*Include*All

a toolkit for enriching learning, teaching and assessment

This Toolkit has been designed to be flexible. It can be used as one document or as individual sections.

New sections will be added in the future as necessary.

The Toolkit will be available on the University website to download: www.staffs.ac.uk/inclusivepractice .

It is intended that the Toolkit will eventually be accompanied by case studies of local good practice.

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August 2015

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*Include*All - Core Concepts: Introduction

What does 'Include**All**' really mean and why does it matter?

*Include*All, as you might guess, is about including **all** students, and it is the University's approach to inclusive practice within teaching. It involves "issues relating to all students and to types of teaching and learning that fully and equitably include everyone in the classroom or in the programme cohort" (Grace and Gravestock, 2009, p.1).

Inclusive practice involves minimising any potential barriers to learning experienced by the way the curriculum is designed and delivered. Contrary to popular belief, it is not just about making adjustments to 'level the playing field' for individual disabled students, although where appropriate, this is extremely important and part of our legislative duty. Instead, it is about acknowledging that we have students of different abilities, nationalities and ethnicities, genders, ages, sexual orientations and religions. The QAA (Quality Assurance Agency) refer to this as the 'diversity of protected characteristics' (UK Quality Code for HE, Part B:B1, p4).

It moves away too, from the idea that we have 'traditional' – full-time undergraduates aged 18 to 21 with 3 or 4 A levels - and 'non-traditional'– mature, PT, distance, FE to HE, international, qualifications other than A levels, first in family, Access – to just students, individuals who happen to come from different educational, dispositional, circumstantial and cultural backgrounds (Thomas and May, 2010). This has nothing to do with academic standards or quality but about tackling inequality (Brink, 2008).

It also recognises that students do not have equal access to prevailing educational power structures (Allen, 1998). Some students may not feel secure in their sense of belonging and feel they do not fit in with the 'norm'. This inhibits full engagement and therefore educational experience, retention and attainment (Mann, 2005 and NUS, 2012). It also recognises that dominance and privilege give some students an advantage (Mills et al, 2011).
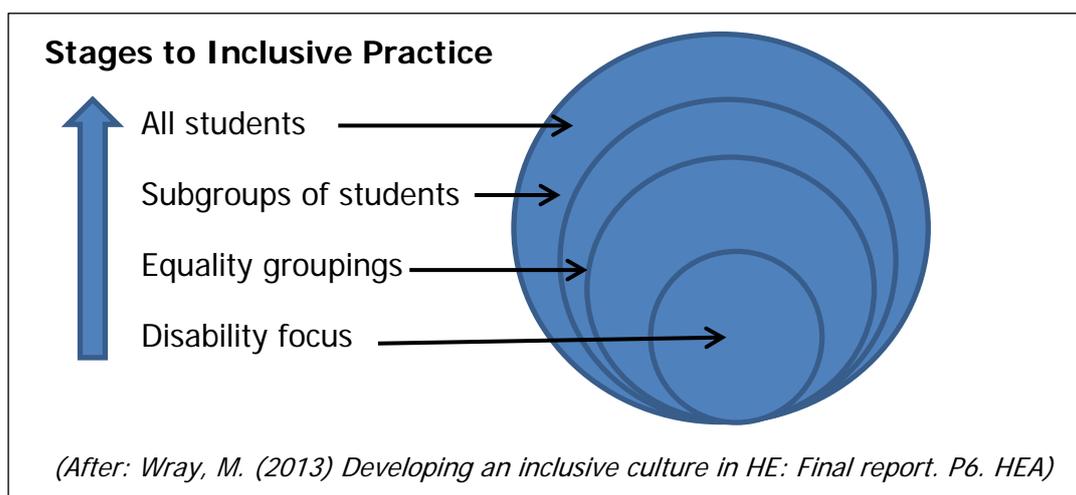
An inclusive practice approach enables individual students to feel they belong and thus develop academically professionally and personally to fulfil their potential. For the QAA an inclusive environment "anticipates the varied requirements of learners and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to education opportunities" (UK Quality Code for HE, 2013, Part B:B1, p5). However, the UK Quality Code also reiterates that while we might be "responsible for providing inclusive learning opportunities and support for learning, the effectiveness with which the learning

opportunities are used, is a matter for students themselves" (UK Quality Code for HE, 2012, Part B:B3, p4).

As a consequence, our *Include*All approach to inclusive practice is about anticipating the breadth of need from a diverse student population, and understanding that **all** students can benefit from changes made to learning materials, teaching approaches and assessment methods. Inclusive teaching is likely to be good teaching, relevant and accessible.

Underpinning our approach is the belief that inclusive practice is, by definition the degree of best fit between an individual learner and their learning environment.

This moves us away from purely reacting to individual 'extra' requirements, through proactively adapting what we are doing to redesigning and transforming our practice, incorporating a universal design approach and changing the systems rather than the individuals. This means the need for specific support is substantially reduced in line with the UK Quality Code for HE. This is summarised in the diagram below:

Stages to Inclusive Practice

All students

Subgroups of students

Equality groupings

Disability focus

(After: Wray, M. (2013) Developing an inclusive culture in HE: Final report. P6. HEA)

A broad diversity of staff and students brings with it different ideas, knowledge and experiences that contribute to an enriched learning environment. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, irrespective of the group or groups to which they belong, whilst also raising aspirations and supporting people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. The NUS (National Union of Students, 2012, p2) talks of liberation as well as equality and diversity in the curriculum:

- **Liberation** – challenging the effects of structural oppression in society

- **Equality** – the curriculum should not disadvantage any students or group of students because of their background or characteristics

- **Diversity** – the curriculum should represent the diversity of contemporary society, facilitating an environment in which all students feel welcome.

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For the NUS this has two strands:

1. Ensuring all students, regardless of profile, have access to the same resources and facilities, feel safe and welcome and have equal chance of success

2. Raising issues and ensuring curriculum content reflects our diverse population, encouraging social inclusion and mutual understanding.

For Margolis (2003), the content of the curriculum sends messages about who is valued in higher education and hence in the professions and workplace.

When the diversity of all students is recognised and valued, their contribution not only adds to, but further enhances, the learning experience of others. We can draw on our students own experiences, backgrounds and beliefs. By adopting this approach, it enables all students to not only access course content but also to fully participate in the required learning and assessment activities. As a consequence, the diversity of students is appreciated, and they are enabled to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and experience, both in teaching sessions and through related assessments.

In essence, we want **all** our students to gain a positive learning experience and thereby reach their full potential. None of our learning materials, teaching approaches or assessment methods should disadvantage any student, so the remainder of this Toolkit is to provide staff who teach with information about good practice on how this can be achieved. None of us are expected to be experts but we can gradually build up experience, sharing what works.

It is anticipated that some of this is already strongly in place in areas of the University, and so the Toolkit might merely be a prompt for reflection, encouraging staff to consider how they can make their existing good practice even better.

For reflection:

Do I know the diverse backgrounds of my students and their implications for learning?	
How do I use curricular, teaching and assessment practices that promote learning for all?	
Do I draw upon the diversity of my students to enhance and enrich the learning of all?	
How do I identify and address inequalities that exist in my teaching environments and promote an inclusive and respectful climate for learning?	

(From CIRTL: Learning through Diversity)

References and background reading

Allen, P. (1998) Towards a Black Construct of Accessibility. In Modood, T. and Acland, T. (eds). *Race and Higher Education.* London: Policy Studies Institute.

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*Include*All - Core Concepts:
Understanding how students learn

As we know, students learn in different ways. This is likely to be influenced by a number of different factors such as their particular learning styles, their own preferences based on experience, and their current needs. We cannot, therefore, assume that how we like to teach will necessarily be the way our students want to learn.

Clearly, it would be impossible either to cater for the needs of every single student in every teaching session, but by using a variety of different approaches, it is likely that we will meet the needs and preferences of the majority in the group and lessen the need for individual adjustments. This will also help students to feel accepted, boosting their self-esteem and confidence in learning.

What our students say:
'The lecturer used different ways to suit all students e.g. group-tasks, presentations, mind-maps, videos and visual aids.'
(Level 4 BA Early Childhood Studies)

In its broadest sense effective learning is likely to occur when opportunities to learn involve (JISC, 2004; p11):

- The right resources

- The right mode of delivery

- The right context and right learners

- With the right level of support.

This lies at the heart of an '*Include*All' approach to teaching in which we should be aiming to not disadvantage anyone. Indeed it is important to remember that some students will have particular challenges if all of our teaching was predominantly using one approach.

Anticipating that in your groups you have will have students who might show a preference for Visual, Auditory, Read/Write or Kinaesthetic learning, the following table gives some ideas of what strategies they may favour.

Visual – learning through seeing	**Auditory –** learning through listening
• Annotating power-point presentations • Underlining key words • Colour-coding/highlighting • Mind-mapping • Converting words into symbols • Converting hand-outs into diagrams	• Discussing in groups • Lecture-capture through audio-recordings • Reading notes out aloud • Gaining comprehension or coming to a conclusion by talking it
Read/Write – learning through reading and writing	**Kinaesthetic** - learning through touching, moving and doing
• Taking notes in class • Re-writing notes • Writing and prioritising lists • Reading material prior to the class • Annotating tables and diagrams	• Being actively engaged in group-work • Hands-on projects • Problem solving by experimentation • Moving about the room to think

Use of a learning styles inventory might be a useful way to explore the learning preferences of students. This can sometimes be a purposeful induction activity in which approaches to learning can be examined and discussed. An easy to use and accessible learning styles questionnaire can be found at:

- http://www.businessballs.com/vaklearningstylestest.htm
- http://www.businessballs.com/kolblearningstyles.htm

Checklist for reflection: learning styles

Having explored learning styles with your students in your planning you may wish to reflect on the following questions:

In a typical teaching session, what percentage of my content is aimed at: • Visual learners? • Auditory learners? • Learners who prefer reading and writing? • Kinaesthetic learners?	
What percentage of my teaching session is aligned to the needs of each of the following learning preferences: • Students who reflect first rather than readily join in (reflectors) • Students who 'jump straight in' rather than reflect first (activists) • Students who prefer theoretical underpinnings to arguments (theorists) • Students who like to work out how something could be implemented in practice (pragmatists)	
What simple changes could I make to my teaching methods in order to meet a wider variety of learning preferences?	
What changes to my assessments (either formative or summative) might meet the learning preferences of a wider group of students?	
How can I further integrate technology to ensure that students can access my teaching content in different ways?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities are:

Changes to be introduced	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

Reference: JISC (2004) *Effective Practice in e-Learning*. Bristol: Hefce.

*Include*All - Core Concepts: Framework of support

Members of academic teaching staff are of course not expected to provide an inclusive environment by themselves. Many parts of the organisation work together to provide a framework to support for inclusive practice:

QAA UK Quality Code For HE

via Quality Enhancement Service and Faculty quality processes

General student services:

Faculty Guidance Advisors

Students' Union groups e.g. mature students, Multicultural Network Students' Union Advisors

Chaplaincy

Nursery

Individual Approaches to Inclusive Practice

as discussed within modules and awards

Physical estate: constantly improving accessiblity in teaching spaces, buildings and the general environment

Specific support:

academic study skills (inlcuding dyslexia support)

language skills

International Student Support

Disability support

technology and assitive technology support

*Include*All - Inclusive by Design: General teaching sessions

Getting it right from the start

When planning and designing your award, module or individual session there are a number of questions it is useful to consider - Do your learning outcomes enable students with a variety of needs to succeed? How, for example, can someone whose learning style better suits them to activity-based tasks, succeed on your module? Can you plan in a range of learning experiences so as to meet different needs? Do you need students to either 'understand' or 'demonstrate competence in' a certain skill and how do these relate to the Staffordshire Graduate attributes?

> **What our students say**
> *'The teaching is fantastic; the content has engaged me and I feel inspired.'* (Level 4 Film & Media Production)

What are the core requirements of this module/course? What aspects of how the module course is designed, delivered and assessed might prevent some students from achieving these core requirements? Can these be redesigned to reduce or remove these potential barriers, not just for our current students in anticipation of those who might participate in the future?

In planning your teaching sessions, you will also need to consider the extent to which you are expecting your students to build on existing knowledge or experience. Is there a pre-requisite for existing knowledge and/or experience? How, for example, do you make sure that a mature student following a non-traditional route into your award can use their experience as much as other students' A-level knowledge? If some pre-requisite knowledge of skills are critical for student success on your module, how can make sure all students can access help to gain this?

> **What our students say**
> *'The fact that we can choose completely different modules and different course to potentially design our own degrees is great.'* (Level 6 Sports Development & Coaching)

Inclusive practice can be considered:

- In advance – learning outcomes and content; accessibility of venue and materials

- During – delivery style

- After – accessibility of follow up material and sources; management of discussion forums and so on; reviewing how the session went and what changes could be made for next time.

Analysing your teaching sessions

In planning your teaching sessions, what proportion of the time will be spent on students listening as opposed to engaging in activities or group-work? Which of your students might this help or disadvantage? Who spoke up and who did not? How can those who did not contribute this time be encouraged to do so? How does your approach to teaching help all your students meet the module outcomes? What could you change?

Remember students often turn to friends for clarification about language, terminology or what is on the screen. They may ask friends for help rather than asking for a change in practice or contacting disability support. Students often do not want to make a fuss, so you may need to be proactive.

