

# DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

2024-2025

*We value every person every day*







## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

The University of Newcastle acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands within our footprint areas. We respect the wisdom of Elders, past and present. The University of Newcastle extends this respect to the homelands of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff. The University of Newcastle acknowledges the intersectional experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff with disability.



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS OF THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

It is an honour to share the University of Newcastle's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2024-2025.

This action plan represents the contribution of many people. While creating this DIAP, we have been heartened by the support, collaboration and investment demonstrated by the University community. This DIAP, across 33 actions, demonstrates a genuine commitment to enhancing equity, access and inclusion for all students and staff with disability of the University.

The collaborative work cannot end here. DIAPs require a long-term investment to be successful. Implementation will depend on our people taking individual and collective action. By joining together, we can maintain momentum and generate a progressive positive influence.

It has been an extraordinarily difficult year for people with disability. We acknowledge that the development of this DIAP occurred within a complex process of broader Australian social policy review, including the finalisation of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the National Disability Insurance Scheme Review. It is no easy task providing input into consultative processes as these often force us to relive trauma, discrimination, and pervasive ableism. Given this context, we thank you for giving your time, sharing your experiences, and contributing your ideas to improve our University. Your contributions will benefit current students and staff of the University, and those well into the future.

We thank and acknowledge the work of students and staff who contributed their time and expertise to the Disability Inclusion Action Plan Subcommittee: Ashish Malik; Belle Johnson; Bobby Fish; I-Fang Lee; Isaac Leonard; Jennifer Lowe; Judith Foggett; Mali Webb; Maribel Guzman; Michelle Campbell; Olivia Whalen; Rachel Fowell; Samantha Ashby; Sarah Wood; Sophie Rawsthorne; Sue Anne Ware; Tim Johnson; and Tim Roberts.

We thank and acknowledge the governance of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee. We are grateful for oversight provided by the University Lead Equity Diversity and Inclusion, Associate Professor Jill Duncan, and executive sponsor Professor Mark Hoffman, Deputy Vice Chancellor (Academic).

**Katie Butler and Associate Professor Jamie MacKee**

Disability Inclusion Action Plan Subcommittee Co-Chairs  
University of Newcastle Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

*(Pictured left to right with Sadie the Guide Dog)*





# ABOUT THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

The University of Newcastle is committed to being a leading advocate and driving force for excellence and equity in higher education. This DIAP demonstrates this commitment, striving to ensure that all students and staff with disability have the best opportunities to succeed.

Disability is the interaction between a person's impairment and barriers that exist in society, which influence full participation, access, inclusion and belonging. The approach of the DIAP is to eliminate barriers that may exist in the University and facilitate opportunity through equity measures to bridge gaps caused by barriers over time. In practice, the DIAP will progressively improve accessibility and inclusivity across campus infrastructure, digital environment, teaching and learning, student services and the professional and academic employee experience.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

The development of the DIAP was overseen by the DIAP Subcommittee, of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee. The DIAP Subcommittee provided guidance throughout the processes of consultation, stakeholder engagement and drafting of the action plan.

A mixed methods consultation was undertaken to inform the DIAP, between November 2022 and May 2023. The consultation sought perspectives of students and staff, with and without disability. Consultation data highlighted four areas of focus, around which the DIAP is framed.

## DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN FOCUS AREAS

1. Inclusive Culture
2. Equitable Learning
3. Inclusive Digital Environment
4. Accessible Campuses and Facilities



# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DISABILITY INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

For successful implementation, the DIAP requires actions from stakeholders across the University. Implementation principles are provided to guide stakeholders with responsibility over actions in the DIAP.

The implementation principles represent areas of attention that are crucial to eradicating discrimination and ableism towards people with disability. Ableism refers to normative expectations around how people look, think, interact, process information and behave. When people are treated unfairly or unfavourably because they do not conform to these expectations due to disability, this is ableism. Ableism is seen when inclusion and accessibility are not properly considered or prioritised.

The need to continuously reflect on the impact of intersectionality throughout the implementation of this DIAP is recognised and respected. Intersectional experiences arise when a person experiences marginalisation or discrimination due to more than one aspect of their identity. For example, the discrimination and trauma experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability is often amplified by experiencing both racism and ableism. We must ensure that the practices we put in place are culturally safe and do not cause further harm.

The elimination of ableism also relies on privileging the voices of people with disability in all matters which concern the inclusion of people with disability. This can be ensured through appropriate engagement in consultation, co-design, remuneration and recognition.

