



Inclusive Access to Education Policy

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In developing this policy the University had regard to the provisions of section 40B(1)(b) of the Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT).

PURPOSE:

The Inclusive Access to Education Policy at the University of Canberra (**University**) ensures that all students, including those with disabilities, injuries, illnesses, or caring responsibilities for a person with a disability, have equitable access to educational opportunities and can participate in university life on the same basis as other students who do not have a disability. This policy sets out the University's commitment to inclusivity and equity, and provides a framework for how the University will support and accommodate students with disabilities, in compliance with applicable laws.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to current and prospective students of the University with a temporary, fluctuating or permanent disability, or any current or prospective students who have caring responsibilities for a person with a disability.

PRINCIPLE:

1. The University will:
 - a. provide current and future students with a disability the opportunity to realise their potential for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development through full participation in University life.
 - b. facilitate an environment of dignity, respect and equal opportunity for people with a disability to ensure that they are able to access, participate and enjoy the benefits of work and education and otherwise participate fully in University life by:
 - i. educating staff and students on the requirements and rights of people with a disability;
 - ii. assisting staff to develop informed and innovative teaching practices such as universal design principles and flexible assessment options;
 - iii. prohibiting harassment, discrimination or bullying by any member of the University

- community, including contractors and visitors, against another on the basis of disability;
and
 - iv. promoting access to employment and education for people with a disability, maintaining consistency with the merit principle.
 - c. ensure that as far as possible, students, including future students with a disability are able to:
 - i. seek admission to the University on the same basis as future students without a disability and without experiencing discrimination;
 - ii. live in student accommodation on the same basis as students without a disability and without experiencing discrimination;
 - iii. participate in courses or programs provided by the University and use the facilities and services provided by the University on the same basis as a student without a disability;
 - iv. participate in learning experiences on the same basis as a student without a disability who is also enrolled in the same course or program as the student with a disability; and
 - v. access and use support services used by the students of the University on the same basis as a student without a disability, and without experiencing discrimination. The University will provide specialised support services to students with a disability so that they may negotiate reasonable adjustments for their studies.
 - d. embed in the design of products, tasks, activities and environments the capacity to cater for a diversity of users, including people with disability.
 - e. recognise and respect the right to confidentiality of information related to a person's disability whilst balancing the safety of the University Community in accordance with the UC Privacy Policy.
 - f. promote and implement procedures for making reasonable adjustments for students with disability to ensure that students with disability have access to and participate in the academic, occupational and social activities of the University.
 - g. maintain the essential academic, accreditation and inherent requirements of its programs and courses.
2. Students, including prospective students, will:
- a. prior to applying for admission or readmission to a course or program of study, familiarise themselves with:
 - i. the inherent requirements of their chosen course;
 - ii. the learning outcomes of their course of study; and
 - iii. the eligibility criteria for registration with professional registration boards as relevant.
 - b. if pursuing reasonable adjustments for their study, follow the processes set out in the Student Reasonable Adjustment Procedure;
3. The University may collect, use and disclose personal information relating to a person's disability. All information will be managed according to the University's Privacy Policy and will be limited to the minimum information necessary and relevant to enable the University to fulfill the following purposes:
- a. to substantiate eligibility for services;
 - b. to make reasonable adjustments for the person to enable them to participate in relevant academic and occupational activities;
 - c. for statistical record-keeping for purposes of accountability and monitoring;
 - d. to provide information to funding agencies or government bodies; and/or
 - e. to monitor or evaluate policies and programs.

4. Laws affecting the rights and responsibilities of students and the university include some exemptions, and the university is not required to provide adjustments which would alter the inherent requirements of the course or unit of study, affect the integrity of a course, or impose unjustifiable hardship on the university.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Who	Responsibilities
University community	The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the entire University community, including all staff, students, contractors and visitors of the University.
InclusionUC	Provide specialised disability services for students including the administration of Reasonable Adjustments.
Faculties, unit conveners and HDR supervisors.	Implement Reasonable Adjustments as set out in individual student reasonable adjustment plans. Consult with students with disability, InclusionUC and Learning & Teaching to ensure equitable participation.
Learning & Teaching	Supporting faculties to embed teaching practices and assessment tasks that align with principles of universal design
Managers and Supervisors (within their scope of authority)	Ensure workplace and study environments are inclusive and free of disability discrimination and harassment. Implement this policy in all aspects of their area's activities.