What students say:
'I don't like to go up to a lecturer and tell them I am deaf because I am a bit shy. I don't know them; I don't want to be treated differently; I don't want to be treated differently; I don't want to have a lot of attention focused on me and in any case I don't know what difference if would really make anyway '
(Student with hearing loss, Nicholson 2008)

Building academic skills

As curriculum and pedagogy moves away from transmission learning and testing to independent learning and critical analysis, it is recognised that most students, not just those from other educational cultures, need a structure and more formal way of developing higher level academic skills. Students start their courses with a wide variety of previous educational experience and structuring development of such skills as critical analysis helps ensure all students get the same start. Some students will need a clear lead that it is important to challenge what is said, criticise and debate published research. Some international students for instance might feel this is rude or inappropriate (see Working across cultural and linguistic boundaries).

Most students will need to learn to express themselves using an academic style of writing as they progress as undergraduates, learning to manipulate different syntax and grammar; growing their vocabulary to express concepts; learning to question, analyse and problem solve. Lower self-esteem, for example some students with dyslexia, or low perception of academic ability, for example some mature students, hampers learning, so these students may need more support as they build their skills.

Some students may need guidance on taking notes – whether linear or mind mapped - how, what and when. Students sometimes also have difficulties in coping with different lecturers having different expectations of what notes are for and how crucial they are.

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Managing behaviour

Creating a professional environment free from discrimination and harassment is part of inclusive practice. Students should feel safe, welcomed and their opinions respected and valued. For Thomas and May (2010, p12), classroom climate and the 'ways in which power is exercised and dynamics are managed' is very important, as is the balance of opportunities to voice differences of opinion or perspectives whilst remaining appropriate.

Establishing ground rules right at the beginning can help provide this environment. These can be decided by the students themselves:

- When is a student late? And what happens? Be aware that some cultures have different expectations around time – you might expect a 9am start to be just that whereas some international students might interpret this as 9.15ish.

- What are the rules about mobile and internet use? Students might be following up relevant links or contributing to discussions online.

- What about chatting to friends? Students might be seeking clarification of language or meaning.

Discussions may highlight cliques or dominant personalities which need to be managed. You may need to develop techniques to challenge inappropriate language and behaviour perhaps in relation to mental health, sexism, racism homophobia or transphobia. Sometimes a quiet word with the perpetrator solves the issue, but try not to punish the victim by isolating them or leaving them feeling they cannot attend.

Occasionally more serious incidents occur such as bullying, verbal harassment or even physical violence. There are policies and procedures in place including the *Behaviour and Fitness to Study Policy* which outline what to do if an incident occurs.

What does an inclusive lecture look like?

What students say:
'*I'd like it that all lecturers use a microphone so everyone can hear easily'.*
(Student with hearing loss, ECU Sensory Access in HE, 2009)

- Venue – most lecture theatres and large teaching rooms are accessible, but some students might need additional furniture such as a chair with a back-rest or a small table at the front of a lecture theatre; notetakers or personal assistants may need to be accommodated; you as a lecturer may need a particular environment due to a disability.

- Consideration of the timing of lectures to take account of school drop-off or finish.

- Signers or interpreters for hearing impaired students need regular breaks.

- If there is a mic use it – those who are hearing impaired will need it or may be using the associated induction loop; if there are questions use a roving mic or repeat the question so all can hear before answering.

- A paced delivery that allows for notetaking or translation.

- Pause for clarification or breaks to review material, react or question.

- Linkage from the previous session or to the course.

- Recap of the main points.

- Link to next session.

- Ensure good practice around the use of presentation software (see Inclusive by Design: PowerPoint and Prezi).

- If writing on a flipchart/white board/smart board stop talking when your back is to the group.

- Describe demonstrations.

- Use clear, clean language that avoids metaphors; explain jargon and use a glossary for technical terms

- Recording of general lectures should be allowed for a student's own use. It is common practice in some universities now to routinely record main lectures to go on the learning platform.

- Finish on time to allow everyone to get to their next session.

- With large numbers catering for unknown individual adjustments is very difficult, so anticipation is the key.

What does an inclusive seminar/tutorial look like?

This of course is very similar to that of an inclusive lecture, but with smaller numbers it is easier to get to know student's individual needs, and ways of working, and to check things are going alright.

IT suites should be accessible and with relevant software but a student might have specialist assistive software on their own laptop

What our students say
'We get the chance to explore things in our own way.'
(Level 4 Film & Media Production)

Sometimes it can be very difficult to match all the different requirements and take time to get things right. The first session might be spent sorting out the environment as well as setting expectations and getting to know everyone. This however is important to help students settle in and start making friends as well as feeling positive about their learning.

Innovation in teaching

Lecturers are encouraged to use technology in learning, teaching and assessment and there is plenty of support available to try innovative methods. In many cases technology can improve accessibility and enable students to engage more effectively.

- Support for Technology Enhanced Learning is available from the Academic Development Unit and Information Services –

  www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/adu/tel/index.jsp

One of the newer developments to help all students feel included is to use a 'flipped classroom' technique. This puts the onus on them coming to the class prepared for the learning activity which is being planned. To learn more about this technique, please follow the link below:
http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/programs/teaching_insights/pdf/insight9_flipped_classrooms.pdf

Further hints, tips and background reading

- Carroll, J. and Ryan, J. (eds) (2005) *Teaching International Students.* Abingdon: Routledge.

- Mortiboys, A. (2010) *How to Become an Effective Teacher in Higher Education: Answers to Lecturers Questions*. Milton Keynes: OUP.

- National Union of Students (2012). *Liberation, Equality and Diversity in the Curriculum*. London: NUS.

- Thomas, L. and May, H. (2010). *Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*. York: Higher Education Academy.

Checklist for reflection: General teaching

Do I:

Take a coherent approach which is anticipatory and proactive?	
Provide an environment for effective learning for all?	
Ensure materials are accessible and representative and where relevant, challenging?	
Need to make any other adjustments to my communication methods?	
Do I need any extra equipment, furniture this time? Different tools? Rooms?	
Does everyone know how to get extra help?	
Know how to use a variety of new technologies to enhance inclusive practice?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes to be introduced	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All - Inclusive by Design: Group-work

Group-work is an important element on many courses and so it is important to plan it effectively, considering a range of different implications. Working with a variety of others to achieve an outcome of course helps students develop skills to communicate effectively with a wide range of people from different backgrounds and cultures in preparation for employment in a global society.

What our students say
'I have valued the time spent in small groups to discuss problems and increase my understanding of topics.'
Level 6 BSc Hons Nursing Practice (Adult)

Essentially we cannot assume that all students will know what to do within group-work, or have automatically have the skills and patience to work effectively with others who are different from themselves. Rather than allowing groups to self-form there are other ways to make it a successful and effective experience.

The following hints and tips might be of use:

- Groups can be different sizes, from pairs to 7-10.

- Ensure the group size allows all students to take part.

- Encourage culturally mixed, integrated groups and a mix of language background if you have International students.

- Ensure any students with specific needs are supported – students with hearing and visual impairments and Asperger syndrome may have particular difficulty with groups (see section on Enhancing Practice).

- Be prepared to manage any conflict.

- Think about the most effective way to arrange students into groups. This helps students to mix and work together Here are some ways:
    - Giving each student a number and then asking all 1s, 2s, 3s etc. to sit together.
    - First name/last name alphabetical.
    - Giving out coded labels.

- Encourage the setting of ground rules e.g. everyone to have an equal opportunity to contribute and be listened to; everyone to be treated with dignity and respect; no responses should offend others; take time to communicate; keeping the focus on learning not winning arguments.

- Fun icebreakers can be useful before more focused work begins.

- If you have a hearing impaired student then it is important to sit in a circle so everyone's faces can be seen; get people to raise hand when they wish to speak; and to speak one at a time.

- If you have a student who is visually impaired then it is good practice for everyone to introduce themselves and/or say who they are before they make their contribution; this is especially important whilst people are getting to know each other.

- Be clear with students about the task; the roles required (e.g. scribe, facilitator, presenter) and the timeframe for completion of the task.

- Be aware of dominance within groups by an individual or a few students. To counteract this, set tasks that require the opinion of all students to be heard. Some group dynamics is inevitable bound up with learning preferences but it is important to watch that this does not stray into ignoring others or even bullying.

- However, students should also not be forced to contribute – the more comfortable they feel, and therefore part of the group, the more confident they will feel to be able to make contributions. This is one of the responsibilities of the lecturer as well as the group themselves. Starting with pairs or threes and then building up the group size can help here.

- The group will also be a mix of learning preferences – activists who leap in and talk, and theorists, who sit back, listen, collate and then contribute.

- Consider any cultural sensitivities, including that of gender, that might make participation from all students difficult.

- If working in group to achieve a given end is part of an assessment, then consider including marks for working together and a reflection on how they think the group worked.

- Synchronous and Asynchronous discussion boards can be useful as they are not face to face and can go at a slower pace. This is a good way work with cultural and linguistic differences, distance learners or part-time students, students with Asperger Syndrome or dyslexia. They are also useful for visually and hearing impaired students as they can contribute at their own base backed up with assistive technology.

Checklist for reflection: Group-work

Have I:

Explained the purpose of the activity and how it aligns to the learning outcomes for the session?	✓
Clarified how this activity will be either assessed or fed back to the whole group at the end?	
Purposely divided the students to ensure they get experience of working successfully with those who are different to themselves?	
Purposely mixed home, European and international students so that inter-cultural learning can take place?	
Explained what the students need to do?	
Established some ground rules which will guarantee that all students can be treated equally and with respect?	
Made sure any dominant students do not prevent quieter group members (and sometimes students whose first language is not English) from expressing their views?	
Encouraged only one student to talk at any one time?	
Backed up verbal instructions with written information? (this is particularly important for students whose first language is not English including sign users)	
Outlined the roles of each of the group members?	
Suggested how the different roles within the group can be assigned?	
Made sure that any student with specific learning needs has been accommodated – for example - hearing or visually impaired students; students with Asperger Syndrome; any note-takers; English as a second language?	
Explained how you will monitor a) the progress of the group and the contribution of individual students? If it is part of an assessment, is this being aspect being given a mark?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes to be introduced	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All - Inclusive by Design: Assessment and Feedback

What are the key issues?

Nationally, within the NSS survey, responses to the questions relating to assessment and feedback show much lower satisfaction rates compared to responses to other questions. Indeed, the issue of needing to make assessment more accessible to students has been recognised in the sector for the past couple of decades. It is acknowledged that 'students can escape from the effects of poor teaching [but] they cannot, by definition if they want to graduate, escape from the effects of poor assessment (Boud, 1995). Students actively want to understand lecturers' expectations in assignments and exams.

Waterfield and West (2006) suggest that making assessment inclusive ensures it does not pose a disadvantage to any student or group of students. Ideally this should not be based on a compensatory approach but on the Social Model of Disability, endeavouring to remove inequalities and barriers.

With inclusive assessment all students should have a way of demonstrating that they have achieved the learning outcomes of their module/course. An inclusive assessment approach should not make assumptions about the needs of certain students; but instead consider the strengths and weaknesses of all students, utilising a wide range of options and if possible giving a choice of assessment methods (NUS, 2012).

> **What our students say**
> *'The course content is varied and allows students to explore different avenues when completing assignments.'*
> (Level 6 BA Sports Development & Coaching)

> **What our students say**
> *'Assignment feedback has been very useful and has helped me in improving my overall marks throughout my time as this university.'*
> (Level 6 BSc Hons PE & Youth Sports Coaching)

What are the implications for practice?

Here at Staffordshire University we are keen to make assessment more accessible to all students.

Our current Assessment Principles and Policy covers inclusive and equitable assessment and states that:

> *'The University is committed to the provision of an environment which encourages and properly supports a diverse learning community. The*

University will continue to work towards ensuring that assessment tasks and procedures are designed to be inclusive and do not disadvantage any group or individual (for example students with disabilities, students with varied cultural backgrounds). Programme teams should show that they are aware of the University's regulations on the assessment of disabled students. The equality impact assessment carried out early in the process of planning a programme should explicitly cover assessment as well as other aspects of the learning and teaching strategy for the programme.'

At Staffordshire University, we also advocate seven principles for good feedback

- Be an interactive process involving student-tutor and student-student dialogue

- Facilitate the development of self-assessment and reflection

- Clarify for students and staff, through dialogue, what good or bad performance actually is in the assignment or task

- Be developmental, progressive and transferable to new learning context

- Be ongoing and embedded in the learning process

- Motivate, build esteem and confidence to support sustainable lifelong learning

- Support the development of learning groups and communities.

What works well?

Some of this can be achieved by teaching staff making a few small changes to the planning and delivery of assessments. The following aspects of good assessment practice are therefore offered for consideration. Much of this is common sense, but might be of use as an aide memoire for individuals or subject teams to review their current practice:

- In planning and reviewing/monitoring of awards, include a variety of assessment methods across modules to do full justice to the students' diverse knowledge, skills, learning styles and academic background.

- Consider using more diverse modes of assessment which do not focus on writing e.g. practical's, presentations, posters.

- Incorporate the principles of good assessment (constructive alignment between module learning outcomes and assessment criteria, clear, transparent and explicit criteria and constructive feedback) so that assessment is for learning rather than an end in itself.

- If possible, include a choice of assessment methods so as to cater for students with different learning preferences. This benefits all students and will avoid having to formally make adjustments for students with different needs. Exams in

particular can be resource heavy in terms of individual room requirements and invigilation.

- If exams have to be used (e.g. because of Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirements), try to design them as inclusive as possible by considering:

  o The length of the exam

  o The type (open or closed book)

  o Structure of each question

  o Weighting of all the questions

  o Can answers be typed (writing long-hand can be a barrier to success)

  o Open choice of questions

- Design assessments so that they are inclusive of cultural and experiential diversity.

- Schedule assessments with colleagues across your award so that assessment overload at particular times can be avoided wherever possible.

- Check the assessment brief for clarity of language to reduce barriers to understanding what to do.

