additional work needed by academic staff and others involved in organising support for disabled students.
- 1.2. The general principles of the policy are aimed at removing barriers for disabled students to access teaching and learning materials and improving access for all. These aspirations are in line with our duty to make reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010. This duty requires education providers to take positive steps to ensure that disabled people can fully participate in their education and enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services which education providers provide for their students.

2. Intended learning outcomes and competency standards

- 2.1. Under the Equality Act, the university is not required to make reasonable adjustments to intended learning outcomes or professional competency standards. It is therefore important that any intended learning outcomes, including professional or other competency standards are fully understood and transparent. These intended learning outcomes and / or professional standards themselves need to be justified under the provisions of the Equality Act and we may need to make adjustments to how these intended learning outcomes or professional competency standards are met.
- 2.2. Intended learning outcomes must be explicitly stated in course handbooks.
- 2.3. There are guidelines produced by professional bodies and organisations which serve to protect the general public. Programme directors need to be guided by the competencies required by particular professional groups (e.g., nurses, doctors, teachers, psychologists etc.). Under these circumstances an adjustment would not be made if it meant that the student could not competently act within their field without the adjustment. However, it should be remembered that students may demonstrate that they meet competency standards in different ways. The Disability Support Office can advise staff with respect to competency standards and reasonable adjustments.
- 2.4. Equally, an intended learning outcome could be considered to be a competency standard under the Equality Act. The Disability Support Office can provide further advice and guidance.

3. The Policy

3.1. This policy applies to all teaching and learning materials produced in the University. The policy applies to all students of the University and to all staff who teach and support students.

3.2. Unless there is a justified pedagogic reason for not doing so, the policy applies to all courses. Such justified pedagogic reasons should be agreed with the DSO and must be made clear to students in advance in the course handbook. This may include confidential or sensitive information. However, if this is not clearly stated in the course handbook it is not justified. The DSO can give advice as required.

3.3. The guidance in section 4 should be followed and applied.

3.4. Documents

- All documents should be produced in order to make them accessible to people using a screen reader. See further guidance below.
- All documents should be produced to enable them to be accessible to people with average vision. A sans serif font, minimum size 12pt should be used.

3.5. Electronic materials

- Any video materials should contain subtitles or alternatively a suitable transcript of the content should be available for deaf or hard of hearing students.
- Any video materials should have descriptive voice-over options for blind or visually impaired students
- File sizes should be made as small as possible.
-

3.6. Powerpoint presentations

- University templates¹ should be used in all cases.
- See further guidance below (Section 4).

3.7. Recording lectures

- Lecturers should facilitate the use of the Lecture Capture technology².
- Video recording is not permitted without the explicit consent of the member of staff involved, and upon recommendation as a reasonable adjustment from the DSO.
- All teaching staff must ensure that microphones are turned on, worn and used in all lectures when they are available, regardless of the perceived need to use them.

¹ <http://www.tlso.manchester.ac.uk/templates-teaching/>

² Any lecture held in a room with lecture capture facilities will be recorded and made available to individual students for their own use. The University Lecture Capture Policy applies to disabled students, and the right of a student who is fully registered with the DSO (i.e., they have provided complete acceptable evidence of their disability) overrides the opt-out option. Students are reminded that disciplinary action may be taken against them for improper use of these recordings.

3.8. Reading lists

- All Unit Coordinators should provide **course outlines** and **reading lists** with book details, chapters and relevant page numbers indicated **at least 4 weeks** before the start of the unit.
- All Unit Coordinators should provide an electronic equivalent where possible – these can often be obtained from publishers.
- See further guidance below (Section 4).

3.9. Marking the work of disabled students

- Allowances should **NOT** be made for spelling and grammatical errors on assessed work other than when a special sticker, provided to the student by DSO, is affixed to it. For online exams, an electronic marker is provided and this identifies the need for the same marking considerations.
- Any reasonable adjustments recommended by the DSO should also be applied to in-class assessments. Staff will be notified separately of students with support needs additional to those outlined in this standard practice.

4. Sources of support & further guidance

4.1. Documents

- All document structures should be kept simple.
Screen readers (used by blind or visually impaired people) work best with well-structured documents. They read across a page from left to right.
- University templates³ should be used in all cases, and staff should familiarise themselves with how to produce correctly formatted documents – see the Techdis guide⁴ for producing accessible Word documents. *As an example to colleagues, this policy document has been produced using these accessibility recommendations.*
- Text should be left aligned. There should be enough white space to break up the text. This can be done by adjusting line and paragraph spacing settings.
- Use bullets and numbering.
- All pages should be numbered.
- Use the built-in header styles in Word – this then enables users to use the navigation pane to move around the document.
- Use a sans serif font such as, Arial, Verdana or Calibri *etc.*
- Use a minimum **size 12 point font** – the font should be large enough to be read easily by most people.
- Write in Plain English, avoiding jargon except for technical words.
- Make use of diagrams, flow charts, screen-shots, summary boxes and callouts to provide additional **visual explanation**. Consistently used pictograms can draw attention to important procedures or hazards.
- When using tables the header row should be specified and repeated across different pages.

