

# Accessible Teaching and Learning Policy

## 1 Purpose of Accessible Teaching and Learning Policy

The Accessible Teaching and Learning Policy (ATLP) sets out expectations and guidance for accessible and inclusive teaching to all students through consideration of their different requirements in the design, approval, delivery and review of programmes and modules.

Embedding reasonable adjustments improves the educational experience of all students and is required by a significant number of disabled students. This ATLP enables staff to move towards a position where ILPs are no longer the only means of overcoming learning inequities faced by our students. It also responds to the European Court of Human Rights' recommendations following the death of Natasha Abrahart. The ATLP and the accompanying guidance will ultimately support academics to progress towards a more consistent and inclusive model for inclusive teaching, by reducing reliance on individual reasonable adjustments on a student-by-student, ad hoc basis.

## 2 Overview

The ATLP contains principles for improving accessibility and inclusivity of teaching at the University. It provides some detailed baseline requirements, including mainstreaming some adjustments recommended for disabled students whose universal adoption benefits all students.

## 3 Background

The University's Transformative Education Framework principles aim to create a learning environment that fosters a culture of compassion and promotes respect by embedding inclusivity and cultural competence. The University seeks to avoid the exclusion of any student and facilitate equality and diversity by pursuing language, behaviours and teaching practices that foster the inclusion and success of all students, and work towards improving their experience, skills, and attainment.

Under Sections 20(3) and 91(9) of the Equality Act 2010 the University has a legal duty as an education provider to take positive and proactive steps to ensure that students with protected characteristics can fully and equitably participate in their education and enjoy the other benefits, facilities and services which are provided for students.

## **4 Application**

The ATLP addresses accessibility and inclusion for teaching and learning. Unless otherwise stated, it extends to all teaching contexts (including online classes). The ATLP applies in respect of all students of the University and to all staff (including external guest lecturers and tutors) who teach students on modules and programmes, where relevant. Each module lead (or postgraduate research training coordinator, as applicable) should complete an Accessibility Statement which either confirms full compliance with the ATLP or sets out which baseline standards in the ATLP will not be met and provides details of alternative provisions offered.

## **5 ATLP contacts, review and update information**

The ATLP will be reviewed following its third year of operation (2027/28), and will be considered by representatives from Education Board, PGR Board and Education Leadership Team. If you have any questions relating to this ATLP, you should email Education Policy, Quality and Standards at [educationpolicy@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:educationpolicy@exeter.ac.uk).

## **6 Consultation undertaken**

The ATLP was commissioned at the request of the Success and Inclusive Education Working Group, Wellbeing and AccessAbility Services, and the Student Guild. This ATLP was approved by Education Board on 23 April 2025. The ATLP was jointly developed following consultation with Education Board, Education Leadership Team, Senior Education Partners, the Doctoral College, Success for All Strategy Group, Success for Inclusive Education Working Group, Deans of Education and Student Experience, the Neurodivergent and Disabled Students' Society and the Student Guild.

## **7 Definitions**

In this ATLP, student means all Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught students of the University. It includes Postgraduate Research students of the University in respect of any group teaching or training session they attend.

## **8 Principles for accessible teaching and learning**

The University shall in the first instance seek to anticipate barriers to student participation and address these by designing programmes, modules and facilities and designing or procuring services and resources that are accessible to all. It recognises that this will not always be possible and that specific adjustments may then have to be made to remove remaining barriers for individual students.

The knowledge and skills required for making teaching accessible to all students are considered a standard part of normal academic and professional practice. The University shall make training and guidance available for all educators, so that they can be confident that they understand and can engage with issues of accessibility.

Compliance with the ATLP and the content of Accessibility Statements will be reviewed by and integrated into 'Business as Usual' quality assurance processes (including, but not limited to: during module accreditation, Annual Teaching Review, FESEC/FEPEP meetings).

## **9 Staff support for working with this ATLP**

Detailed guidance to support staff to work with this ATLP is available alongside this policy on the Education Policy webpage of [Education Policy, Quality and Standards](#).

## **10 Detailed baseline standards**

The following seek to increase the accessibility of learning and teaching for students.

### **10.1 Module outlines and core reading lists shall be made available at least four weeks before the start of the module.**

10.1.1 This information, along with indicative content and assessment formats, should be communicated in module Study Guides. This will provide students with an early opportunity to engage with the module requirements and familiarise themselves with the subject and learning material.

10.1.2 This requirement is for outline information: Further module details can be provided nearer to or at the start of the module.

10.1.3 In some subjects, the compilation of a resources list may be central to an assessment task, and it may therefore not be appropriate to provide a set resources/reading list. Where this is the case, it shall be signalled clearly to students in advance.