- At the earliest opportunity within a module, explain the required assessments, Students often benefit from more preparation time; do not assume that just because assessments are documented in the handbook, the students will necessarily understand it.

- Ensure that students actually understand the assessment e.g. test their understanding by setting a task such as asking them to explain it to another student.

- Build in formative assessment opportunities so that students can practise and receive feedback on the necessary skills or learning tasks.

- Allocate time for an assessment preparation session. An effective use of such a session would be to:

  o Prepare example answers for each of the broad assessment grades and incorporate a session into the module where students mark these (thereby getting used to the criteria and requirements)

  o Reiterate good referencing and critical analysis practice to pre-empt any problems with plagiarism (particularly if international students are part of the cohort – see Enhancing Practice: Teaching across cultural and linguistic boundaries). Ideally academic skills should be built into programmes early on and Information Services has advice for students www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/infoservices/learning_support/refzone/plagiarism/

- Sign-post to any additional student-support resources, indicating the timeline which these need to be accessed for positive impact on the next assessment.

- Annotating reading lists to indicate which texts are essential and which desirable and if possible specific chapters or sections. This helps students who find scanning text difficult, for instance students with dyslexia, students who are visually impaired using very large print, students using screen reading software. It also helps students whose first language is not English and students who are new to academia.

- Where courses lead directly to qualifications and have core competencies specified by professional bodies, essential, non-negotiable skills or knowledge need to be highlighted clearly, preferably before the course starts.

- However professional bodies also have to take the Equality Act 2010 into account and are usually open to testing in different ways or finding alternative ways to achieve learning outcomes. There are recognised adjustments now for assessments such as OSCEs.

- Generally being less rigid within the programme specification, building in flexibility in terms of expectation, gives greater scope to achieving the course requirements in alternative ways without compromising legitimate, justifiable competence standards. The adjustment is to the way the students are assessed not the competency.

Further hints, tips and background reading

University policy: [Reasonable Adjustments in Assessment for Students with Disabilities](#) and [Assessment Principles, Policy and Procedures](#)

Boud, D. (1995) *Enhancing Learning Through Self-Assessment*. London: Routledge.

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Checklist for reflection: Assessment

Have you:

Made sure that the assessment methods you have chosen are accessible to students who learn/communicate in different ways or at least do not disadvantage them?	✓
Considered introducing a choice of assessments?	
Considered involving students in the design of assessment and agreeing marking criteria?	
Checked the language used in the assessment to make sure that it is not a barrier to students understanding what to do?	
Checked assessment requirements so that they are understood by all students?	
Explained fully about the assessment, avoiding assumptions that because it is written in the module guide, the students will automatically know what to do particularly for students whose first language is not English?	
Built in formative assessments to a) test ongoing understanding and b) receive formative feedback and c) prepare students for the summative assessment?	
Devoted some of your teaching time to preparing the students for the assessment and ensuring they understand the requirements?	
Explained what plagiarism is, how it is sometimes interpreted differently in certain cultures, given guidance on how to avoid it?	
Provided or signposted to guidance/study skills support for any students who have not recently done a formal assessment?	
Provided examples of assessment/answers which meet the different grading criteria?	
If assessing by examination, given hints and tips on revision, particularly to students whose previous educational experience was not assessed through examinations?	
Thought about the timing of hand in deadlines and exams to take account of the needs of carers and with an awareness of religious observance?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All - Inclusive by Design: Teaching materials

PowerPoint©, Prezi© or similar

If using PowerPoint (PPT) or a similar presentation software, there are some simple steps which can be taken that make them accessible to all students:

> **What our students say**
> *'The structure of the power-points is good and the links help me to find relevant information quickly without trawling the net for hours'*
> (Level 4 Early Childhood studies)

- Try to upload presentations and other materials to Blackboard in sufficient time prior to the teaching session to allow students to download their own copies. This allows students with specific learning needs to adapt the hand-out to their own requirements e.g. font-size or paper-colour. It also allows students to prepare for the session and know what to expect. There is no evidence this reduces attendance. Prezi presentations can be harder to print out but students can also download them to their own devices to explore in their own way.

- It is useful to at least have the University logo, your details and the course details as well as the date on the materials for future reference.

- Background contrasts should be good but not dazzling; off-white is better than white.

- Use a sans serif accessible font for a PPT presentation – the University recommends Tahoma (see www.staffs.ac.uk/brand)

- Typically for a lecture you will need a font-size of 28 or more – but this depends on the size of the screen/room; if in doubt check from the back of the room

- Left justify the text so sentences all start in the same place and the words are evenly spaced with no visual 'rivers' which might make it hard to follow visually.

- Try not to make slides too text-dense (3 main bullet points per slide is conducive to effective learning) – extra detail can always go into the notes section and/or accessed from BlackBoard.

- If using bullets, still end with punctuation – full stop, semi colon or comma – this enables a screen reader user to distinguish between ideas.

- Label images and tables

- Tables and graphs should still be able to be read. You could include highlights on the slides and put the main data on BlackBoard.

- Think about bias when choosing images – opt for as diverse range as possible

- Vocalise all the content of the slide for students with visual impairments, dyslexia, language differences and so on.

- If using film-clips, where possible, incorporate accessible multi-media such as audio description or subtitles, so as to cater to both visual and auditory learners and sensory impaired students.

- Think about recording a voice over so students can listen and work through the material again, or be able to access the lecture if they miss it through ill-health, caring for a child/relative and so on.

'Hand-outs' and other documents

When writing hand-outs, similar rules around the clarity of the information apply. The following checklist may be of use. Have I:

What our students say
'The hand-outs were easy to read, detailed and plentiful.'
(Level 5 Maths & Stats)

Hints and Tips for clear, accessible documents	✓
Used a sans serif font e.g. Arial or Tahoma, and a font size of 12 point as a minimum (a document can be made smaller – printed out 2 to a sheet for instance but cannot be enlarged)?	
Aligned the text to the left so that spaces between words and letters are uniform and the information is easier to read?	
Used clear, clean language free from jargon and metaphor? (NB the readability feature in Word will help with this)	
Structured the material into short paragraphs in order to break complex information into chunks?	
Used heading styles in Word to enable the document to be displayed in outline and/or navigated by a screen reader (using the heading tags)?	
Provided a glossary of terms and abbreviations when introducing new material/concepts?	
Ensured that the text is not too dense and there is reasonable space between lines and paragraphs?	
Used bulleted lists where possible, and for long lists, used numbered bullets (making the information easy to remember and refer to)?	
Used **bold** to emphasis text or *italics* rather than underlining to avoid confusion with web links? Not used capitalisation?	
Displayed information so that it is visually stimulating, using images, clearly labelled charts or tables (if appropriate to the content)?	
Used positive/ appropriate language when referring to particular groups of people? Included diverse images and, if appropriate, names?	
Made them available to students before the teaching session? (this is likely to lead to greater understanding and in-class engagement and gives students time to prepare and think critically prior to the session).	

*Include*All - Inclusive by Design:
Making the most of BlackBoard

Blackboard and accessibility

Blackboard is designed to be accessible to students and conforms to international standards for accessibility. It includes the following features some of which are aimed at users and some at tutors when writing Blackboard materials:

- High Contrast setting: any user can select this option from the log-in page

- Text size: this can be changed using browser commands - see guide on log-in page

- Quick links: allows simple access to all the headings in the page for ease of navigation. Click the icon shown here on the right on any page:

- Readable by screen-readers - users can download a tutorial by clicking the following link: Blackboard Learn Screen Reader Tutorial.

- Tutors have the option to include alt-text when images are inserted in Blackboard content so screen-readers can access image descriptions.

- Tutors can use the styles feature in all text entry boxes to enable the creation of consistent text layout (similar to Word styles feature – see Inclusive by Design: Producing accessible teaching materials.

Click here for a full list of Blackboard's accessibility features

Adding Learning materials to Blackboard

- Follow the good practice guidance for Word and PowerPoint from Inclusive by Design: Teaching Materials) before adding to Blackboard.

- Be aware that PDF does not always work with assistive technologies especially if heading styles were not included in the original document; a reader may not be able to alter the background colour or contrast and although there is zoom, the document font size cannot be increased for printing.

- If you have students who are visually impaired try to put materials on in both Word as well as PDF for maximum flexibility.

- Film clips, including YouTube, should have audio subtitles and transcripts if possible; this caters for both visually impaired and hearing impaired students.

- It is good practice to tag images with an audio description for visually impaired students using a screen-reader.

- Voiceover on PowerPoint can be a useful way of capturing, giving a lecture, or providing background information on material.

Learning activities in Blackboard

Using online learning tools is often a new skill and a challenge for many students. Some suggestions for ensuring that students use Blackboard effectively:

- At induction, explain to students what materials are available in Blackboard and how they can use them for learning.

- Highlight the Staffordshire Graduate Attributes, employability and digital literacy skills they will be developing as they access materials and engage in online learning activities. Find out more about digital literacy on the JISC Developing Digital Literacies page.

- Include some practice activities and give feedback that will help them build digital skills and confidence in using Blackboard.

- Discussion boards, whether synchronous or asynchronous, are often a more accessible and comfortable way of engaging many students who might want to take their time contributing – this might be because of using English as a second language (International Students or sign language users; students with Asperger Syndrome, hearing or visually impaired students, students with dyslexia).

- Check part-time students are able to access Blackboard from home.

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes to be introduced	By when	Indicators that it will make my practice more inclusive

*Include*All - Inclusive by Design: Curriculum content and discipline specific practice

What are the key issues?

As discussed at the start in Core Concepts: Introduction, the content of a course and modules is of course as an important part of inclusive design as the delivery, in providing a positive learning environment for all our students. The underlying principle is about enhancing and enriching the curriculum rather than an intrusion into academic freedom.

Our teaching is bound up in sharing our interest, knowledge and research into our own discipline. However it is useful to recognise this is rooted in our own context, experience and culture and tied up in our socio-cultural influences, educational experiences, identity and culture. We can then start to assess our own biases and challenge them.

Sometimes without realising or stopping to question, the core sense of a discipline can be rooted in a white, western/Eurocentric, and often male, arena. This of course can be off-putting for many students, signalling that they do not belong or that their views are not valued. 'What we include in the curriculum and how we teach it are intrinsically linked and together form the basis of the dominant culture provided by the students' department' (Gunn, 2010, p5). Allen (1998) was challenging this as far back as 1998 with the suggestion that, for instance, Black students were impeded by the systems and prevailing stereotypes and questioned why Black history and culture did not seem relevant in curricula.

Our students are, of course, not just acquiring skills and knowledge but also preparing to work and practice in diverse communities, often in a global context. Broad and relevant materials across the diversity of human experience will help them do that.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Age diversity

Assumptions about what interests and abilities a particular age group has crops up in all kinds of unlikely places. Students in their seventies are just as capable (or not) as younger students when it comes to technology enhanced learning. Challenging stereotypes like this and respecting age is important especially in a University like

ours which has such a diverse age range of students. Students will go out into employment and professional situations to work with people of all ages.

Racial, ethnic and cultural diversity

UK society is now a multicultural one, so images, case studies and examples need to reflect this and be checked for racial bias or negative views of certain races or cultures. However bias may go deeper than this. Historically research and knowledge has often been based on a white, western/Eurocentric viewpoint. For a different perspective have a look at the following clip on YouTube – students giving their views on 'Why is my curriculum white?' -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dscx4h2l-Pk   and also
http://www.nus.org.uk/en/news/why-is-my-curriculum-white/

Sadly, a small percentage of respondents to a recent major survey by the National Union of Students described the learning environment as 'racist'. In the same survey Black students reported the learning environment to be cliquey and isolating; felt left out and invisible to lecturers; found that the curriculum did not reflect issues of diversity and did not feel able to bring their perspective as Black students to lectures and seminars. This resulted in them feeling their views were not valued. They also felt their questions or concerns were treated with derision due to a perception from staff that they had less academic potential than their peers (NUS, 2011).

It is this kind of experience that can lower confidence and engagement in learning and can contribute and lead to lower attainment (ECU/HEA, 2008). This is despite the higher numbers from minority ethnic backgrounds coming into higher education. There is often a greater emphasis placed on education as a means to improve for first, second and even third generation migrants (Alexander and Arday, 2015).

We now have a specific strategy in place to close our attainment gap and looking at the content of the curriculum can be one area that supports this.

Gender diversity

Consideration of gender has several areas for reflection with respect of curriculum:

- Recognising that there may be a tendency towards male, white reading lists

- Challenging a traditional male or female dominance of a discipline and looking at encouraging, for instance, women into computer coding and engineering and men into nursing or early years education.

- Recognising that there are many different ways of being 'male' or 'female'.

- Ensuring the learning environment is free from sexual harassment and challenging inappropriate language and behaviour.

- Recognising that gender is not binary – due to the complexities of their situation, the lack of awareness and degree of transphobia, there is a high incidence of

mental ill-health and risk of suicide amongst transgender students. An atmosphere of acceptance and respect in the classroom is crucial (ECU, 2010).

Sexual diversity

The dominant norm historically in research and literature is heterosexual so it is good practice to try to find, use or develop materials that challenge this. Reflect the historical and current contributions of LGB (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual) people and a range of different relationships and families.

Worrying over 46% of LGB students surveyed had received homophobic/biphobic remarks from other students and even staff (ECU, 2009). Students had fears for physical safety, overheard frequent disparaging remarks, encountered stereotypical attitudes and a lack of visible role models. Many still felt they had to hide their identity.   If unchallenged, the atmosphere created by homophobic remarks and attitudes may make LGB students feel excluded and not valued, lowering attainment or possibly resulting in the student leaving.

