Student Accessibility Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) This Policy details Macquarie University's approach to providing its students with an inclusive learning and social environment.

Background

(2) Macquarie University is committed to promoting and implementing the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, the Disability Standards for Education 2005, the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 and the University's Student Accessibility Action Plan 2025-2028.

(3) This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Admission Policy, Appendix 1: Inherent Requirements Statement and Fitness to Practice Procedure.

Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all Staff and Students of the University.

Section 2 - Policy

(5) Macquarie University (the University) is committed to:

a. providing all Students with equal opportunity to access, participate and enjoy the benefits of a University education and University life;
b. providing all Students with the opportunity to realise their potential for physical, social, emotional and intellectual development through participation in University Activities;
c. providing a University experience where all Students, including Students with a Disability and Students who care for someone with a Disability, are treated with dignity and respect;
d. raising awareness within the University community regarding the requirements and rights of people with a Disability, or who care for someone with a Disability;
e. ensuring that future Students with a Disability, or who are care for a person with Disability, are treated equitably and are not subject to Unlawful Discrimination when seeking admission to the University;
f. ensuring that University Staff have the skills and knowledge to provide an inclusive and accessible education and service environment to Students impacted by Disability; and
g. respecting a Student's right to privacy and confidentiality when providing Disability-related support for study.

(6) The University will:

a. ensure that Students with a Disability, or who care for someone with a Disability, can access University study and services provided to all Students, without Unlawful Discrimination;
b. where feasible, implement Universal Design principles that enable equitable access to content, tasks, activities, events and environments, to reduce the need for individual Students to request Reasonable Adjustments;

c. consult, when requested, with Students with a Disability to identify Reasonable Adjustments that may be required to support access to study;
d. consult, when requested, with Students who are Carers of someone with a Disability, to identify Reasonable Adjustments that may be required to support access to study;
e. identify and implement Reasonable Adjustments, when requested, to enable access and participation on the same basis as Students without Disability;
f. record agreed Reasonable Adjustments in a Student's Individual Education Access Plan (IEAP);
g. when requested, provide support and services to Students with a Disability, and Student Carers of a person with a Disability, to assist negotiate Reasonable Adjustments to study, if Reasonable Adjustments can be implemented;
h. identify and uphold the essential academic requirements of its programs and courses; and
i. take measures to provide an environment free from Harassment and Unlawful Discrimination, with an accessible process to address Student reports of Harassment, Bullying, or Unlawful Discrimination.

Student Responsibilities

(7) Students with a Disability, and Students who are Carers of someone with Disability, have responsibilities to:

a. meet the Inherent Requirements of their course of study/program, and consider whether the impacts of the Disability or Carer relationship may prevent meeting the Inherent Requirements of the course of study/program;
b. understand fitness to practice or eligibility requirements related to a professional registration linked to their study, and whether the impacts of the Disability or Carer relationship may prevent meeting fitness to practice or professional registration requirements;
c. register with the Accessibility Service to access Reasonable Adjustments;
d. disclose the nature of their Disability, or responsibilities related to caring for someone with Disability, to the Accessibility Service, where this impacts the Student's ability to access study materials, study content or environments;
e. provide appropriate supporting documentation to the Accessibility Service about impacts of Disability or caring for someone with Disability;
f. participate in units in which they are enrolled, including undertaking assessments;
g. meet the learning outcomes and Inherent Requirements of the units and courses in which they are enrolled; and
h. respond to communications from the Accessibility Service regarding their IEAP.

(8) A Student with Disability, or who cares for a person with Disability, is under no obligation to register with the Accessibility Service.

(9) If a Student chooses not to register with the Accessibility Service, the University is unable to assess and implement Reasonable Adjustments.

(10) A Student who chooses not to register with the Accessibility Service may seek to manage the impacts of Disability or Carer responsibilities using special consideration. Refer to the Special Consideration Policy.

Disclosure of information

(11) The purpose of disclosure of Disability information, or an IEAP, is to support access to study, not to exclude Students from opportunities.

