

Education Access and Inclusion Policy

APPROVAL AND REVIEW	
Policy Title:	Education Access and Inclusion Policy
Policy Owner:	Dean of Studies
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Superseded Documents:	Special Needs Support Policy
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Approved by Academic Board, endorsed by the Senior Leadership Team	

POLICY INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out the principles for providing inclusive and equitable access to education for *all* UTS College students, in this way enhancing their learning experiences.
- Ensure that UTS College students with a disability, learning need or health issue can access and participate in their education *on the same basis* as other students.
- Enrich the accessibility and inclusiveness of enrolment, learning and assessment practices.
- Make sure UTS College complies with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986, the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006, as well as the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (and the 2015 review).

SCOPE

The policy applies to:

- All staff who play a role at any stage of the student life cycle, onshore or offshore.
- All students applying to or enrolled at UTS College
- All aspects of UTS College's learning environment.

Acknowledgements

The UTS College Education Access and Inclusion Policy is based on, and occasionally draws from, the following documents:

- *Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee (AVCC) Guidelines relating to Students with a Disability*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005 plus Guidance Notes*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005 Fact Sheet*
- *UTS Accessibility Resource Guide 2017: Working Together to Make UTS Accessible and Inclusive*

DEFINITIONS

Access and inclusion requirements	<p>Conditions (not necessarily provided within UTS College's standard learning environment) that a student needs in order to fairly access, and be fully incorporated into, the UTS College learning environment. The nature of these requirements depends on the individual student's disability, learning need or health issue, and circumstances. For example, access requirements may be related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Campus access ▪ Assessments ▪ Learning resources ▪ Physical environments such as a lecture room
Accessible	<p>Able to be obtained or used by a wide range of people with differing abilities, needs and circumstances. For example, learning materials are accessible if they can be perceived by students with differing sensory abilities – such as videos with closed captions, printed materials with large font size, visual images with alternative text and so on.</p>
Barriers	<p>Elements of the learning environment that may limit or prevent a student having equitable access to learning. For example, they may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Learning and teaching resources that are not perceivable to students with visual or hearing impairments ▪ Learning spaces that cannot be easily accessed or used by students with mobility impairments ▪ Assessment methods that disadvantage students with mental health issues.
Digital Environment	<p>In this context, spaces involving or relating to the use of computer technology e.g. the internet.</p>
Disability	<p>Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, disability includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ learning or neurological conditions e.g. dyslexia, ADHD/ADD, autism spectrum disorder ▪ ongoing medical conditions or illness, e.g. chronic fatigue syndrome, acquired brain injury ▪ mental health conditions, e.g. anxiety and depression ▪ vision, hearing and physical impairments.
Discrimination	<p>In this context, behaving or proposing to behave towards someone unfavourably on the basis of a disability. For example, staff stereotyping a potential student with a disability as unsuitable for study at UTS College without the decision having any foundation in fact or knowledge of the potentialities or limits of the condition.</p>
Equitable	<p>In this context, all students can participate in learning environments on the same basis. For example, students with a hearing impairment are provided with captions on videos.</p>
Flexible	<p>In this context, providing more than one way to achieve the same learning outcome. For example, students might be able to use various media and modes in their learning in the preparation and submission of assessments.</p>
Harassment (harass, v.)	<p>Behaviour that disturbs or upsets, is typically repetitive and may be threatening. For example, in this context, regularly calling students by an offensive name because they have a disability.</p>

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Inclusive	Creating a learning environment that accepts each individual student's differences, embraces their strengths and provides opportunities for them to achieve their full potential.
Individual Education Access and Inclusion Plan	A formal document prepared by UTS College to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ record its decisions on the reasonable adjustments that are appropriate to meet an individual student's access and inclusion requirements, and ▪ constitute an agreement with the student that it will provide these adjustments.
Inherent requirements	The skills and knowledge in a program of study that must be completed by students because they are essential to the program. Students can be provided with reasonable adjustments, but inherent requirements must be maintained.
Learning Environment	Covers all factors that contribute to students' learning experiences, including but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attitudes and values embedded in the curriculum and teaching practices ▪ Learning spaces, including their size, arrangement and lighting ▪ Learning resources and teaching aids (e.g. handouts, slides, videos) ▪ Assessment methods and timeframes ▪ Technologies and equipment ▪ Student services and facilities (e.g. lift access).
On the same basis	Opportunities and choices comparable to those offered to students without disabilities. For example, if there was a student in a wheelchair in the class, when going on an excursion, the organising teacher would check that the site was accessible.
Operable	In digital environments, students must be able to interact with the website or other online platforms. For example, teachers would give students enough time to read and use content.
Perceivable	In digital environments, students must be able to understand the information being presented. For example, providing text alternatives for any non-text content (such as braille, or speech).
Reasonable adjustment	The modification of a learning environment, learning resources, or facilities to remove barriers and enable students to access learning and participate in a program of study. Reasonable adjustments may include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lift pass to access all floors ▪ Special exam conditions ▪ Modification to assessment deadlines ▪ Use of alternative assessments ▪ Use of assistive resources and/or technologies ▪ Adapted course materials Reasonable adjustment is distinct from "Special Consideration", which is available to any student who has been affected by a <i>short-term</i> event.
Robust	In digital environments, students with a wide variety of assistive technologies must be able to use the web site and other online platforms now, and in the future, as technologies evolve.