(Dis)ability diversity

The use of the Social model in advocating removing barriers should be continued as a theme in content. Images portraying disabled people as sufferers or victims should be avoided. Concentrate on positive images and on what people can do, not what they cannot, and challenge how things can be done in your particular subject area. Use a variety of images and role models who happen to be disabled.

Student experiences:
'They just looked startled to see Storme zoom in': when will university drama departments wake up to the needs of disabled students? (Birkett, 2013)

Religious diversity

Recognise the impact of global culture and religion in curriculum content, not just Western, Christian viewpoints, history or contributions.

What works really well?

- One way of enriching the curriculum, and in the process becoming more relevant and therefore more inclusive to a greater diversity of students, is to look at broadening the scope of such things as:
    - reading lists
    - examples
    - case studies
    - discussion topics
    - film clips

- o quiz questions

- o assignment themes

- o exam questions

- o posters and illustrative materials in the learning environs

- Be wary of resources which portray people at victims or which denigrates.

- Be aware of the effects of power, privilege and domination, seeking out silent/minority voices. It is possible, in some instances, to use students' own experiences to do this but do not ask an individual to speak on behalf of a particular group; instead use open ended questions to enable them to recount their experiences and observations. For role models and mentors seek voices via YouTube, television programmes or TED (www.ted.com/talks)

- Try to embed discussion of issues in the mainstream curriculum rather than singling out areas such as 'women's issues'.

- Try to cover all perspectives, or if not available, discuss with students why alternatives might not be available.

- Use correct or more appropriate language and challenge the use of inappropriate language and behaviour. This helps create a respectful environment where all students feel their voices can be heard and are valued.

Discipline specific practice

Ideas for enhancing and enriching practice in specific disciplines have been collated by the HEA (Higher Education Academy) and by the University of Worcester SCIPS Project (Strategies for Creating Inclusive Programmes of Study):

- HEA inclusive practice in a range of specific disciplines: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/inclusion/Disability/Inclusive_curriculum_design_in_higher_education

  www.heacademy.ac.uk/node/11103?utm_source=The+Higher+Education+Academy&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=5724475_EEDCMay15

- SCIPS Project creating inclusive programmes of study (based at the University of Worchester); guidance on the full range of subjects taught in HE: www.scips.worc.ac.uk/

References and background reading

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STEM Disability Committee – www.stemdisability.org.uk

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Checklist for reflection: Curriculum content

Do I:

Structure my teaching activities to enable all students to share their values and beliefs with in a culture of mutual respect and dignity for all?	✓
Use group activities to facilitate student's understanding of how working with people of diverse backgrounds enriches their own learning?	
Manage the learning environment to enable all students to participate fully?	
Challenge stereotypes in my discipline/subject area?	
Make use of the different experiences and backgrounds of my students?	
Seek out role models – guest lecturers, video clips/ interviews; case studies?	
Actively seek minority views in my subject area?	
Challenge inappropriate language in my teaching sessions?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

IncludeAll – Enhancing Practice: Introduction

Inclusive design based on principles of equity, collaboration, flexibility and accountability allows us to adopt a proactive, anticipatory approach which benefits both staff and students (Morgan, 2010).

What students say*:*
'I have to be very persistent and proactive to get what I need and this is sometimes uncomfortable.' (Student with sight loss, ECU Sensory Access in HE)

Although it is good to remove barriers in delivery and content, it is also important not to make assumptions about the abilities or requirements of particular students. Talk to individual students to determine what strategies work for them. Getting to know students as individuals, their likes, dislikes, strengths and weaknesses, also helps, although of course this is easier in some teaching contexts than others. With large cohorts and lectures this is of course much harder and certainly so at first. Designing and delivering in such a way that particular individual learning needs do not become a highlighted issue, but are simply catered for in the way things are set up, helps enormously.

We try to avoid pigeonholing students into specific groups with predictable, fixed approaches to learning, however, it is sometimes useful to consider common themes to improve practice and address the potential inequalities. For instance Thomas and May (2010) use the following:

Educational – examples – level/type of entry qualifications; skills; ability; knowledge; educational experience (not necessarily UK); life and work experience; learning approaches.

Dispositional – examples – identity; self-esteem; confidence; motivation; aspirations; expectations; preferences; attitudes; assumptions; beliefs; emotional intelligence; maturity; learning styles; perspectives; interests; self-awareness; gender; sexuality.

Circumstantial – examples – age; disability; paid/voluntary employment; caring responsibilities; geographical location; access to IT and transport services; flexibility; time available; entitlements; financial background and means; marital status.

Cultural – examples – language; values; cultural capital; religion and belief; country of origin/residence/; ethnicity/race; social background.

This approach recognises similarities, for instance, between the educational needs arising from English not being a student's first language, because they are an International student, or arrived in the UK part way through their primary/secondary education, and those arising with a student whose first language is BSL (British Sign Language). Their needs and the solutions are very similar, as indeed will those of

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someone who has Asperger syndrome – clear, concise communication, explanations of requirements, written materials in advance and so on.

For disabled students, while the aim should always be to minimise the number of individual adjustments by removing barriers, some individual adjustments will of course be necessary. Some may conflict – for example the needs of a visually impaired student and a wheelchair user. As information around disability is confidential, you may only be aware of what adjustments are needed and not why. The most common conditions you may potentially come across have been included, but many of our disabled students have multiple conditions to be considered. Your Faculty Disability Coordinator and the Student Enabling Centre can help with background information.

What students say: *'I don't like to draw attention to my deafness. I also do not want to be seen or treated as disabled I want to be able to take part and do things the same as everyone else does.'* (Student with hearing loss.

This section on Enhancing Practice has used current 'labels' for certain groups of students to help provide background knowledge and provide some understanding of the issues faced. However, it must always be borne in mind that these are artificial groupings and all of us have individual, multiple identities.

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IncludeAll – Enhancing Practice: 'Mature' Students

What are the key issues?

We categorise students over the age of 21 as 'mature' but should be wary of using this label. A student of 18 may have a high level of maturity and someone in their 40's may not react very well to be termed 'mature'. Everyone will probably just want to be a 'student'.

> **What our students say**:
> *'The University has been an amazing experience as a mature student...I've received excellent support and built up confidence and knowledge.'*
> (Level 6 BSc Psychology and Counselling)

The older we are the more likely we are to have competing demands on our time, but 'traditional' 18-21 year old students may also be parents, need to work whilst studying, or be caring for elderly/disabled relatives.

Around 44% of the University's student population is over 25 years of age, and although many are on part-time, distance learning, professional or postgraduate courses, many are also on full-time undergraduate courses. Typically, mature students will have more competing priorities than younger students and may be more likely to be juggling family/caring responsibilities with their studies. They are also more likely to be travelling to and from the University, often from a distance. Older students are also typically female and studying to improve their career opportunities. Often people return to post-16 education when their own children reach this stage.

Older students coming back into education may have had poor experiences at school being termed 'stupid', 'lazy' or a 'failure'. As a consequence they also may lack confidence in their ability to succeed, and this is exacerbated if it has been a while since they have engaged in formal education. Some may have completed access courses such as 'Step up to HE' to bridge this gap but others may not have come through this route. It is advisable, therefore to find out their educational background and consequent study skills requirements at the earliest opportunity within the programme. This might be similar to assessing the skills of students from FE or international students.

Personal tutors can play an important role in this process, signposting the student for additional help, if required, and ideally, well before assessment time. Putting in an appropriate support structure appropriate can help reduce anxiety about returning to formal education.

Making expectations clear is essential when mature students are applying to study at university. Choices have serious consequences when you are a single parent, for

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example. Any pre-course literature should be explicit about what is required for studying each particular subject, and where and how study skills support can be found if gaps are recognised.

Mature students may also feel a sense of not being 'part of the University' or 'one of the group'. Whilst this does not apply to all mature students, for some the experience of being at university can feel quite isolating. Welcome Week/Induction programmes and activities therefore need to be inclusive of mature-students so that they genuinely feel welcomed. Although integration amongst all students is encouraged at the start of the award, if social contact with other mature students can be built in/arranged, it can be particularly appreciated.

According the National Union of Students, 65% of lone parents and 60% of parents considered leaving their course (NUS, 2009). Each course is different in its student diversity so you will already be aware of the typical age range of your students and if older students might need extra support. The age of students may also, of course, alter the relationship between lecturer and student.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Due to their competing demands, especially around child care, mature students appreciate knowing in advance:

- Term dates and any reading/self-study weeks and how these might fit with school terms and half terms

- Timetable and advanced notice of any changes – again for arranging care

- Any placement/fieldwork requirements

- Study requirements

- Reading lists

- Access to learning resources/library

- Nursery/breastfeeding facilities and rules about children on campus.

There may need to be in-built flexibility to study arrangements, and if teaching sessions are missed, having your lecture captured electronically is very useful. Some awards have part-time blended learning versions available, and the study material from this can be extremely useful for any full-time students who miss a session.

Older students can be more confident in voicing opinions and in some instances this conflicts with younger students who feel the older student is dominating the class.

Award teams need to be explicit about the on-entry skills, knowledge and competencies they require of learners as this is often an area in which mature

students may need extra support, confidence-building and encouragement. However, be wary of making assumptions around skills and abilities -

> *You were impressed by a student's essay and in order to encourage her, especially as she's had a break from formal academic study and appears to lack confidence, you commented:' a promising piece of work especially from a mature student – please to see you're getting to grips with the IT too.'* (Attwood, 2010)

What works really well?

In the main, apart from needing information well in advance, good inclusive practice will cover most of the needs of mature students.

If using a PBL (Problem Based Learning) approach which requires students meet between lectures to work on project tasks, be aware that some mature students might not live on or near to the University.

Acknowledging that some of your students have different life-experiences, and ideally valuing that of mature students, can be particularly re-assuring to them.

Giving early warning if teaching sessions have to be cancelled - mature students who might not live close to the University will appreciate not having to make an unnecessary journey onto campus, or make unnecessary child care arrangements.

Further information and background reading

Attwood, R. (2010) *The Cinderella Students*, THES 10 June 2010 [online]

Longden, B. and Yorke, M. (2008) *The Experiences of Part-time Students in Higher Education: A Study from the UK*. York: HE Academy

Moreau, M. (2012) *Supporting Student Parents in HE: A Policy Analysis*. London: Nuffield Foundation.

NUS (2009) *Meet the Parents: the Experiences of Students with Children in Further and Higher Education.* London: National Union of Students.

Checklist for reflection: Mature students

Many of these are general good practice but might act as useful reminders. Have I:

Looked at the age range of my students (especially with UG courses)?	
Been explicit at the start of the module/award as to how it will be taught?	
Wherever possible, built in time to find out the past experience of all students?	
Working with Study Skills Tutors, integrated a formative task to help identify any skills–gaps?	
Arranged group activities designed to welcome and integrate all students can at the start of the course?	
Created a safe learning environment which promotes an equal partnership ethos?	
Ensured that learning materials are available in advance through BlackBoard?	
Planned in interactive activities on BlackBoard for students who have restricted travel times? Have to travel from a distance?	
Taken into consideration students who have caring responsibilities?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes to be introduced	By when	Indicators that it will make my practice more inclusive

*Include*All – Enhancing Practice
Working across cultural and linguistic boundaries

What are the key issues?

We recruit a wide range of students onto awards and any class may be a mix of different nationalities, ethnicities, culture and languages. At Staffordshire University, for example, we have students from over 120 different countries. These students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and add depth and richness to our student population. However, there are many students who have moved recently to the UK, as well as students who are UK citizens, who experience a mixture of cultures and languages at home.

Thus, national, ethnic, cultural and linguistic boundaries can impact the entire student population. In this section we will consider the impact of cultural and linguistic boundaries associated with Home, EU and International students. Therefore, the teaching, learning and assessment techniques suggested in this section should be considered for the entire population of students.

Whilst the diverse backgrounds of our students are likely to enrich and enhance the learning experience, there are likely to be some challenges and consequent changes to be made to your approach to teaching, learning and assessment. We believe that adopting effective classroom management strategies which are specifically designed to help manage diversity can help address some of the issues emerging from national, ethnic, cultural and linguistic barriers to learning.

Some students will have experienced a different educational regime prior to joining university. Even in the UK, students may have experienced a range of teaching styles ranging from different educational approaches, different school environments, and lived in communities which had distinctive attitudes towards education. This is not 'right' or 'wrong', just different. The following table outlines a typical educational regime students may have been accustomed to culturally or have experienced at their previous institution:

Teacher-student relationship	Teaching methods	Assessment methods
• High power difference between teachers and students • Respect and deference expressed through gifts and silence • Teacher has concern for whole student welfare • Teacher is seen as the expert • Teacher has high out-of-class visibility • Teacher has the ability to modify decisions to show favour	• Teacher telling and student listening • All tasks structured and supervised • Lots of homework assessed orally in class • Deep knowledge of a small number of texts • High value on knowing information; low value on using information • Punishment for evaluating information • High value on personal diligence expressed as time on homework • All tasks done individually	• Exams only • Questions about content knowledge • All short answers or MCQs • All marks norm-referenced • Prevalent use of ranking • Marks commonly between 75 and 100% • No failures • Each teacher's performance linked to marks

There are some specific issues which international students commonly face, many of which may also apply to UK students. The view of many international students is:

> My lecturer: should be an authority, know the right answers and tell me, make sure I pass.

> A good student: learns by listening and doing everything they are asked to do.

Whilst the view of lecturers in UK higher education is:

> A good lecturer: is a good facilitator; helps students to be independent learners.

> My best students: participate in discussion; think critically about the issues.

