

# Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guidelines

## Section 1 - Context

(1) These Guidelines support the University's commitment to an inclusive culture that is reflected in its approach to teaching and research. The Inclusive Teaching and Learning Guideline should be read in conjunction with the [Promoting a Respectful and Collaborative University: Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy](#).

## Section 2 - General Aims

(2) Staff at the University of Newcastle will:

- a. apply the concept of 'inclusive teaching';
- b. recognise and be able to describe the impact of their cultural predisposition on their teaching;
- c. demonstrate an informed respect for and an appropriate response to diversity;
- d. assess students in ways which demonstrate an appropriate response to diversity;
- e. use resources and materials which demonstrate an appropriate response to diversity;
- f. promote in their teaching the development of cross-cultural understanding and informed respect for diversity amongst the University population;
- g. implement quality assurance processes to ensure the ongoing promotion of inclusive practice at the University of Newcastle;
- h. plan, teach and assess in ways that comply with University policy and Federal and State legislation relating to diversity.

## Section 3 - Specific Outcomes

(3) With respect to Clause 2(a):

- a. Content:
  - i. incorporates diverse student knowledge;
  - ii. values and builds on diverse prior learning, experiences and goals;
  - iii. contests a uniform view of knowledge, and
  - iv. makes assumed knowledge explicit in the stated prerequisites of the course.
- b. Course design:
  - i. reflects a variety of learning tasks that value diversity of learning needs;
  - ii. builds on student diversity to engender student interest;
  - iii. considers the linguistic, cultural and physical skills and talents of all students;
  - iv. actively promotes the use of inclusive texts and materials in all teaching and presentations, and
  - v. accurately represents Aboriginal and Australian history components and the effects of the invasion and occupation of Australia on Aboriginal communities and people.

(4) With respect to Clause 2(b):

a. Lecturing staff:

- i. demonstrate teaching practices and communicative competence with cultural groups other than their own;
- ii. critique their cultural bias in the way they plan, teach, and assess students;
- iii. use language that values and respects all student groups, not just those similar to themselves, and
- iv. are able to describe their cultural pre-disposition to staff and students.

(5) With respect to Clause 2(c):

a. Teaching:

- i. University of Newcastle;
- ii. is responsive to diverse student needs;
- iii. builds on student diversity as an educational resource;
- iv. facilitates the equitable participation of all students in the required learning activities;
- v. does not disadvantage any particular student groups or individuals;
- vi. demonstrates an awareness of the effect of diverse students' predispositions on student learning;
- vii. responds to difference in English language levels so as not to disadvantage students in keeping with University language requirements and guidelines;
- viii. actively promotes the use of inclusive language and presentation by staff and students in all documents and materials, both written and otherwise;
- ix. uses examples and applications in teaching that are equally accessible to all student groupings;
- x. distinguishes cultural-inclusiveness from 'cultural-blindness' and 'cultural neutrality', and
- xi. ensures that any disability of students as notified by the student is considered and catered for. Student learning outcomes:
  - xii. aim to meet the needs of all students;
  - xiii. provide students with opportunities and physical resources to access knowledge and skills that are assumed in the course;
  - xiv. encourage collaborative work between students;
  - xv. support the development all students' language skills to meet the specific course requirements (e.g. specialized language), and
  - xvi. cater for a diversity of learning styles in the range of teaching and learning opportunities offered.

(6) With respect to Clause 2(d):

a. Assessment methods:

- i. respond to difference in English language levels so as not to disadvantage students in keeping with University language requirements and guidelines;
- ii. ensure that the assessment methods used cater for a diversity of learning styles;
- iii. avoid disadvantaging any one group of students;
- iv. take into account the diverse values, goals and experiences of students;
- v. allow for the articulation of diverse perspectives, and
- vi. require students to have an understanding of and interaction with diversity.