³ <http://www.tlso.manchester.ac.uk/templates-teaching/>

⁴ <http://www.jisctechdis.ac.uk/assets/Documents/resources/AccessibleDocsGuideWord10.pdf>

- Add meaningful 'alt-text'⁵ to tables for visually impaired students
- Images should be used in such a way as to not obscure text.
- There should be sufficient contrast between the text and the background.
- Where possible use non-glossy paper, off-white is preferred.
- Use hyperlinks so that readers can easily move to information in the same document, a different document or a web page.
- The easiest way to create a PDF is to create it from an accessible Word document or Powerpoint presentation

See also:

Creating Accessible documents in word

http://www.jisctechdis.ac.uk/techdis/multlinkres/detail/main_site/AccessibleDocsGuideWord10

Creating Accessible PDF Documents

<http://www.jisctechdis.ac.uk/techdis/resources/pdfs>

4.2. Powerpoint presentations

- University templates⁶ should be used in all cases.
- The layout should be simple and clear.
- The notes field should be used to expand on important points, or to describe tables and diagrams. This will make the presentation more accessible for a visually impaired person reviewing it later.
- The presentation should be checked and modified as necessary using the [accessibility checker](#).⁷
- ALT-Text and captions should always be used for any images.
- Images must not overlap or interfere with text.
- Any video materials should contain subtitles or alternatively a suitable transcript of the content should be available for deaf or hard of hearing students.
- Any video materials should have descriptive voice-over options for blind or visually impaired students.
- Be careful about the use of animation, and keep it simple.

4.3. Reading lists

- All Unit Coordinators should provide **course outlines** and **reading lists** with book details, chapters and relevant page numbers indicated **at least 4 weeks** before the start of the unit.
- All Unit Coordinators should provide an electronic equivalent where possible – these can often be obtained from publishers. Where lecturers cannot provide an electronic copy of key texts, then reading lists should be provided to the library **THREE MONTHS IN ADVANCE** of the beginning of the unit. This is to allow time

⁵ Alt-text (or alt tags) is used to help people using a screen reader to understand the content of images and other non-text content in a document.

⁶ <http://www.tlso.manchester.ac.uk/templates-teaching/>

⁷ Available in Microsoft word 2010 onwards – with the mouse click on File tab, Info, Prepare for sharing.

for University support services to identify or produce electronic versions of texts for blind or visually impaired students.

- Reading lists should indicate priority and / or relevance so that students can prioritise their own reading.
- Reading lists should clearly indicate sections that are considered to be key to the course or session or themes within a course. It is not expected that students should be limited to the texts on a reading list – instead they will be expected to identify further readings through their own research.

Further information:

Delivering Accessible Digital Learning

<http://www.jisctechdis.ac.uk/techdis/resources/accessiblecontent>

RNIB Guidance

http://www.rnib.org.uk/professionals/accessibleinformation/text/Pages/clear_print.aspx

HEA Asperger Guidance

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/physsci/home/pedagogicthemes/accessibility/aspergerssyndrome>

5. Useful Tools

Outline view

This provides an outline of your document or presentation. It is available in the view tab in Word and in Powerpoint.

Table of contents

If your document is correctly formatted, then a Table of Contents can be easily produced from the References Tab in Word.

Navigation pane

The Navigation View (from the View Tab in Word) allows a reader to navigate quickly from section to section in your document. This pre-supposes that the document has been correctly formatted using the Styles available in Word.

Text-to-speech (TTS)

This is included with Word 2010 (PC). The simplest way to use this is to add the TTS icon to the Quick Access Toolbar. To do this, go to the File Menu, and select OPTIONS. Click on QUICK ACCESS TOOLBAR in the left hand pane. Change the drop down menu labelled 'Choose Commands From' to see the full range of options by selecting 'Commands not in the ribbon'. The scroll down to select the 'SPEAK' command. Click the add button in the middle to move it to the box on the right of the screen (this box lists the commands that are currently available in the Quick Access Toolbar). This adds the SPEAK icon to the toolbar. Selecting text, and then clicking the SPEAK icon will enable you to listen to the text being read aloud.

On a Mac – the easiest way to use TTS is to use the built in OSX accessibility features in system preferences and enable ‘Voiceover’. The toggle command to turn this on or off is cmd ⌘-F5.

Document control box	
Policy / Procedure title:	Policy on Inclusive Teaching and Learning Materials
Date approved:	TBC
Approving body:	TLG/Senate
Implementation date:	TBC
Version:	0.2
Supersedes:	N/A
Previous review dates:	N/A
Next review date:	tbc
Related Statutes, Ordinances, General Regulations / Policies	N/A
Related Procedures and Guidance:	N/A
Policy owner:	Elaine Shillcock, Head of Disability Support
Lead contact:	Elaine Shillcock, Head of Disability Support

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