At the start of their studies at the University, almost all students are trying to make a major adjustment to living away from home and getting used to different ways of living. They may, for example, be lonely or homesick, and this can impact adversely on their ability to settle down to their studies. Therefore, it is helpful to design teaching sessions so that there is every opportunity for interaction and integration between students through group work and/or discussion. However, you also need to be able to point students to the various sources of advice and guidance within the University including Student Support, guidance on the website and the different clubs and societies on offer through the Students' Union, which might help students to integrate and feel comfortable. Part of the Staffordshire Graduate is Global

Citizenship (see *www.staffs.ac.uk/study/staffordshiregraduate/attributes/global-citizen/index.jsp*) and the presence of students from a variety of backgrounds can help all students develop a more global perspective and start to work across national, ethnic, cultural and linguistic boundaries.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Clearly, all students are different and generalisations cannot easily be made. However, the following points are for you to reflect upon and consider in relation to your experience of teaching diverse groups of students.

Background knowledge:

Students have different background knowledge or experience of your academic subject. Students will have a variety of entry qualifications, so you cannot assume that they are all building upon a base of previous knowledge and understanding about your subject. The important factor is to create an environment in which students are encouraged to share their knowledge and in which opportunities are provided to help students understand why they and their peers might adopt different perspectives on their academic subject.

Culture:

Students have very different perceptions of the role of those who are teaching them. You may be seen as the expert and rarely challenged by students, or you may be seen as a guiding mentor. The students' previous educational and cultural experiences will shape how they feel they should connect to the teacher.

To help students make a cultural shift into being inquisitive learners, you will need to encourage them to ask questions in a safe environment and give them plenty of positive feedback, making comments such as 'That's a really useful question – so pleased you've asked it.'

Being cognisant that there may be cultural barriers that creep into subjects that require individual creativity is important. Indeed, a collective identity is more rewarded than individual creativity by some cultures, and so a move away from this belief needs to be supported. In addition, in some subjects certain topics will be quite sensitive (perhaps for religious or ethical reasons), so a reluctance to take part in discussions should not be interpreted as a lack of engagement. Ideally, any anticipated sensitive material or topics should be announced in advance, and have an alternative activity where possible. This should allow some students to engage more fully.

Sometimes there will be cultural misunderstanding, between different groups of students and/or yourself. Culture is complex, learnt from birth and most of us are

unaware of our cultural norms or assume our way of doing things is the only way until it conflicts with someone else's. Differences around how we use time, personal space and the gestures we use all complicate communication. We all have different ways of communicating politeness and respect and in some cultures it is important not to lose 'face'. For instance, there can be a reluctance to use first names, and lecturers are often referred to as 'professor' as a way of being polite and respectful to whoever is teaching them. There can also problems around 'gifts' and their meaning. The Further information and background reading section has more detail on intercultural communication.

Language skills:

An early formative written task which you set **for all your** students often helps to identify those who need extra support. This does not need to be an extensive piece of work and may take the form of routine seminar/small group preparation tasks.

 International students will vary in their language competence, both written and spoken even with a similar IELTS score. If you suspect that any of your international students are struggling, there is language support - www.staffs.ac.uk/international/support/english

Working in partnership with your Faculty's Student Guidance Advisor and Academic Skills Tutors is highly recommended, but you cannot assume that students will know who these are, where they are located or whether they will access them. Indeed, any support service which is (wrongly) perceived as remedial may not be readily accessed by students. They may face pressures from their family and friends to feel they should learn and work in a specific way. As a teacher, it is important to find ways to promote these services in a positive manner which removes any stigma and which encourages students to want to use these services. Your role in signposting students to and/or working with these other staff members is critical to the success of students.

For students who are non-native speakers of English, it is worth remembering how tiring it is to be constantly translating what is being said or read. There may be a delay in answering questions or talking to neighbours, seeking clarification or translating for each other. As the grammar and syntax of their first language may be very different, there may be some errors in written work. As the students' vocabulary, technical or otherwise, may be not being as broad in a second or third language, written work may appear simplistic.

A glossary of technical terms is useful for everyone, as is a discussion of vocabulary with all students.

Approach to study:

National, ethnic, cultural and linguistic barriers may mean students need structured advice and guidance about how to study. For example, in some communities the idea of discussing or arguing against an idea may be alien. Making it very clear what you expect of all students a) within the teaching sessions and b) in their out-of-class study will help to clarify what is expected. Assumptions should not be made about students necessarily knowing how and when to study. If, for example, you refer them to a text to read, be very clear about which parts you need them to read and what to do once they have read it. Structuring study skills and building up skills in critical analysis and referencing will reduce problems with plagiarism. Problems with plagiarism can often arise where students have been used to demonstrating knowledge by quoting portions of text verbatim and because these texts are so well known, it is not thought necessary to attribute them to a particular source.

What works really well

Communication:

- Take care not to talk too quickly and articulate clearly

- Use short, uncomplicated sentences when necessary

- Become aware of and avoid using jargon, colloquialisms, acronyms and abbreviations without explanation

- Allow pauses for clarification, including when asking questions

Explaining your session:

At the start, clarify what your session is about, the structure, what exercises/tasks will be set and what is required outside of the session. Being explicit rather than implicit helps all students know what is expected of them.

Explaining your approach to teaching:

Some students might assume that you, as the expert, will be passing on your knowledge and wisdom and that they, in turn, will be the passive recipients of your knowledge and wisdom. You, therefore, need to explain and justify a more interactive and discursive approach to teaching, punctuated with many activities and opportunities for challenge and debate, where appropriate.

Clarifying your expectations of students:

Be clear about your expectations. Reassure all students that you understand that, even though they come from different backgrounds, there may be some specific learning activities in which you expect everyone to engage. For example, all students will have to:

- Check the Blackboard VLE prior to the session for any alerts and/or hand-outs

- Contribute positively to group discussions

- Offer to answer any questions in class

- Be prepared to share their experiences

- Make notes (but not write down everything you say)

- Carry out any follow-up work or reading

Managing group-work:

Group-work is often a challenging for many students for many reasons. These include:

- Language - students may struggle to communicate their points effectively

- Social skills – different national, ethnic and cultural norms mean that students may struggle with social anxiety when faced with group working

- Group dynamics – different national, ethnic and cultural norms mean that not all students cope well with difficult interpersonal dynamics

- Lack of familiarity – students from different educational backgrounds may not be familiar with group work

- Confidence – for all students, lack of confidence may affect performance in group work

Try to ensure that groups contain a variety of students. Try to integrate students for whom English is not their first language into groups of other students where they will receive support. Although some students who speak the same language might want to sit together in teaching sessions, you may need to intervene and manage the setting up of groups for different activities. You may need to build skills in discussion by starting with pairs first and then larger groups for instance, before getting students to work together for assessments.

Some students may need further instruction in regards to group work. Ensure that you fully explain the purpose, set up ground rules (see section on Inclusive by Design; Group- work) and justify the link to the summative assessment (if relevant).

Jargon-busting!

We are often unaware of our habitual (and often unknowing) use of educational jargon within our conversations. For example, we talk about 'NSS', 'SVS', 'group crit', learning outcomes and reflective practice, all of which we understand, but we cannot assume that all students will. It is therefore imperative that you become more aware of your use of jargon and then seek to replace it with other words

where the meaning is more transparent. Keeping language straight-forward is important, as is using clear and explicit guidance and instructions.

If you teach a subject where there is a lot of specialist language, and key terms and/or abbreviations which have to be learnt, it is advisable to provide a glossary. It is good practice to write new words or key terms on a flipchart or board as and when they are introduced.

The globalised curriculum:

As relevant to your module content, it is important that you try to include within your teaching as many examples as possible from different national, ethnic, cultural and linguistic experiences (see also Inclusive by Design: Curriculum Content). This will help to make the curriculum more inclusive and provide a more global context for learning for all students. For Ryan (2000) this helps students to look at their own background objectively, stepping back and learning to value cultural diversity.

Preparation for assessment:

Cultural and social expectations can make assessments very stressful for students. This may be because they are familiar with different assessment systems such as ranking by results or marking on the curve. Your role is therefore to make sure that you can contribute to alleviating any stress for your students by:

- Giving as much detail as possible, thoroughly explaining the assessment and what is required

- Making sure the assessment-brief is as clear and unambiguous as possible

- Clarifying any key words/phrases or abbreviations which are critical to the assessment criteria e.g. analyse, synthesise, comparative analysis, SWOT analysis

- Being clear about how much weight will be given to spelling and grammar. For many reasons, including English language skills or learning disabilities, students may not all be able to demonstrate the same fluency, grammatical accuracy or vocabulary initially. Consider whether, at the beginning of the course, the priority is 'communication rather than correctness?' (Reisz, 2012)

- Giving examples of good and poor practice

- Providing an overview of common mistakes (and how to avoid them)

- (Re)explaining plagiarism and how this can (and must) be avoided

- Explaining the assessment criteria- what it means and how they need to understand it in order to gain maximum marks

- Explaining the importance of feedback, how and when this will be given and their role in using this for future learning

Further information and background reading

British Council (2007) *Cultural Connections: How to Make the Most of the International Student Experience*. London: British Council [online] Available from: www.educationUK.org

Carroll, J. and Ryan, J. (eds) (2005) *Teaching International Students: Improving Learning for All.* London: Routledge.

Foster, M. (ed) (2011) *Working with Cultural Diversity in HE.* SEDA Special 28. London: Staff and Educational Development Association

HE Academy – Internationalisation. Webpage. [online]. Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk

Reisz, M (2012) *A Word of Advices: let speakers of Englishes do it their way, UK told.* Times Higher Education; 17 May 2012; p19

Ryan, J. (2000) *A Guide to Teaching International Students.* Oxford: Oxford Brookes University.

Scudamore, R. (2013). *Engaging Home and International Students: A Guide for New Lecturers.* York: HE Academy.

Staffordshire University Staff Development Toolkit – articles on 'Barriers to Effective Intercultural Communication' and 'Effective Intercultural Communication' [online] Available from: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/personnel/index.jsp

Tomalin, E. (2007) *Supporting Cultural and Religious Diversity in HE Pedagogy and Beyond.* Teaching in HE; 12:6; p621-634.

UKCISA UK Council for International Student Affairs) – Study Tips www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/Study-work--more/Other-useful-information/Tips-on-successful-study/ [accessed: 20 May 2015]

Checklist for reflection: Cultural and Linguistic Boundaries

Many of these are general good practice but are useful reminders.
Have I

Checked my handbook to ensure it is welcoming and clear to international students?	
Found out how many students in of my classes are international? Where are they from? What is their likely prior educational experience?	
Found out what their EILTs (or equivalent) score was on entry to the University for both written and spoken English?	
Liaised with my study-skills tutor in anticipation that some students might need more help?	

Made efforts to learn more about the cultural backgrounds of these students and considered how this could enhance the learning of others?	
Explained clearly what is expected of all students?	52
Changed the way I communicate so as to use short, uncomplicated sentences? Made efforts to avoid jargon and colloquialisms whilst also seeking to explain abbreviations and acronyms?	
Used imagery and language in hand-outs which is global in nature? Used case studies and activities which enhance cross- cultural and global understanding?	
Introduced group-work and explained the roles and intended outcomes? Monitored the engagement of international students in group-work?	
Effectively managed the group-work so that everyone can contribute in a safe environment?	
Effectively explained the assessment so as to maximise the chance for all students to succeed?	
Made sure all students understand what is meant by plagiarism in UK higher education and how to avoid it?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes to be introduced	By when	Indicators that it will make my practice more inclusive

IncludeAll – Enhancing Practice
Students with Dyslexia

What are the key issues?

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) estimates that 10% of the British population has dyslexia. It varies hugely in severity, with 4% being severely affected. While dyslexia is often regarded simply as a difficulty with reading and writing, these are no more than surface symptoms.

Dyslexia is a Specific Learning Difficulty (SpLD) that the BDA describes as a genetic, neurological learning difference. Differences in the brain affect the way information is processed, particularly language. This is not generally in a linear fashion but more erratic using different parts of the brain, and may vary from day to day. Ironically this is also what gives dyslexia its strengths.

With dyslexia phonological or auditory processing can be poor and the ability to accurately sequence and memorise visual and/or auditory symbols impaired. This leads to difficulties with retaining spoken information such as messages, numbers and names, or following spoken instructions. It is these sequencing weaknesses can also lead to difficulties with mathematics - dyscalculia.

Reading aloud can be difficult, as can generally communicating orally, with words mixed up or missed out. There can be difficulty with remembering the visual form of words (orthography), particularly if these are irregularly spelt, such as 'dough' or 'cough'.

Visual Perception Difficulties (VPD) may affect the ease of reading and can cause discomfort. Visual disturbances that cause, for instance, "rivers" in the text, are the tip of the iceberg. The problem lies with the processing of rapidly moving visual stimuli, sensitivity to glare and problems with visual tracking or "jumping". This makes reading text extremely difficult, time consuming and tiring. Text can easily be misread and overall comprehension is more difficult particularly when accompanied by other processing issues. It also affects the ability to "skim" read. VPD are not experienced by everyone with dyslexia, and are not exclusive to those with dyslexia.

Difficulties in the logical processing of information can lead to inconsistencies, poor personal organisation, difficulties in organising long documents or reports, and poor time management. It can also result in difficulty in sequencing, and left/right confusion.

Dyslexia can affect short term memory. We normally remember around five to nine pieces of information, such as numbers, but someone with dyslexia may only be able

to remember three or four. In addition working memory may be slower. In some cases someone may not be able to recall substance of the text they have only just read. Longer term memory may not be affected, but it may take more effort to get information into long term memory.