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Understandable	In digital environments, the content or operation of the website cannot be beyond the understanding of the student. For example, all web pages should appear and work in predictable ways.
Victimisation (victimise, v.)	Punishing or threatening to punish someone because they have asserted their rights under equal opportunity law and/or made a complaint.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

In this policy UTS College aims to:

1. Provide a learning environment that is accessible to, and inclusive of, all prospective and enrolled students, expressly those with a disability, learning need or health issue.
2. Encourage all students to participate in the educational decision-making process, including by disclosing a disability, learning need or health issue that could affect their access to education on the same basis as other students.
3. Provide appropriate information about educational access and inclusion to all prospective and enrolled students.
4. Determine, document and act on any reasonable adjustments that UTS College considers appropriate, in consultation with the student and in a timely manner.
5. Reserve the right to decline the provision of adjustments in limited circumstances only.
6. Maintain student privacy, in accordance with the UTS College Privacy Policy.
7. Build and promote a culture of social inclusion for students with disability which respects and values their diverse abilities, needs and circumstances as well as their contributions to the culture, and which actively opposes discrimination and harassment, whether it is overt or covert.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. **UTS College aims to provide a learning environment that is accessible to, and inclusive of, all prospective and enrolled students expressly those with a disability, learning need or health issue.**
 - 1.1. Admission, selection and enrolment procedures are non-discriminatory, and orientation and preparation programs are accessible and inclusive in design and application.
 - 1.2. Curricula and programs are designed to be inclusive, flexible and accessible, so they meet the needs of students with a wide range of abilities, learning styles, and preferences.
 - 1.3. Where practical, potential barriers to access or participation are removed or reduced systemically to minimise the need for students to seek adjustments.
 - 1.4. Where practical, learning activities and resources are made available in accessible formats and offer multiple means of: representation (to give learners various ways of acquiring information and knowledge); action and expression (to provide learners alternatives for demonstrating what they know); and action and engagement (to stimulate learners' interests, offer appropriate challenges, and increase motivation).

- 1.5. UTS College teaching strategies are adjusted to meet the learning needs of the student and address any disadvantages in the student's learning resulting from his or her disability (e.g. the provision of additional support).
 - 1.6. The UTS College digital environment is perceivable, operable, understandable and robust, in line with the standards set out in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0.
 - 1.7. Transnational partnership arrangements explicitly address the needs of students with a disability.
- 2. UTS College aims to encourage all students to participate in the educational decision-making process, including by disclosing a disability, learning need or health issue that could affect their access to education *on the same basis as other students.***
- 2.1. Students with access requirements and/or disabilities are invited to disclose this information to UTS College at the time of application, or as soon as they are aware of them.
 - 2.2. Students who choose not to disclose their access requirements and/or disabilities to UTS College may not receive individual adjustments or support.
- 3. UTS College aims to provide appropriate information about educational access and inclusion to all prospective and enrolled students and to all its staff.**
- 3.1. Information about educational access and inclusion is available on the UTS College website, at Orientation and Preparation week activities, on UTS Online and in subject outlines, application forms and exam results.
 - 3.2. UTS College publications, information and forms use inclusive language and are made accessible to students with a disability.
 - 3.3. Staff responding to inquiries from prospective students is aware of services for students with a disability and the information provided is consistent, accurate and useful.
 - 3.4. Staff is supported to meet the needs of students with disabilities through orientation programs, professional development programs and the UTS College Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct.
- 4. UTS College will determine, document and act on any reasonable adjustments that UTS College considers appropriate, in consultation with the student and in a timely manner.**
- 4.1. UTS College will follow up any student who discloses access requirements and/or disabilities to ensure they know how to apply to have their access and inclusion requirements recognised and acted on.
 - 4.2. Once an application is received, UTS College will decide what adjustments are reasonable and appropriate by considering: the information provided by the student, any adjustments recommended by their health professional, their effect on the student, staff and other students, as well as the inherent requirements of the course or program and the implications for UTS College, including financial and other costs.
 - 4.3. UTS College will document its decisions on the reasonable adjustments in an Individual Education Access and Inclusion Plan.

