

## CASQE/CeLT Guidance note on inclusive curriculum planning

### March 2010

This note is for academic staff developing or updating unit outline proformas and for programme teams who are reviewing their curriculum provision. The University's [Strategic Framework for Learning, Teaching and Assessment](#) expects us to provide a supportive and inclusive learning experience which will offer the widest opportunities to a diverse range of learners. This policy is not only to ensure that our programmes are full accessible, but also to ensure that we demonstrate to our students our commitment to a shared value system which is a key part of the University's mission. At programme approval and review, you need to show that you have considered the impact of your approaches to teaching, learning and assessment so that your programme is accessible and that you will be able to make reasonable adjustments if needed.

Many of the university's policies, such as the regulations and the recruitment and admissions policy, have already been screened for equality impact assessment and there should be no need for you to consider these unless your regular monitoring demonstrates a problem.

The most important area for the team as a whole is to ensure that everybody is aware of the potential issues and feels able to act to ensure that provision is inclusive. We recommend that inclusivity is a regular item at programme committee and that you use the appended checklist to identify areas for further action as needed. These can be included in the programme log and you can refer to minutes of meetings in the [self-evaluation document](#) (SED) for programmes undertaking periodic review. If you have taken particular action then this should be documented in the programme log, and you may wish to identify it in the SED or elsewhere in the definitive document. You could also consider logging it in [the Academic Practice database](#) so that others can share the same approach.

If you have any queries about the material in this guidance note, please contact one of the following:

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### Links to further resources

[MMU academic practice database](#): search for information about what colleagues have done in this area.

[Developing an inclusive curriculum](#): a guide for Heads of Department and Course Leaders. Produced by the Geography Discipline Network (GDN) but relevant for other subject areas as well

[Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programmes of Study \(SCIPS\)](#) : strategies for promoting inclusive teaching, learning and assessment within programmes of study taught at degree level (including foundation degrees). Has material aimed at different subject areas.

[Disability legislation: practical guidance for academic staff](#) – from the HE Equality Challenge Unit

## Appendix 1: Checklist for programme teams

As part of an HEA-funded project, MMU developed guidance and resources for inclusive curriculum design. This checklist was developed as part of this process, and provides examples of potential impacts on equality groups which might be considered when completing the Academic Programme Diversity Screening Template. These are not intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive, but a guide to the kinds of questions review teams might ask of their programmes and use to guide further information gathering and action as needed.

Recruitment and admissions	
<b>Marketing Materials</b>	<p>Are marketing materials produced in a range of accessible formats?</p> <p>Do images used reflect the diversity of the population?</p> <p>Does the programme description reflect the diversity of the population in terms of the indicative content, delivery strategy and types of assessment?</p> <p>Is any language or terminology used which might be deemed to be discriminatory?</p> <p>Are entry requirements likely to discriminate against any groups of people?</p>
<b>Applications</b>	<p>Are the numbers of applications received from different equality groups reflective of their representation in the population as a whole?</p>
<b>Offers</b>	<p>Is there any variation in the proportion of rejected applicants from different equality groups?</p> <p>Are the same offers made to all applicants, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and disability?</p> <p>Does interviewing policy give every applicant an equal chance of being invited for interview?</p>
<b>Enrolments</b>	<p>Do enrolments on the programme reflect the representation of equality groups in the population as a whole?</p> <p>Is there any fall off between acceptance and enrolment evident in any of the equality groups?</p>
Programme Experience	
<b>Programme Handbook</b>	<p>Is the programme handbook produced in an accessible format?</p> <p>Is the handbook made available electronically with accessibility software?</p> <p>Does the handbook use appropriate language and terminology?</p> <p>Are any images used reflective of the diversity of the population?</p>
<b>Attendance requirements</b>	<p>Does the programme calendar respect religious holidays and festivals?</p> <p>Do attendance requirements potentially disadvantage any students?</p> <p>Is consideration given to the accessibility of evening attendance for all students?</p>
<b>Timetabling</b>	<p>Does timetabling take into consideration the responsibilities of carers?</p> <p>Is there sufficient time for all students to achieve room or site changes between classes?</p> <p>Does the timetable allow people time to access prayer facilities at appropriate times?</p>
<b>Placements</b>	<p>Might any students be disadvantaged in their ability to take up placements on offer?</p> <p>Is there a suitable range of placement opportunities?</p> <p>Have placement providers been assessed to ensure they meet equalities legislation?</p>
<b>Equipment needed</b>	<p>Is any specialist equipment needed for the course that some students may be unable to use?</p> <p>Are alternative resources available for students who might not have access to those needed?</p>
<b>Personal Development</b>	<p>Are Personal Development Planning schemes designed to ensure they are accessible to and useable by students in the full range of diversity categories?</p>