All of the above can contribute to such surface symptoms as erratic spelling, grammar or handwriting, and a general vulnerability around literacy and in some cases numeracy. The areas of difficulty can occur together or independently, and bear no relation to intelligence. One of the indicators can be that someone's potential is not matched by their performance.

Dyslexia is complex and can impact on a range of different areas including time management, work load management, numbers, handwriting, and physical aspects of reading rather than understanding. Not all people with dyslexia will struggle with written work, spelling and grammar but these may deteriorate under pressure such as in exams or being watched. A student may know, or know how to spell, a word but be unable to get it down onto paper correctly. They may be unable to recognise mistakes making proof reading difficult.

The signs of dyslexia can become more prominent when the individual is under stress. This may include new tasks, tight deadlines or when presenting or performing. By the time someone with dyslexia reaches adulthood, they will probably have been struggling for years with difficulties that may never have been recognised or understood. They can often have low self-esteem, and may feel vulnerable and disadvantaged. Many compensate by putting in extra effort and time, but this can lead to fatigue.

However, the differences in information processing can also result in strengths. These include innovative thinking, pattern recognition, trouble shooting, problem solving, creativity, lateral thinking, 3D thinking, gestalt (overview) thinking, motor memory, tactile memory, picture/video memory, mnemonics, tunes and rhythm. Strengths can also include a high degree of empathy, capacity for hard work and determination to succeed.
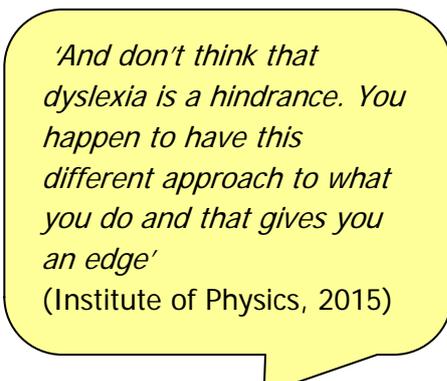
'And don't think that dyslexia is a hindrance. You happen to have this different approach to what you do and that gives you an edge'
(Institute of Physics, 2015)

A student can excel at creative writing and still have dyslexia or be diagnosed as a postgraduate having achieved well in exams and assessments up to that level. Diagnosis is via an initial simple screening test. This may be followed by an assessment by an educational psychologist who will then recommend reasonable adjustments. Often there are a number of simple adjustments available to mitigate weaknesses and maximise potential, particularly using the modern technology but no one solution or set of solutions will suit everyone.

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What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Many adults with dyslexia become fluent readers, and their dyslexia may only show in their writing, short term memory, organisational skills, and in the speed and way they process information.

In HE there are many well compensated people with dyslexia whose persisting difficulties lie in the areas of higher order study and organisational skills. These include organising large pieces of written work, summarising, note-taking, time management, speed of processing of auditory information, and effective revision and exam techniques. With better recognition and teaching in primary and secondary education more students with dyslexia are coming through to higher education.

Students may have difficulty skimming and therefore try and read everything. Even where reading is fluent the student may have difficulty retained what is read due to difficulties with short term memory. This has implications for assignments and critical analysis where it is necessary to pick out small sections to support arguments. There may also be difficulty in sorting out what to use and then using it in a logical way. Students with dyslexia will often take much longer to complete tasks.

There can be basic difficulties in for instance following and remembering instructions, finding places and getting to places on time. Students with dyslexia can also find it difficult to filter background noise in order to concentrate

Poor self-esteem and previous experiences can hinder learning and everything is usually worse under stress. Often the brain tries to take in too much information all at once and becomes jammed, rather like an old fashioned typewriter.

Written work usually troubles lecturers most. Student with dyslexia may struggle with the rules of grammar and punctuation or may have difficulties with *checking* spelling and proofing, not necessarily knowing the spelling. Of course this will be worse in exams. A student may understand the concepts perfectly well but struggle to get it onto paper in the correct way/way the student intended. Students can misread or misinterpret a key word in an assignment/exam due to phonological processing difficulties with disastrous consequences.

What works really well?

- Remembering strengths and that the weaknesses are specific but vary from individual to individual.

- Access to good accessible versions – left justified, good size font and so on (see Inclusive by Design: Producing accessible teaching materials)

- Providing a structure to the course and sessions and linkage to previous and next sessions provides a context –the 'Big picture'

- A variety of assessment/ assignment formats which involve problem solving and creative thinking can be useful – projects or poster presentations.

- Some students with dyslexia prefer to talk about a subject rather than write it down

- In seminars ask for volunteers to read aloud - do not randomly pick people. Many students with dyslexia would find this really difficult and embarrassing.

- Try to provide Word documents and PDFs with heading styles so students can then can skim and dip more easily or select right section; otherwise a student may have to read everything.

- Having presentations in advance, PPTs with extra notes, PPTs with voiceover all help.

- Interaction on whiteboards, activities, images, film clips and so on helps convey concepts rather than just relying on the written word.

- Allowing students to record means they can listen and not have to try and write and listen. Some students may have note takers.

- Spreading deadlines and providing a time scale as to when stages of an assignment should ideally be completed will help students plan.

- Provide oral information/instructions in a written format as well.

Further hints, tips and/or background reading

- The Student Enabling Centre is very experienced in helping students with dyslexia and provides testing.

- Academic Study Skills support based in the libraries provide specialist dyslexia support.

- BRAIN HE – resources around ASD, dyslexia and dyscalculia put together by the Neurodiversity Project Team at the London School of Economics – old site but still useful resources. Website: www.brainhe.com

- British Dyslexia Association – Website: www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/educator

- Dyscalculia and Dyslexia Interest Group – Mathematics Education Centre, Loughborough University. Website: www.lboro.ac.uk/departments/mec/activities/maths-statistics-support/thedyscalculiaanddyslexiainterestgroup/

- IOP (2013) *Supporting STEM Students with Dyslexia: a good practice guide for academic staff*. London: Institute of Physics.

Checklist for reflection

In respect of students with SpLDs:

	✓
Do I deliver my lectures and seminars in a way that would be accessible to a student with dyslexia or similar SpLD?	
Are my teaching materials formatted for use by students with dyslexia?	
Do I connect sessions to the overall context of the module?	
Am I able to indicate which texts are most important taking into account students who find it difficult to 'skim'read'?	
Do I provide a range of ways for students to gain and demonstrate knowledge?	
How do I deal with spelling and grammar errors? In written assignments? In exams?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All – Enhancing Practice
d/Deaf and hearing impaired students

What are the key issues?

The Deaf community views deafness as a communication issue and not a disability. The term d/Deaf respects this. Many people use sign language as their first language and there are 121 different sign languages worldwide, each with its own grammar, syntax and vocabulary. BSL (British Sign Language) has regional variations. It is not the same language as English.

Some people are born deaf so will not have heard sounds and some people become hearing impaired before they have acquired fluency in their first language. This can affect decoding of words phonetically when reading. Some people learn sign language while some learn to lip read, often people use some of each. Children are being diagnosed much earlier now and the use of Cochlea implants more routine.

Some people may become hearing impaired later on as a result of illness or injury and hearing does degrade with age. Older students may describe themselves as hard of hearing. Some people have tinnitus which is often described as a ringing or roaring in one or both ears. It is not a disease, but a symptom that can result from a number of underlying causes. It is distressing and tiring nonetheless, eroding the ability to concentrate and thus learn.

With hearing impairment there is not necessarily a reduction in sound volume but a reduction in sound quality. Often it is the top and/or bottom of the range of sound that is lost, or certain types of sounds including certain letters or phonemes.

Hearing aids and loops only increase the volume not the clarity and amplify all sounds equally, including background noise. However the newer digital systems are better at reducing noise and amplifying speech sounds.

Lip reading is not straightforward but complex and difficult, taking years to prefect. It needs knowledge of language, understanding of context, good lighting, good acoustics and a quiet environment. It also needs clear but not exaggerated speech at a natural pace. Exaggerating or shouting aggravates problems is offensive.

Deafness is hidden and not always apparent to others. Isolation from peers can result from difficulties in communicating and lack of interaction. There is danger of lower self-esteem especially if needs are not understood or tutors and fellow students do not take time to involve or communicate.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

For younger students there may be a steeper jump from school to university especially if they have been at a specialist school for the d/Deaf.

English is a second language for BSL users so their needs and experiences will be similar to those of many international students. This, and the differences in vocabulary, will affect written work. Some discipline specific terms may not translate well into BSL. Unknown vocabulary is hard to lip read so it is important to be open to students checking they have got information down correctly, although they may well ask friends rather than the lecturer.

> **What students say**:
> *'I don't like to go up to a lecturer and tell them I am deaf because I am a bit shy. I don't know them; I don't want to be treated differently; I don't want to be treated differently; I don't want to have a lot of attention focused on me and in any case I don't know what difference if would really make anyway '*
> (Student with hearing loss, Nicholson 2008)

There are a range of potential consequences of students not hearing tutors or catching all the words. Pedagogically students may be left with gaps in their knowledge and understanding of important facts and concepts. If they rely on their peers to fill in the gaps they may be affected by misinformation, especially important for assignments and in situations such as labs. They might also harbour a fear that tutors think they are less able because they don't communicate as fluently (Nicholson, 2008).

If a student's range of sounds heard is affected, their experiences may differ depending on whether the lecturer is male or female – men generally sit in low frequency range with lower voices and women in the higher range. There may also be difficulty with regional accents using different lip patterns, phraseology and intonation.

There are practical difficulties in finding the optimum place to sit, listening/watching and taking notes at the same time or using signers/interpreters. There may be difficulties with background noise – obvious things such as building works but also fellow students chatting or all talking at once; communal learning spaces too can be difficult and distracting. A student may need to be quite close to the speaker's face – within a couple of metres – which may be difficult with big lecture theatres, labs, activities, or fieldwork.

d/Deaf or hearing impaired students will not experience or practice collaborative working as effectively or be able to deal with overlapping conversations. Tinnitus also makes group-work difficult and there may be difficulty concentrating in exams.

Anyone marking assessments will need to know this is a second language and in common with many international students there may be more grammatical errors and /or a narrower vocabulary.

Overall it is very tiring to concentrate on a signer, lip read, try and catch sounds or listen through tinnitus. In addition a student may not be able to 'just pop in' and see someone if no BSL interpreter is around – they may only be funded for main sessions. If placements/fieldtrips are not a compulsory part of the course then it will also be difficult to get funding for an interpreter meaning the student misses out on important learning and work experience.

What works really well?

Getting some of the practicalities right:

- not standing against a window or a bright screen

- using the microphone in a lecture theatre, if there is one, and not moving away from the microphone

- repeating questions if there is no roving microphone and summarising the main points of a discussion from the front

- having good lighting

- directing the presentation to the student who is hearing impaired

- stopping talking when turning away to write on a white or smart board/flipchart

- writing up questions on a board/flipchart

- if using PowerPoint$^©$, reveal the bullets one at a time or use a laser pointer if available – students will find it easier to see where you are and follow what is happening

- allowing students to place themselves for optimal hearing – some may only have difficulties on one side

- a BSL interpreter will need a break every 20 minutes or so.

Do not alter or exaggerate way you speak as this will make it more difficult to lip read and try not to put your hands near your mouth or obscure your face.   Use a slightly slower, more relaxed delivery with pauses, as the student may have more difficulty in note taking as they cannot write and look.

Providing materials beforehand so the student has some idea of what to expect and can follow up later if necessary and allow recording of lectures where possible.

Use film clips with subtitles and provide transcripts if possible

Managing group-work and having ground rules such as speaking one at a time and indicating who is speaking; sitting in a circle will enable a hearing impaired student to see everyone's faces. Discussions may need to be paced to ensure time for signing or lip reading.

Synchronous and Asynchronous discussion forums are good as they do not rely of oral communication. Digital technology is now very good so make use of email, mobiles, PDAs and so on as well as BlackBoard.

Further hints, tips and/or background reading:

- ECU (2009) *Sensory access in HE*. London: Equality Challenge Unit.

- Nicolson, D. (2008). Inclusive Learning and Assessment Practice: Feedback from d/Deaf and hard of hearing Students. *Learning and Teaching in Action*. Vol 7, Issue 2; summer 2008; p34-43.

- Royal National Institute for the Deaf (2002) *Deaf Students in Higher Education: How Inclusive are you? A Self-assessment Tool*. London: Action on Hearing Loss.

Checklist for reflection

In respect of hearing impaired sheets:

	✓
Do I deliver my lectures and seminars in a way that would be accessible to a hearing impaired student?	
Do I communicate with my students in a way that would be accessible to a hearing impaired student?	
Do I manage activities and groups in a way that would be accessible to a hearing impaired student?	
Do I use subtitles on film clips or provide transcripts?	
Can I make more use of technology for engagement or discussion?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All – Enhancing Practice
Students with Asperger Syndrome

What are the key issues?

Asperger Syndrome is a form of autism, a 'spectrum disorder' because it affects people in many different ways and to varying degrees. It is a hidden disability.

Unlike autism, people with Asperger syndrome have fewer problems with speaking and are often of average or above average intelligence. Their difficulties fall into three main areas - social communication, social interaction and social imagination.

A student may have a problem reading the subtle messages of facial expression, tone of voice and/or body language and find it difficult to follow the social cues and emotions which we usually rely on to understand or interpret other people's thoughts, feelings or actions. This makes everyday interactions challenging, leading to high levels of confusion and anxiety and often inappropriate interpersonal behaviour.

People learn different body language, levels of eye contact, gestures and personal space in different cultures which can also cause confusion and conflict. However people with Asperger Syndrome might also have difficulty knowing when to start/ how to start a conversation or how to end one and also have difficulty choosing topics to talk about. This should not be taken to mean they are unsociable; it is just that they find it difficult to makes friends and take part in everyday chat. This can lead students to feeling socially isolated and for this reason low self-esteem is common.