4.4. UTS College will act on any documented reasonable adjustments as soon as practical.

4.5. Provision of reasonable adjustment does not guarantee success in studies.

5. UTS College reserves the right to decline the provision of adjustments in limited circumstances only.

5.1. UTS College is not required to provide adjustments to meet a student's access and inclusion requirements if doing so would impose an unjustifiable hardship on UTS College.

5.2. UTS College is not required to provide adjustments to meet a student's access and inclusion requirements if doing so would endanger the health or welfare of the student or other people.

6. UTS College aims to maintain student privacy, in accordance with the UTS College Privacy Policy.

6.1. Students are under no obligation to inform UTS College of their access and inclusion requirements and/or disability unless they represent a health risk to students or staff.

6.2. UTS College will protect the personal information it collects and receives from students and the privacy of those students, in accordance with its Privacy Policy.

7. UTS College aims to build and promote a culture of social inclusion for students with disability which respects and values their diverse abilities, needs and circumstances as well as their contributions to the culture, and which actively opposes discrimination and harassment, whether it is overt or covert.

7.1. Policies and codes of conduct explicitly prohibit discrimination, harassment and victimisation of students with disability and strategies are in place to prevent these behaviours.

7.2. Staff and students are informed about: the obligation not to harass or victimise students with disability or their associates; the appropriate action to be taken if harassment or victimisation occur; and the complaint mechanisms available to a student who is harassed or victimised in relation to a disability of the student or an associate of the student.

7.3. Grievance procedures deal fairly and in a timely manner with all grievances arising directly or indirectly from a student's disability.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Academic Advisers: 2.1, 2.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4
- Academic Subject Coordinators: Principles 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 3.1, 4.4 and 4.5
- Admissions Manager : Principles 1.1, 2.1, 3.3 and 4.1
- All Teachers : Principles 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 and 4.5
- Associate Dean of Studies: Principles 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.2, 3.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6 5.1, 5.2, and 7.3
- Associate Dean, English: Principles 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.2, 3.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, 4.6 5.1, 5.2, and 7.3
- Dean of Studies: Principles 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 3.1, 4.5, 4.6, 5.1 and 7.3

- Director of Studies, ELT : Principles 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 3.1, 4.2 and 4.4 ELT Curriculum Leader: Principles 1.2,1.3,1.4,1.5,1.6,3.1, and 4.4
- ELT Level Leaders: Principles 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 3.1, 4.4 and 4.5
- Facilities Manager: Principles 1.3, 4.1, 4.4 and 5.1
- Head of ICT and Staff: 1.6 and 3.1
- Head of Student Services and Staff: Principles 1.1, 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 7.1 and 7.2
- Human Resources Director and Staff: Principles 3.4, 7.1 and 7.2
- UTS College HELPS Centre Staff: Principle 1.3
- Leader HELPS Centre and Staff: Principle 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5 and 1.6
- Learning and Teaching Consultant: Principles 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5,1.6 and 3.4
- Learning Development Specialist : Principle 3.4
- Marketing Manager: Principles 1.7, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3
- Privacy Officer : Principle 6.2
- Program Managers: Principles 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 3.1, 4.2 and 4.4
- QS (external agency): Principle 3.3
- Registrar: Principle 1.1, 1.7 and 7.2
- Student Centre Advisers: Principle 4.1
- Transnational English/Academic Quality Manager: 1.2,1.3,1.4,1.5,1.6, 1.7 and 4.4

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Assessment Design Guide
- Assessment Design Policy
- Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee (AVCC) Guidelines relating to Students with a Disability
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Disability Standards for Education 2005 (and the 2015 review)
- Education Access and Inclusion Guide
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986
- Individual Access and Inclusion Plan
- UTS College Academic Handbook
- UTS College Application Form
- UTS College Model of Learning
- UTS College HELPS Centre
- UTS College Privacy Policy
- UTS College Staff and Affiliates Code of Conduct
- Offshore Partner Application Forms
- Student Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006
- UTS Accessibility Resource Guide 2017: Working Together to Make UTS Accessible and Inclusive
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0

VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Date	Version	Approved by and resolution no.	Amendment
Signature: Name: Joyce Kirk Chair of Academic Board Date:01/03/2018			