<b>Planning</b>	Do PDP tutors have access to diversity training? Are guidelines on appropriate tutor/student interaction provided?
<b>Extra-curricula activity</b>	
<b>Volunteering opportunities</b>	If volunteering is made available, is there a suitable range of opportunities to ensure equality of access? Do the volunteering opportunity providers adhere to equalities legislation?
<b>Work placements</b>	Might any students be disadvantaged in their ability to take up work placements on offer? Is there a suitable range of work placement opportunities? Have work placement providers been assessed to ensure they meet equalities legislation?
<b>Access to facilities (refreshments etc)</b>	Are there adequate facilities to meet the personal needs of all students? Is sufficient time provided within the timetable to allow students to access facilities?
<b>Progression</b>	
<b>Stage progression rates</b>	Is there any possible connection between equality grouping and potential to progress between stages? Are any equality groups more likely to be re-assessed to achieve progression?
<b>Numbers of good honours degrees</b>	Are there any disparities in the numbers of good honours degrees which might be linked to diversity factors? Are there higher numbers of any particular groups in the pass degree category?
<b>Mitigating circumstances</b>	Are there any equality categories which appear to present a disproportionate number of mitigating circumstances requests? Is there any apparent variance in the acceptance of mitigating circumstances requests relating to equality groups?
<b>Academic misconduct</b>	Are any groups appearing disproportionately in academic misconduct cases? Is there any apparent disproportionality in the numbers of proven misconduct cases?
<b>Complaints</b>	Is there evidence of higher numbers of complaints from any particular equality group? Is there any evidence of higher numbers of rejection of complaints from any equality group?
<b>Appeals</b>	Is there evidence of higher numbers of appeals from any particular equality group? Is there any evidence of higher numbers of rejection of appeals from any equality group?

## Appendix 2: Checklist for unit design

Units Design	
<b>Curriculum Content</b>	<p>Does the content of the unit reflect the diversity of the population in terms of examples used and topics covered?</p> <p>Might any of the content be deemed discriminatory?</p> <p>Are there any elements of the content which some students might find inaccessible due to their age, gender, ethnicity etc.?</p>
<b>Delivery methods</b>	<p>Are these inclusive? Might any students be unable to understand or engage for reasons of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or sexuality?</p> <p>Are guidelines on inclusivity provided for staff?</p> <p>Is staff development on inclusivity available and are staff encouraged and facilitated to access it?</p>
<b>Classroom activities</b>	<p>Are these inclusive? Might any students feel unable to participate for reasons of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or sexuality?</p>
<b>Type of assessment, load and timing</b>	<p>Do the assignment requirements make it difficult for any student to complete them due to age, gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexuality?</p> <p>Is the assessment loading achievable for all students?</p> <p>Does the timing of assessment (including examinations) take into consideration factors such as religious holidays or caring responsibilities?</p> <p>Are there any patterns evident with unit pass rates? Are certain groups less likely to pass the unit than others?</p>
<b>Supporting materials</b>	<p>Are supporting materials, including unit handbook, available in fully accessible formats?</p> <p>Are appropriate guidelines for accessibility provided for staff preparing materials?</p> <p>Are procedures in place to ensure materials are provided in a timely way?</p>
<b>Technology used in teaching</b>	<p>Is the VLE fully accessible?</p> <p>Have steps been taken to ensure all students can access technology?</p> <p>Are materials routinely provided in electronic format in advance of teaching sessions?</p>
<b>Access to facilities (refreshments etc)</b>	<p>Are there adequate facilities to meet the personal needs of all students?</p> <p>Is sufficient time provided within the timetable to allow students to access facilities?</p>