Many people with Asperger Syndrome do get better at this as they get older and learn the 'rules' of social interaction although they still may not understand them. However early experiences may well have reduced their confidence.

With no social imagination to project into future, or predict/guess what might happen, the world can be frightening. This results in high levels of anxiety which in turn may trigger difficult behaviour. It can also lead to honesty of opinion, which in turn can lead to difficulties in social situations. It can also mean that people with Asperger Syndrome can take words and phrases literally and have difficulty understanding jokes, metaphor and sarcasm.

This is not the same as imagination and people with Asperger syndrome can be accomplished writers, artists and musicians.

However, it can lead to rigid or repetitive behaviour and love of routines. Someone may obsessively collect or organise things or have a single minded pursuit of the

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current topic of interest. People may have rituals which help them make sense of the world and may insist on rules being strictly adhered to. However, this attention to detail, ability to repeat and love of routine is also a strength in the workplace and is now sought after by many companies, especially when combined with a favourite subject. People with Asperger syndrome will be particularly knowledgeable in their chosen field of interest.

People with Asperger Syndrome often have heightened sensitivity, either low or high, for touch, heat/cold or a particular colour. Some may find jostling in queues where touch is unexpected very difficult or the feel of clothing or water on skin very hard to tolerate. There can often be a low tolerance of noise due to difficulties in filtering out sensory information.

In many instances people with Asperger Syndrome may also have ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), dyspraxia or dyslexia, OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) and sometimes epilepsy.

It is best to see Asperger Syndrome as a learning difference and a different way of viewing the world. The label of disability can be a barrier; each person will be different and have their own individual needs. Like all conditions, concentrate on the strengths not the weaknesses.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Students with Asperger Syndrome may need plenty of time to get used to people, places or procedures. Many may take a year out after school to get used to where they will be going and may still go to University near to home in case anything happens. People with Asperger Syndrome are vulnerable so will be covered by Safeguarding policies.

It is not necessarily the subject that will be the problem. Of course washing, cooking, catching buses and so on need to be learnt by all students but these are particularly difficult for someone with Asperger Syndrome. Settling into halls and perhaps getting on with flatmates and other students on the course may also cause difficulties. There may be inappropriate behaviour – for example standing too close, odd topics of conversation, seemingly uninterested in other people and appearing almost aloof. Frustration and anxiety may result in outbursts of temper.

Students with Asperger Syndrome may be very good in lectures but struggle to find their way from place to place. Many may find large lecture rooms full of chatting people difficult and sensory overload will interfere with learning.

There may be difficulties in taking notes and listening at the same time and perhaps deciding what to write and try and write everything. This is especially true if the student has dyspraxia and/or dyslexia as well. A student may also struggle to

process verbal information so, like many students, would benefit from having materials beforehand and on BlackBoard.

Some may do the working out/planning for a task in their heads so appear just to go straight to answer with no working out or planning stages.

Most students with Asperger Syndrome will find activities and group-work particularly difficult due to the difficulties with social interaction outlined above.

Sudden changes in timetable or other routines may be upsetting as can such things as delays when something should have happened at a certain time. Field trips and placements may need more planning and support as they disrupt routine. They may also want to talk at length about the subject in hand so if this is difficult be clear about when you can be contacted by students.

Students with Asperger Syndrome have much to offer – a desire for knowledge, enthusiasm, punctuality, determination and reliability.

What works really well?

- Buddies and mentors – especially those who are enthusiastic about the same subject – and can act as a familiar face to turn to for help.

- Clear timetables; and sometimes indications of what to do in 'free' time; good practice would be a safe quiet, plain place to chill or to spend unstructured time.

- Simple clear, clean language; avoiding colloquialisms and metaphor.

- Unambiguous instructions; keeping sentences short, clear and concise.

- Allowing someone to leave the room if necessary, sit where they need to; a student may want to arrive early to avoid bustle and jostling if the group is large; this also gives time to prepare.

- Empathy and acceptance; keeping calm and trying not to react to erratic behaviour.

- Clear information on academic requirements and deadlines and possibly support with self-directed study; choosing what to read.

- Help and support with planning workloads and assignments and for exams; prioritising and where to begin.

- Quiet feedback about behaviour e.g. 'If you are bored, don't say so aloud.' – but check if this approach is welcome first!

- Actively managing activities and group-work with rules and expectations making such everyone gets a chance to speak; encourage students to get to know each other.

- Non-tolerance of bullying – students with Asperger Syndrome are particularly vulnerable.

- Trying to make sure any changes are announced well in advance.

Further hints, tips and/or background reading

- Talk to Faculty Student Guidance Advisors or the Student Enabling Centre.

- National Autistic Society – Top Transition Tips for Colleges; Education Professionals in FE and HE. Website - www.autism.org.uk

- National Association of Disability Practitioners (2008). Working effectively with students who have Asperger Syndrome. NADP, *Journal of Inclusive Practice in Further and Higher Education*; Issue 1; Nov 2008.

- Case study – The founder of company Specialisterne, Thorkil Sonne, has a son with autism. He now employs more than 40 people with autism capitalising on their focus, persistence and love of routine. Dreaper, J. (2009) Why a firm wants staff with autism. *BBC*. [online]. Available from: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/8153564.stm [accessed 20 May 2015]

Checklist for reflection

For students on the autistic spectrum:

	✓
Are requirements clear and unambiguous?	
Do I actively manage group work?	
Do I announce changes well in advance if possible and in writing as well as verbally?	
Is support for study and assignments clearly signposted?	
Do I make clear the times when I am or am not available to talk?	
Do I look out for bullying and feel confident about tackling it if it occurs?	
Do I try to understand and make allowances for behaviour?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All – Enhancing Practice
Visually-impaired students

What are the key issues?

The majority of visually impaired people, even if registered blind, have some vision even if this is limited to light perception which would tell someone where for instance the windows are, or the presence of major physical obstacles.

Different parts of someone's vision may be affected - central vision leaving only peripheral sight; just the centre portion being affected – 'tunnel' vision; or where the image is mottled or blurred.

Some visually impaired people have a guide dog to assist with day-to-day independent living. These are fully trained working animals and not pets. We have staff and students who have guide dogs and accommodate their needs.

With advances in technology and assistive technology fewer people are learning braille. However tactile messages in the environment such as door signs and lift controls remain important.

The physical environment needs good contrast, audio alerts and tactile indicators. Much of this is now part of the building regulations and incorporated in to the environment as a matter of course - handrails, tactile flooring to indicate the top of stairs, the contrast strip on the edge of steps, or textured paving to indicate a road crossing. There should be sound incorporated to inform and alert such as voice instructions in lifts and flashing indicators for fire alarms. Signage should be in a large and suitable font and with good contrast.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Students will need to be taught in a way, and have access to resources, in a format that suits their impairment. This may be braille, audio transcription or large/giant print. These take time to arrange but Information Services offers assistance - www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/infoservices/disabledaccess/librarysupportfordisable dstudents.jsp .

Increasingly computer hardware and software has accessibility as standard including audio alerts and screen readers. However, assistive software/technologies do not make everything fully accessible.

PDF do not always work with assistive technologies, and may not be adjustable for those needing different coloured backgrounds. Although usually incorporating a zoom function, cannot be printed in a larger font.

JAWS, or similar screen reading software, needs heading styles and correct layout to identify parts of the document for the user so they can follow the structure and flow. If these are not tagged then the document would sound like one long paragraph.

It takes additional time to read information even in large print or from computer screens with assistive software. It also takes time to assimilate information aurally particularly if the information is complex and has tables, diagrams etc.

Obtaining and organising materials for assignments in accessible formats takes considerable and effort – so the more accessible we make Word and PDF the smoother this will be for students with all kinds of needs.

However, this may not alleviate all the barriers and students may still be at a disadvantage to their sighted peers.

Proof reading and 'scanning' can be problematical so more guidance may be needed on which texts or sections to focus on and leeway in assessing work.

More time will probably be needed for some assignments and assessments due to the time to acquire identify and assimilate material. Access by screen readers or using an amanuensis is not easy and can be slow.

For some activities the student may need a personal assistant and in some environments, such as a lab, a risk assessment may be needed.

What works really well?

- Providing Word$^©$ documents as well as in PDF as this enables students to print out however they like – font size, different background etc.

- Electronic documents should incorporate heading styles where possible to make them easier to navigate and for use with screen readers (see Inclusive by Design: Producing accessible Teaching Materials).

- Allow recording of sessions; if necessary discussing issues around confidentiality.

- Introduce people, be clear about who is speaking and saying when you are leaving or ending the conversation.

- Visual description of images, audio subtitles and transcriptions.

- Reading out everything on a screen and any questions.

- Anticipating that completing assignments may take longer than usual.

- Some students may demonstrate their knowledge better through oral exams and coursework.

- Keeping the furniture layout reasonably stable. This of course may be difficult or there may be students who have mobility issues who need flexibility of arrangement. Discuss with the student concerned the best way forward.

Further hints, tips and background reading

- ECU (2009) *Sensory Access in Higher Education: Guidance Report*. London: Equality Challenge Unit

- RNIB – Starting University. Website: www.rnib.org.uk/cy/young-people/starting-university

- National HE STEM – Maximising the Potential of Students with VI *'I have a blind student in my maths/science class…'* Website: http://stem.ecs.soton.ac.uk/home

Checklist for reflection

To take account of visually impaired students:

	✓
Do I ensure my materials are in a flexible and accessible format as far as possible?	
Do I choose film clips with audio sub titles or transcriptions which can be read by a screen reader?	
Does the student know how to access materials in braille or audio transcription?	
How do I communicate with my visually impaired students?	
Are the environments I teach in suitable for my visually impaired students? Can they be improved? Do any necessitate a risk assessment?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All – Enhancing Practice
Students with mental-health problems

What are the key issues?

Over the past 10 years we have seen an exponential growth in the number of students who declare some form of mental health issue during their time with us. These issues can be short-term and relatively easy to deal with or be enduring and often more challenging.

When a student does declare a mental health issue they are encouraged to take up the support offered by the Student Enabling Centre, often through the effective use of Specialist Student Advisors, Counsellors and Specialist Mentors. Where appropriate, students are encouraged to apply for Disabled Students' Allowances to fund their support.

What our students say:
'I cannot thank you enough for all the help and support you have given me the last few months. I was so close to giving up but your support has helped me to see the light at the end of the tunnel.'
(Student Enabling Centre feedback)

The key focus of this support is to encourage the student to continue to engage with their learning whilst their circumstances allow them to do that and to help to make alternative arrangements when continuation of study is not possible for a period of time.

Of course, students often receive support both from Academics and from their peers and this can be invaluable in supporting recovery. Ideally, there should be a dialogue between the Faculty and the Student Enabling Centre in how to most effectively support the student.

What our students say:
'Just wanted to thank you- I really wasn't expecting the level of support or help that you offered and it was very reassuring.'
(Student Enabling Centre feedback)

Sometimes, although very rarely, medical intervention is required when a student is in crisis and there are effective mechanisms in place to support this. We have good relationships with the Early Intervention and Crisis Teams in the Local Authorities and know we can depend on the support of the Paramedic and Police services.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

Clearly, mental health issues affect individuals in different ways and developing an understanding of the individual's needs is a key first step in supporting their learning

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and teaching. Focussing on needs rather than their condition is likely to produce more effective results.

To support this, we regularly run sessions on developing active listening skills that are well attended by Academics. Developing these skills encourages empathy with students rather than sympathy which has more negative connotations.

What our students say:
'*I have completed all my exams now and speaking to you helped a lot because I felt a lot better about myself and I went into those exams with more confidence than before.*'
(Student Enabling Centre feedback)

From a learning and teaching perspective, it is important to try and keep the student actively engaged in their studies and this should be supported with positive feedback about the work they are undertaking. Using negative feedback may reinforce some of the fears and anxieties that students often experience.

Many students with mental health issues experience difficulty with concentration. This is sometimes due to their own experiences but can sometimes be exacerbated by the side effects of medication or disturbed sleep patterns. The key here is also active engagement, encouraging the student to participate rather than allowing them to withdraw from activity.

Occasionally, a student may display behaviours that are difficult to manage in the learning environment. This can impact negatively on the student's peers and also cause extreme frustration for the teacher. If the behaviour is unchallenged it is likely to persist and we may have to consider the Duty of Care to others, if it is challenged insensitively it may generate further issues for the student.

On these rare occasions it is important to make a judgement of impact and involve the professional support staff in the Student Enabling Centre before things get out of hand. Consideration will then be given to the students' fitness to study at that point in time.

Sometimes it is appropriate for students to withdraw from their studies for a period of time. This shouldn't be viewed negatively and consideration should be given on how to support the student through this period. It is often sufficient

What our students say:
'*Thank you for taking the time out to see me yesterday, also thank you for listening- it meant a great deal. Also thank you for passing the information onto me. It has given me a clear idea about what steps I need to take.*'
(Student Enabling Centre feedback)

to drop the student a supportive e-mail to check their progress and offer reassurance. This can help the student when they come to re-engage with their studies.

What works really well?

- A collaborative approach to supporting the student is often the best way of managing a situation where a student has mental health issues. Partnership approaches between the Faculty and the Student Enabling Centre produce good results and demonstrate the commitment we have to our students.

What our students say:
'*I just wanted to thank you for the time you've given me. I haven't felt like I'm taking a step in the right direction for a long time, so thank you.* '
(Student Enabling Centre feedback)

- Flexibility in assessment and an overall plan of action for the student often helps. The Student Enabling Centre and Academic colleagues in Psychology are on hand to offer support in dealing with assessment anxiety without compromising learning outcomes.