### **10.2 Reading lists shall indicate priority and/or relevance.**

10.2.1 Where resources lists are provided to students, these should clearly indicate those readings that are especially important to the module as a whole, and those which are particularly relevant to a session or theme within the module.

10.2.2 Materials indicated on reading lists shall be accessible and available in alternative formats wherever possible. If material on a reading list is in a digital format, then it is already in a format that is more accessible for students. Where no digital format currently exists, module leaders should seek advice from Library Services.

### **10.3 An outline of what to expect in the teaching session and the documents to be used (e.g. lecture outlines, presentation slides, or equivalent) shall be made digitally available to students via the University's Virtual Learning Environment (ELE) at least 24 hours in advance of the relevant teaching session.**

10.3.1 Educators will not be expected to produce presentation slides if these are not normally used, for example, in discussion-based tutorials or seminars. In such cases, an outline of the taught session will be required. This may take the form of a bullet-pointed list of the key themes and content of the class. The provision of detailed notes is not necessary.

10.3.2 Judgement will need to be exercised in such cases where confidential or ‘spoiler’ information is contained within materials to avoid compromising confidentiality or impinging on the learning experience. In such cases students should be informed of the presence of such information and may be provided with only a partial set of slides in advance of the class; with the further materials required by this section made available following the class.

**10.4 Where relevant, key technical words, terms or formulae used in a teaching session shall be provided to students at least 24 hours in advance of the relevant teaching session, via ELE.**

10.4.1 In the same way, where maps, complex graphs or detailed images are used in a class, it will normally be appropriate to provide these to students in advance of the relevant teaching session.

10.4.2 Where technical words, terms or formulae cannot be provided through ELE, students must be informed how to access the materials.

10.4.3 In many cases technical words and formulae are likely to be embedded in the presentation slides and are likely to be covered by the provision of lecture outlines or slides detailed in 10.3 above. Alternatively, educators might produce a supplementary hand-out for students, or to develop a ‘module glossary’ on the module’s ELE page.

**10.5 Students shall be notified via official University communication channels (currently email to student University email address) of changes to any teaching arrangements, for example, changes to modules, room changes or class cancellations.**

Students should be notified of changes to teaching arrangements as soon as possible. The current official form of communication is the University email system, and this should be the primary method of communication.

**10.6 Scheduled live teaching sessions shall be recorded in accordance with the [Digital Learning Resources Policy](#) (“DLRP”).**

10.6.1 The DLRP sets out the University’s expectations on the recording of scheduled live teaching. The ATLP sets out the approaches to be taken in any cases where scheduled live teaching is not recorded under DLRP.

10.6.2 The ATLP Statement is primarily focussed on lectures and seminars. We acknowledge there are certain scenarios whereby it is not possible for adjustments to be

made or recordings to be taken, including for regulated programmes and disclosure of sensitive information in seminar settings. Please reach out to your module lead and AccessAbility for support if you are concerned about the application of the ATLP.

10.6.3 Where recording any scheduled live teaching session is not possible, students shall be provided with an alternative containing taught content in sufficient detail for students who are unable to take contemporaneous handwritten or typed notes to meet the intended learning outcomes for that teaching session. Examples include, but are not limited to, annotated lecture slides, lecture notes, a transcript of the teaching session, a written summary of questions and answers provided in the teaching session, or descriptions of taught content to supplement lecture slides. Faculties/departments may agree a 'default alternative' to recording the session, to ensure consistency across sessions which cannot be recorded. This should be approved by the APVCE.

**10.7 All teaching staff shall ensure that wherever possible, microphones are worn and used in all lectures regardless of the perceived need to wear them.**

10.7.1 Where radio microphones are made available in teaching rooms these must be worn and used by all teaching staff, including external guest presenters, regardless of the perceived need to wear them.

10.7.2 Teaching staff should report promptly any faults that they encounter using the telephone numbers provided in teaching rooms.

10.7.3 Where a microphone is not working, teaching staff and presenters should consider other alternatives, such as those set out 10.6.3.

**10.8 Teaching staff and examiners shall ensure their materials such as slides, lecture outlines and other electronic documents are accessible in accordance with the University's guidance on requirements for accessible formats.**

Teaching staff shall use accessibility settings, appropriate sizes, fonts, alternative text, hyperlinks and adjustable sizing, where relevant, to ensure as many students as possible can utilise these materials in their learning without the need for further adaption or support. The Supporting Guidance for this ATLP provides guidance on how to do this.

**10.9 Accessibility Statement**

Each module's Study Guide will include an Accessibility Statement based on the Template Accessibility Statement confirming compliance with this ATLP in full, or setting out which

baseline standard/s in this ATLP will not be met and details of any alternative provision offered.

**Published August 2025**