(7) With respect to 2(e):

a. Course materials and resources:

- i. represent a range of student experiences;
- ii. present research that values multiple student groups through examples;
- iii. make generalisations that apply to multiple cultural groups;
- iv. use references and/or research referred to that are appropriate to a diverse student population;
- v. support the development of all students' language skills to meet the specific course requirement (e.g. jargon);
- vi. provide adequate facilities and use materials and methods that are appropriate for all students and staff in the University;
- vii. ensure that women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disabilities, people from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are visible;
- viii. make appropriate references to the achievements of all groups in the discipline (e.g. gender, race, social class and disability);
- ix. represent women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disabilities, people from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds with respect;
- x. make explicit issues of gender, race, social class and disability, and
- xi. explore and analyse inequalities based on gender, race, social class and disability.

(8) With respect to Clause 2(f):

a. Lecturers encourage students through their teaching to:

- i. question how thinking and knowledge-making have been shaped primarily from a selective social, cultural and physical perspective;
- ii. question how knowledge and thinking are shaped by racial categories and stereotypes;
- iii. treat all students and staff, irrespective of diversity, fairly and equitably;
- iv. participate and promote a harmonious and creative learning environment that respects and celebrates diversity;
- v. recognise that Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders are the original custodians of this land and provide unique cultures which underpin and enrich Australian cultural identity;
- vi. recognise that physical limitations should not limit opportunities for learning;
- vii. recognise that Australian society now consists of people from many different cultural, religious, ethnic and national backgrounds;
- viii. acknowledge that all cultures are important to Australia's heritage and the members of all cultures are entitled to equality of opportunity and social justice;
- ix. recognise that all students have the right to the opportunity to achieve their full potential, and to work and study in a climate of mutual respect for diversity, and
- x. demonstrate ethical practices and communicative competence where students can engage with multiple perspectives, operate in socially, culturally, linguistically and physically diverse environments, and work in diverse teams.

(9) With respect to Clause 2(g):

a. Lecturing staff:

- i. develop quality assurance processes that support the ongoing promotion of inclusive practice;
- ii. demonstrate that they plan, teach and assess in ways that meet the requirements of the University of Newcastle quality assurance procedures;
- iii. evaluate their teaching regularly to ensure their teaching is inclusive;

- iv. change their planning, teaching and assessment to respond to student and staff feedback in relation to inclusive practice, and
- v. implement in their planning and teaching the occupational health and safety requirements of the University of Newcastle.

(10) With respect to Clause 2(h):

- a. Lecturing staff teach in ways that comply with the:
  - i. [Supporting Students with Disability Policy](#)
  - ii. University of Newcastle Policy on [Inclusive Language](#);
  - iii. University of Newcastle's Code of Practice for Teaching and Learning;
  - iv. [Disability Discrimination Act \(1992\)](#);
  - v. New South Wales [Anti-Discrimination Act \(1977\)](#), New South Wales Anti-Discrimination (Racial Vilification) Amendment Act (1989) and the Commonwealth [Racial Discrimination Act \(1975\)](#);
  - vi. [Sex Discrimination Act \(1984\)](#);
  - vii. University of Newcastle Disability Action Plan;
  - viii. University of Newcastle Equity Strategy,
  - ix. University of Newcastle Student Equity Plan; and
  - x. University of Newcastle Ethnic Affairs Priority Statement

## Status and Details

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## Glossary Terms and Definitions

**"Prerequisite"** - A condition or requirement which must be fulfilled for admission to a course or program (sometimes called 'requisite').

**"Class"** - When referring to a class attended by Students, a class is any teaching and learning activity of a course. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Assumed knowledge"** - The knowledge base upon which a course builds and which is deemed necessary at the commencement of that course to succeed in that course.

**"Course"** - When referring to a course offered by the University, a course is a set of learning activities or learning opportunities with defined, assessed and recorded learning outcomes. A course will be identified by an alphanumeric course code and course title. Course types include core courses, compulsory courses, directed courses, capstone courses and electives. For all other uses of this term, the generic definition applies.

**"Student"** - A person formally enrolled in a course or active in a program offered by the University or affiliated entity.

**"Disability"** - As defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (as amended from time to time).

**"Learning outcome"** - In accordance with the AQF definitions, the expression of a set of knowledge, skills and the application of the knowledge and skills a person has acquired and is able to demonstrate as a result of learning.

**"Staff"** - Means a person who was at the relevant time employed by the University and includes professional and academic staff of the University, by contract or ongoing, as well as conjoint staff but does not include visitors to the University.