- Encouraging all students to be supportive and empathic, especially where group activities and responsibilities are required.

What our students say:
'*I seem to be recovering slowly from my illness - feeling that I have achieved something has helped.*'
(Student Enabling Centre feedback)

- Developing active listening skills and undertaking any training in mental wellbeing that is offered. This will add to your coping skills.

Further hints, tips and background reading

- This provides a good overview of the difficulties students with mental health conditions can experience in relation to their time at university: www.rethink.org/living-with-mental-illness/education/difficulties-while-studying

- Understanding Student's Experiences: www.umhan.com/experiences.html

- Student Mental Health: www.nhs.uk/Livewell/studenthealth/Pages/Mentalhealth.aspx

- Mental Health Info and Self-Help

- Understanding Mental Health Problems: www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/mental-health-problems-general/what-are-mental-health-problems/#.VUH0UCG6e70

- A list of resources to help someone else who is struggling: www.mind.org.uk/information-support/helping-someone-else/

- Our Counselling web-pages also have a big list of sources of support that staff can also recommend: www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/counselling/support/index.jsp

Checklist for reflection: Mental health

In respect of mental health:

Do you know how many students in your session have mental health issues?	✓
Have you received, checked and actioned their Learning Support Agreements?	
Have you done any work within your group to encourage an awareness of diversity and to produce a supportive and empathic culture?	
Have you liaised with the Student Enabling Centre's Specialist Student Advisors for advice on how to support individual students?	
Have you considered alternative methods of assessment that would be more suited to the needs of individuals with mental health issues?	
Have you considered how to support individuals who may be absent from study because of their issues	
Do you know where to go for extra help, background information and support?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All – Enhancing Practice
Students with mobility issues

What are the key issues?

Mobility issues are highly individualised but the impact is always the same; the individual experiences difficulty in accessing learning environments that would otherwise be considered accessible.

One of the key underlying issues that is often overlooked is that mobility issues are often associated with pain that, of course, can be mild to severe, transient or permanent or, indeed, debilitating. Pain is often controlled using medication that can severely impact on concentration levels, mood and ability to participate.

A significant number of people with mobility issues receive ongoing medical treatment. This may require temporary absences for appointments or, on some occasions, longer-term absences for recuperation.

Many mobility issues are hidden; some are a consequence of other underlying impairments such as multiple sclerosis, diabetes or motor neurone disease. Some mobility issues are life limiting such as muscular dystrophy.

The issues then are not simply about physical access to learning environments, although that is highly important, but may be more to do with developing a clearer understanding of the needs of individuals and the impact on their lives.

What are the implications for teaching and learning?

The first and most obvious implication is the organisation and management of the learning environment. When teaching, you are the manager of that environment and it is your responsibility to ensure that it is organised appropriately. This may mean ensuring that general teaching is organised in ground floor locations where possible in order to minimise the impact of stairs etc. although this is not always possible.

Our Estates department very much take account of accessibility when refurbishing and this includes teaching rooms. However there may still be a need to ensure appropriate furniture is available.

Rooms should be organised to allow free movement and, if appropriate, consideration should be given to prioritising seating in order to allow individuals to fully participate. With specialist rooms, consideration should be given on how the student may best access this which may, on occasion, involve a risk assessment.

To allow for the effects of medication it is important that the pace of your delivery is appropriate; that notes, hand-outs, session briefs are provided in advance where possible, in order that the student can fully prepare for the learning experience and that instructions are given clearly and simply. Please note that making things simple to understand is actually a difficult task and in no way should this be considered to be "dumbing down". Of course, learning outcomes need to be maintained at the appropriate academic standard so the real challenge is how you facilitate the opportunity for the student to best demonstrate their achievements.

As mentioned elsewhere in the toolkit, it is important to establish a good rapport with students and be able to listen and respond to their individual needs. This is, in essence, what the Law requires us to do when we are considering individual reasonable adjustments. Attendance at sessions that support active listening skills and empathy can be of great value here.

Students may take more time getting to and between lectures and seminars.

What really works well?

- Getting to grips with the concept of managing your learning environment(s) is essential in dealing with students who have mobility issues e.g. move freely around the space; sit in a position that best facilitates their view.

- Allow recording of your delivery where appropriate. Students often find an audio recording helpful to enable them to return to their study at a later date.

- Post materials on Blackboard ahead of the learning session and keep them in an accessible format (preferably Word) so that the text can be formatted for individual needs (see the Inclusive By Design section).

- Make some arrangements for students to catch up if they have to have a necessary absence because of their mobility issues.

- Be flexible about assessment arrangements, understanding that, for some students, pain may be a huge barrier to the more formal examination arrangements we have in place.

Further hints, tips and background reading

- Developing an inclusive curriculum for students with mobility impairments - www2.glos.ac.uk/gdn/icp/imobility.pdf

- Disability, mobility impairments and students with disabilities - www.disabled-world.com/disability/education/students.php

- STEM Disability Committee - http://www.stemdisability.org.uk/portal/supportstaff.aspx

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- Muscular Dystrophy Campaign: Trailblazers on Higher Education in 2013 www.mdctrailblazers.org/did-you-know

- Birkett, D. (2013) 'They just looked startled to see Storme zoom in': when will university drama departments wake up to the needs of disabled students. [online]. *Guardian*; 30 September 2013. Available from: http://www.theguardian.com/education/2013/sep/30/disabled-students-university-drama-departments [accessed 20 May 2015]

Checklist for reflection: Mobility

Have you considered the physical layout of your learning environment and how it may be adapted to meet the needs of individual learners with mobility issues?	✓
Have you noted the adjustments contained in any Learning Support Agreements and taken action to ensure they are in place?	
Have you ensured that students with mobility issues are comfortable in your learning environment and ensured that they have access to all resources you may be using?	
Have you made your resources available in an accessible format on Blackboard?	
Where possible, have you sought out ground floor teaching space to make your sessions more accessible?	
Have you considered how you will support individual students when they are absent for a reason to do with their mobility impairment?	
Have you considered alternative assessment strategies for individuals who experience discomfort when having to sit for long periods of time?	
Have you considered the pace of your delivery when face with students who have concentration difficulties because of pain and/or medication?	

Reflection into action

Having reflected on the above, my key priorities for making my teaching more inclusive are:

Changes I would like to introduce	By when	Indicators that it has made my practice more inclusive

*Include*All: Inclusive Practice:
Self-Reflection Checklist for individual lecturers

The purpose of this checklist is as an aide memoire to help self-reflection rather than as a prescriptive set of regulations for all to conform. It is anticipated that many of the statements listed here will mirror practice which is already in place in various curriculum areas of the University, and so this checklist is merely to prompt reflection, encouraging you to consider how you can make your existing good practice even better.

Either across all your teaching or just focussing on your teaching within one particular award or module, for each statement in the checklist below, place a tick in the appropriate column.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Planning					
The cultural background of different students is taken into consideration when a teaching session is planned					
Consideration is given to the range of student needs within the group					
Teaching sessions are planned to accommodate different learning styles and preferences					
Barriers that prevent students from diverse backgrounds are recognised and therefore avoided					
You consciously examine your own assumptions so as to avoid any bias					
Differentiated activities are included so as to maximise the potential of all students					
Hand-outs and other learning materials are made available on Blackboard sufficiently in advance to support learning					

Learning resources					
A range of Inclusive imagery and language are used so as to include students from different cultural backgrounds					
Cultural diversity is celebrated through being integrated into materials					
Recommended texts and/or articles illustrate and heighten awareness of different cultural perspectives					
Hand-outs are clear and informative so as to aid learning					
Power-point slides have a balance of text and imagery					
Lectures are recorded and made available to students in order to consolidate learning					
Teaching methods					
Teaching strategies maximise the chance for all students to succeed					
Opportunities are provided for the experiences and voices of all students to inform the discussion					
A multi-sensory (e.g. visual, verbal and auditory)approach to teaching is used					
Teaching methods and learning activities are varied to promote and support different learning styles/preferences					
Strategies to ensure the positive engagement of all students are used					
Group-work					
The rationale behind group work is explained					
Students are divided into groups to aid integration					
Instructions for the tasks are given using simple language					

Dignity and respect for all group members is promoted as part of ground-rules setting					
Group-work is monitored so as to ensure all students are engaging with it					
Power differentials between genders, races classes and students with disabilities are recognised and minimised					
Communication					
New vocabulary is clarified and displayed; variation in definitions across linguistic barriers discussed					
Unnecessary jargon is avoided					
The language used is inclusive and non-discriminatory					
Diverse perspectives and interpretations are encouraged					
Students of all abilities and cultural backgrounds are helped and encouraged to contribute.					
Students confident to raise issues and ask if they do not understand.					
Open to students suggesting improvements					
Inappropriate language and behaviour challenged					
Assessment					
A choice of assessments and/or a choice within assessments is given where appropriate					
If the module allows, students co-create with you the assessment criteria to be used					
The assessment is explained in simple terms					

The students' understanding of the assessment is checked					
Guidance is given about the structure and content of assessments and, where appropriate, example/model answers are provided to aid clarity					
The marking criteria is made explicit to students					
Plagiarism is (re)explained and hints and tips about how to avoid it are reiterated					

Reflection and action

Analysing my responses to the above checklist, I now intend to work on the following:

Action	By when?

*Include*All: Inclusive Practice
Self-Assessment Checklist for Award Teams

The purpose of this checklist is as an aide memoire to help award teams reflect on their practice rather than as a prescriptive set of regulations for all to conform. It is anticipated that many of the statements listed here will either mirror existing practice in various curriculum areas of the University or they will have been considered as staff gain increasing awareness of inclusive practice. Therefore this checklist may be aspirational in parts and designed to prompt reflection, encouraging award teams to consider how they can, within the confines of what can realistically be changed, make their existing good practice even better.

Please note that although there is an emphasis on ethnicity and gender to tie in with our work around the attainment of BAME students, the Equality Challenge Unit's Race Equality Charter Mark and the Athena SWAN Charter, monitoring should include all areas of diversity.

In consideration of the whole of your award, for each statement in the checklist below, place a tick in the appropriate column.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Data analysis					
The diversity data for the award is analysed and acted upon					
The percentage of BAME, disabled and mature students on the course is benchmarked year on year					
The attainment of BAME and disabled students is monitored at module and award level					
The attainment gap between white and BAME students is monitored					
Analysis of the diversity data for the award impacts on curriculum planning and specific changes can be identified					

The ethnic profile of the staff teaching on the award is recorded and monitored					
Marketing and advertising					
The marketing information, including faculty and school webpages, for the award celebrates diversity to attract a diverse student body					
Specific quotes from a diverse range of students are used to attract new entrants					
Information about the award for prospective students is inclusive in terms of language and imagery					
Where selection interviews occur, any barriers to recruiting a diverse range of students are removed					
All staff involved in the student recruitment process routinely have refresher training about unconscious bias					
Curriculum planning					
Induction covers study skills, independent learning, plagiarism, language skills, expected behaviour and general support available?					
The content and structure of the award is scrutinised to remove any potential barriers to supporting the success of a diverse range of students					
Where visiting speakers are part of the curriculum, there is representation from BAME and disabled people					
Where visits are part of the curriculum, these are planned with a diverse range of students in mind					
Where placements are part of the curriculum, these are planned with a diverse range of students in mind					
The curriculum is planned in anticipation of some students needing additional study support					
The EILTs scores of students is shared with all module tutors					

The pre-entry qualifications of students is shared with all module tutors					
The student induction programme ensures that specific support for BAME, international, disabled and mature students is identified if required					
In the allocation of personal tutors, the needs of specific students is taken into consideration					
Module and award handbooks are in plain English free of jargon and include standard information pointing to study skills, disability and faculty guidance support and stance on discrimination					
Any related professional or qualification bodies consulted around reasonable adjustments for disabled students					
Take into account the needs of teaching staff with disabilities when planning and when booking rooms					
Teaching methods and resources					
Across the award, a wide range of teaching methods is used so as to meet the learning styles and preferences for all students					
A strategic review of the teaching methods across all the modules is undertaken to ensure that there is a variety used					
The module and award-level learning outcomes are reviewed so as not to disadvantage any students					
The teaching methods support the success of learners from both traditional and non-traditional educational experiences					
Across the award, the way in which group-work is conducted is monitored so as not to disadvantage any students					
The key texts, case studies and other materials are reviewed to check that their language and imagery are inclusive					

Across the award, learning resources are uploaded into BlackBoard so that students can access them before lectures					
The inclusive practice of all lecturers on the award is a focus within teaching observations					
Assessment and feedback regime					
A range of assessment methods is used across the award					
On some modules, there is a choice of assessment methods					
Where possible, module tutors co- construct the assessments and/or the related criteria with students					
Early formative assessments are used to diagnose which students need extra study skills support					
Module tutors work in partnership with student-skills tutors to provide support for the assessments					
In preparation for assessments, module tutors provide support to all students					
In preparation for assessments, module tutors go through example assessments with students					
In preparation for assessments, module tutors go through exercises which enable students to understand the assessment criteria					
In addition to individual feedback, group-feedback is given to highlight key strengths and weaknesses					
Staff development					
Update training for staff on inclusive practice is discussed at team meetings					
Update training for staff on inclusive practice is included in staff appraisals					
Update training/briefing on BAME and international students					

is made available to staff					
Update training/briefing on disabled students is made available to staff					
Update training/briefing on mature students is made available to staff					

Inclusive practice award-level action-plan

Analysing the responses to the checklist above, the award team have decided to focus on the following:

Issue(s) to be addressed /enhanced	Action	Lead responsibility	By when
For BAME students			
For disabled students			
For mature students			