



UTS

UNIVERSITY
OF TECHNOLOGY
SYDNEY



Access and Inclusion Plan 2025–2030

Centre for Social Justice & Inclusion

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Development of the plan

The Access and Inclusion Plan 2025–2030 is UTS’s sixth Disability Action Plan. It builds on the progress of previous plans to enhance our provision of education, employment, and digital facilities that are accessible and inclusive for all people.

This plan was informed by a formal evaluation and research study that explored how best to engage people with lived experience of disability in the planning process.

This helped guide meaningful and accessible consultation activities, ensuring the voices and expertise of people with lived experience of disability shaped the direction of the plan from the outset.

Face-to-face and online appreciative inquiry sessions were held to inform the development of the plan. These sessions included staff and students with lived experience of disability, alongside those with a professional or personal interest in accessibility at UTS. Targeted consultation was also undertaken with staff and teams responsible for accessibility across the university.

UTS aims to be a leading tertiary education provider and employer for people of all abilities. This means moving beyond compliance to model intersectional disability inclusion. UTS affirms our commitment to eliminate, as far as possible, direct and indirect disability discrimination. We will remove barriers to full participation in education, employment, and social activities by incorporating access and inclusion into planning and delivery and providing reasonable adjustments where required. Further, we aim to lead the way in innovative inclusive practice across all our work and to embed universal design into our everyday practices.

Access and Inclusion Plan 2025–2030

In the Access and Inclusion Plan 2025–2030, UTS intends to extend our progress to date through implementing key actions across 5 focus areas:

- Accessible environments
- Culture
- Learning and education
- Employment
- Research and innovation

Accessible environments

UTS will provide accessible services, social opportunities, facilities, and amenities and grounds, ensuring an optimal inclusive experience for students, staff, and visitors.

To do this we will:

- ensure that our policies and practices deliver built and digital environments that are accessible to students, staff, and visitors with disability
- ensure all new digital platforms meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 Level AA and that accessibility experts are engaged from the beginning of development
- ensure information on how UTS supports accessibility and inclusion for staff, students, and community members with disability is easy to find
- provide accessible feedback channels and respond with timely communication and action
- continually review our processes to ensure best practice in our approaches to workplace health and safety for UTS staff with disability
- continually review student housing to ensure optimal accessibility and inclusion for student residents with disability
- work to improve availability of accessible parking and amenities for staff and students with assistance animals.

Culture

UTS will embed a culture of inclusivity that recognises and embraces the value that people with disability bring.

To do this we will:

- ensure our marketing, communications, and events reflect the diversity of the UTS community by affirmatively promoting disability through appropriate language and imagery
- lead the higher education sector in providing opportunities for people with disability to participate in the cultural life of UTS, including art and sport, by developing community partnerships and through a continuing program of accessible and inclusive events
- develop, promote, and celebrate the leadership of people with disability at UTS
- increase opportunities for UTS staff to support community-based disability organisations through the roll out of our Social Justice Leave initiative and brokered volunteering
- champion access and inclusion across the UTS community and formally recognise contributions to inclusive practice.

Learning and education

UTS will ensure that our enrolment and student administrative systems, teaching practices, learning materials, digital learning platforms, curriculum, assessment procedures, and research environments are flexible, accessible, and inclusive for prospective and current students with disability.

To do this we will:

- ensure that the UTS digital learning environment complies with the WCAG 2.2 Level AA
- require all teaching staff to demonstrate an understanding of Inclusive Education Principles and how to deliver and support inclusive education
- provide technical support and guidance for faculties and teaching staff to enhance the delivery of classroom accessibility
- embed accessible practice within curricula, during assessment, and in the professional experience environment
- ensure all digital platforms include enforceable accessibility requirements in vendor contracts and are accessibility tested throughout design and development
- ensure full access to all new systems and websites at UTS by working with relevant staff, vendors, and service providers to incorporate universal design and comply with accessibility standards WCAG 2.2 AA
- establish a central human contact point for all accessibility queries for staff, students, and visitors to triage appropriate support, streamline communication, and improve quality casework and seamless collaboration between support services and faculties
- integrate awareness of accessibility and support for postgraduate research students with disability into researcher development and doctoral supervision development programs
- improve our IT systems and resources to ensure early provision of accessible course materials (i.e., before the commencement of teaching) and promptly resolve flagged issues
- work to constantly improve the student experience for all students with temporary or ongoing disability
- work to provide opportunities for students to experience authentic disability related learning and undertake work integrated learning projects with community-based disability organisations.

Employment

UTS recognises the benefits of a diverse workforce that is reflective of the wider community. We will ensure that our business operations and strategies reflect a long-term, sustainable, independent commitment to social impact, including by actively addressing barriers to employment and professional development for current and future staff with disability.

To do this we will:

- ensure the needs of students with disability are included in UTS employability initiatives
- ensure robust data is available through the UTS Enterprise Resource Planning on numbers of staff with disability to enable the development of improved targets and initiatives
- ensure all UTS hiring managers undertake training in unconscious bias in recruitment
- embed a culture that supports workplace flexibility across UTS
- ensure all UTS supervisors/managers undertake Disability Confident Manager training
- ensure workplace adjustments reflect international best practice, are adequately resourced, and include access to flexible work arrangements
- include Disability Awareness training in onboarding and embed access and inclusion responsibilities in staff work plans
- support staff to build the capabilities and confidence to manage, teach, collaborate, and engage with staff, students, and other stakeholders with disability and act in support of access and inclusion

- ensure staff with disability have access to accessible IT (including personal devices when they have not been issued a UTS device), technical expertise, support, and guidance.

Research and innovation

UTS will provide research leadership by working with industry and community partners to co-create a more accessible and inclusive world for people with disability.

To do this we will:

- develop a UTS Disability Research Capability statement that details our distinctive capabilities in innovative industry and community engaged research
- create a career development strategy to strengthen support (including IT support) for higher degree research students and researchers with disability at UTS
- increase regular engagement with disability focused community partners to identify opportunities for strong innovative research partnerships
- increase our disability research impact and engagement with public debate on disability and inclusion through seeking opportunities for policy advocacy
- explore opportunities for innovative and collaborative disability research and practice with an intersectional focus, in particular building on research in the Indigenous and disability spaces
- use UTS's own purchasing power and that of the Australian Universities Procurement Network to influence our supply chain to be increasingly accessible and inclusive.

Communicating the plan

The plan will be communicated widely across UTS through staff and student channels. It will be made available online on the UTS website and will be provided to the Australian Human Rights Commission for online publication.

Implementation

All UTS staff, including senior executives, managers, and supervisors, are responsible for implementing the actions in this plan.

Where it is identified that staff need to undertake training, all staff will be required to undertake such activities as part of their paid duties.

Governance

The UTS Vice-Chancellor's Social Justice and Inclusion Committee has overall responsibility for monitoring, evaluating, and ensuring the implementation of this plan.

UTS welcomes feedback on this Access and Inclusion Plan, which can be provided to the Centre for Social Justice and Inclusion at:

- Telephone: +61 2 9514 1084
- Email: equity@uts.edu.au
- Website: socialjustice.uts.edu.au