LEGISLATION:

1. This policy is governed by and made pursuant to the *University of Canberra Act 1989 (ACT)*.
2. This policy was developed in accordance with, and is informed by the following legislation:
 - a. *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*.
 - b. *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*.
 - c. *Discrimination Act 1991 (ACT)*.
 - d. *Human Rights Act 2004 (ACT)*.
 - e. *Human Rights Commission Act 2005 (ACT)*.
 - f. *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*.
 - g. AVCC Guidelines relating to Students with a Disability (2006).
 - h. AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities (2004).
 - i. [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) standard 2

SUPPORTING INFORMATION:

DEFINITIONS:

Terms	Definitions
Carer	means a person who provides assistance or services to a person with a disability, because of their disability.
Disability	<p>means limitations, restrictions or impairments affecting an individual, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a disability (such as cerebral palsy or hearing impairment); • an injury (such as broken bone or concussion); • a medical condition (such as arthritis or diabetes) as diagnosed by a treating practitioner; • a mental health condition (such as anxiety or depression) as diagnosed by a treating practitioner; • a neurodiverse condition (such as autism or dyslexia) as diagnosed by a treating practitioner; or • the primary carer of someone with a disability or ongoing health condition. <p>A disability may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, life-long or acquired.</p>
Discrimination	<p>discrimination in relation to a disability means when a person or groups of persons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Treats or proposes to treat the other person unfavourably because of the other person’s disability or their caring responsibilities for a person with a disability; or 2. Imposes or proposes to impose a condition or requirement that has, or is likely to have, the effect of disadvantaging the other person because of their disability or their caring responsibilities for a person with a disability.
Harassment	means offensive, belittling or threatening behaviour toward an individual or group.
Inherent Requirements	mean the essential components of a course or unit that demonstrate the abilities, knowledge and skills to achieve the core learning outcomes of the course or unit, while preserving the academic integrity of the university's learning, assessment and accreditation processes.
Fluctuating Condition	means a condition diagnosed by a treating medical practitioner, whether it’s a disability, injury, illness, or ailment, that might not be present now but could potentially reappear in the future. This includes conditions that come and go or change in severity over time, as well as chronic or recurring conditions.
Permanent Condition	means a condition, such as a disability, injury, illness, or ailment, that can’t be cured or improved with medical treatment, as diagnosed by a treating medical practitioner.

Reasonable Adjustment	means a measure or action taken in accordance with the principles set out in the Disability Standards for Education to assist a student with a disability to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers and enable them to achieve their maximum potential within a framework of academic standards.
Reasonable Adjustment Plan	means a document produced by InclusionUC in consultation with the student that documents the measures or actions taken to assist a student with a disability to participate in their education on an equal basis as their peers.
Student	means a person applying for admission to the University, including for study at the University of Canberra College, as well as people currently enrolled at the University or the University of Canberra College in a course or program of study, including non-award and HDR courses.
Temporary Condition	means a condition, such as a disability, injury, illness, or ailment, that is currently present but might not be in the future, according to the diagnosis from the student's own doctor.
Unjustifiable hardship	<p>a term defined in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 that allows an organisation to refuse to make a particular adjustment if it would cause significant problems, or if the cost in making the adjustment is unreasonable. Whether or not an organisation can apply the unjustifiable hardship defence depends on the circumstances of the individual case, including consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the effect of the disability on the student or staff member; ii. the benefits or disadvantages likely to be experienced by any persons concerned as a result of the adjustment being made; and iii. the cost of making the required adjustment in the context of the organisation's financial circumstances.
Work Integrated Learning	As defined in the <i>University of Canberra Work Integrated Learning Policy and Procedure</i> , and includes internships and placements.