(12) Information provided to the Accessibility Service about a Student or other person's Disability will only be disclosed to Staff within the Accessibility Service when:

a. the University has reasonable grounds for concern about the health or safety of the Student or other people;
b. the Student gives consent to the disclosure;
c. the disclosure of the information is otherwise required or authorised by law;
d. it is necessary for the University to obtain legal advice; and/or
e. it is necessary for the University to respond to a complaint against it by the Student (for example, in responding to an Ombudsman).

(13) Consent to distribute an IEAP is required to implement the Reasonable Adjustments described in the IEAP.

(14) Distribution of IEAP content is in accordance with the University's Privacy Management Plan.

(15) Only Staff directly involved with implementing an IEAP will have access to the content of the IEAP. Refer to the Guideline for Developing Individual Educational Access Plans for additional information.

Supporting Documentation for making Reasonable Adjustments

(16) The University requires Students seeking Reasonable Adjustments to provide supporting documentation about the nature and impact of their Disability, or the nature and impact of the Student's Carer relationship with a person with Disability.

(17) The purpose of supporting documentation is to assist identify appropriate Reasonable Adjustments in the learning environment. The Student Accessibility Procedure provides more information about supporting documentation.

(18) The University may not be able to assess and/or determine the provision of a Reasonable Adjustment if supporting documentation is not provided by the Student to the Accessibility Service.

Work Health and Safety

(19) The University recognises its obligations and responsibilities under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. The University is committed to ensuring a safe work / study environment and to ensure that work health and safety planning and activities also incorporate the requirements of people with a Disability.

(20) Students with a Disability must meet work health and safety requirements when participating in University Activities.

Section 3 - Procedures

(21) Refer to the Student Accessibility Procedure.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(22) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(23) The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

a. Access and Inclusion Plan means an organisational plan that identifies actions which ensure that education and employment, services, premises and facilities are accessible and non-discriminatory to people with a Disability.
b. Accessibility Service refers to the University Accessibility Service (see the Accessibility webpage).

c. Adjustment means a measure or action (or a group of measures or actions) taken by the University in relation to the learning environment. An adjustment has the effect of assisting a Student with a Disability to participate in study on the same basis as a Student without Disability.
d. Bullying means repeated and unreasonable behaviour by an individual or group directed towards an individual or group where that behaviour creates a risk of physical or psychological harm. Bullying includes, but is not limited to, conduct via the internet, email or other electronic means.
e. Carer means a person who provides ongoing, unpaid support to a family member, neighbour or friend because of Disability, terminal illness, chronic illness, mental illness and/or ageing. Anyone can become a Carer at any time. A person is not a Carer if they care for a person as a paid employee, a volunteer or as part of education or training. A Carer can be:
    i. a spouse of the person;
    ii. another person who is living with the person on a genuine domestic basis;
    iii. a relative of the person;
    iv. a Carer of the person; or
    v. other groups listed within the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
f. Disability has the meaning provided in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
g. Individual Educational Access Plan (IEAP) means a Student centered plan that sets out the academic, practicum, examination, assessment task, library, security and information technology requirements the Student will need whilst studying at the University.
h. Inherent Requirements are the essential activities, capacities and academic requirements that are necessary for a Student to successfully achieve the core learning outcomes of a Macquarie University degree or course or unit. Refer to the Admission Policy, Appendix 1: Inherent Requirements Statement.
i. Planned Extensions means an adjustment that allows for the addition of time for written take home assessment tasks. These planned extension requests are processed via the Special Consideration portal using an IEAP as evidence of the request.
j. Reasonable Adjustment means an Adjustment balances the interests (including the health and safety) of the student, of other students and staff.
k. Staff means all persons appointed as academic or professional staff of Macquarie University, whether they hold full-time, part-time, casual or conjoint appointments.
l. Student means a person registered for a course at Macquarie University including a person who approaches the University about seeking admission to, or applying for enrolment in, the University.
m. Universal Design means the design of services, devices, products, communication and built environments to be accessible and usable to as many people as possible without adaptation or adjustment.
n. University Activities means the activities of the University, any Student organisation or any member of the University community.
o. Unjustifiable Hardship has the meaning provided in Section 11 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992.
p. Unlawful Discrimination is discrimination that is unlawful under applicable State or Federal laws.

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Responsible Officer	Leanne Piggott Pro Vice-Chancellor (Dean of Students)
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