## IMPLEMENTATION PRINCIPLES

In combination with monitoring relevant actions, stakeholders should ensure all action is undertaken in alignment with the below principles:

1. Respect and attention are granted to the intersectional experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and staff.
2. As identified in the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2025, consideration and attention should be given to intersecting equity cohorts.
3. The voices of people with disability must be sought and respected as the experts in matters that concern inclusion of people with disability.
4. Students and staff with disability who contribute to implementing the DIAP should be appropriately remunerated and or recognised for contributing their time and expertise.

## FOUNDATION PRINCIPLES

The DIAP aligns with the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2023-2025, which sets out foundation principles to which the DIAP aligns.

1. *The University community strives for **universal non-discrimination***
2. *The University community strives for **full and effective inclusion***
3. *The University community strives for **full and effective accessibility***
4. *The University community believes in the **equity of people***
5. *The University community believes in **equality of opportunity***



## GOVERNANCE

Realising the ambitions of the DIAP will require a whole-of-university effort. The DIAP spans across multiple areas of business delivery. Each outcome and action is assigned a Lead, Support or Champion and Executive Sponsor to ensure the effective and efficient pursuit of success.

- The role of 'Lead' is to implement the outcome via the designated action(s).
- The role of 'Support' is to assist in implementing the action(s).
- The role of 'Executive Sponsor' is to deliver the action(s).

The Equity Diversity and Inclusion Unit (Academic Division) will oversee the DIAP. However, ensuring successful outcomes ultimately resides with the University's Executive Committee.

## MEASURING PROGRESS

The DIAP requires responsible stakeholders to report on action undertaken. This data will be collated by the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit and periodically reported to the University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and Executive Committee to assess if targets are being met effectively.

## STRATEGIC AND LEGISLATIVE ALIGNMENT

This DIAP supports the University of Newcastle Looking Ahead Strategic Plan (2020-2025), which highlights the values of equity and excellence. This DIAP (2024-2025) aligns with the University's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy (2023-2025) and associated action plans.

This DIAP reflects many components of a Disability Inclusion Action Plan created under the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW). The University is not obligated to create a DIAP in line with this Act but recognises the framework and associated guidelines as presenting a best-practice model. Additionally, the DIAP aims to ensure alignment with other relevant Australian social policy priority areas. Please consult Appendix 1 for more information.

In creating and implementing this DIAP, the University of Newcastle ensures regard to the following policy and legislation.

- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)*
- *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability 2006*
- *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Cth)*
- *Disability Inclusion Act 2014 (NSW)*



# FOCUS AREA ONE: INCLUSIVE CULTURE

## Focus area objectives:

- University personnel will develop greater knowledge and skill to enable them to practice with accessibility and inclusion as an integrated priority.
- The University will foster experiences in which students, staff and prospective staff can disclose disability and access reasonable adjustments with ease, safety, pride, and confidence.
- The University of Newcastle will build its reputation for having a welcoming, disability inclusive culture.

OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
<b>1.1</b> Staff build knowledge and capability through completion of Disability Confidence Training.	Devise a strategy to continue Disability Confidence Training rollout and resourcing to maximise staff completion.	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	Human Resource Services - Capability and Development; Accessibility Champions Network	2024, 2025	DVC (Academic)	Staff
<b>1.2</b> University personnel are empowered to locate and develop knowledge to support their own application of disability inclusive practice in teaching and learning design, project delivery, and in implementation of reasonable adjustments for students and staff.	Create a LibGuide in consultation with key knowledge holders with a focus on provision of easily accessible information, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inclusive employment practice.</li> <li>• inclusive teaching practice.</li> <li>• disability-related legislation and standards.</li> <li>• accessibility checklists.</li> <li>• deidentified case examples, solutions and troubleshooting techniques to assist in inclusive practice.</li> </ul>	University Libraries	Learning Design and Teaching Innovation; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit; other identified subject matter experts	2024, 2025	DVC (Academic)	Staff
<b>1.3</b> University projects and programs are informed by students with disability.	Establish individual business unit procedures that specify the protocols of engagement, remuneration and utilisation of the Student Feedback Community and other student consultative mechanisms, informing accessibility of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• systems and services.</li> <li>• digital environment.</li> <li>• premises design.</li> <li>• program delivery.</li> </ul>	Infrastructure and Facility Services; Digital Technology Solutions; University Libraries	Student Central – Student Systems and Business Enablement; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit; Student and Staff Insights	2024, 2025	PVC (Student Experience)	Student

OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
<b>1.4</b> The Student Feedback Community has strong representation of students with disability.	Undertake targeted recruitment drive(s) to the Student Feedback Community targeting students with disability and health conditions.	Student Central – Student Systems and Business Enablement; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	Student Central's AccessAbility – Student Information and Communications	2024, 2025	DVC (Academic)	Student
<b>1.5</b> The Staff with Disability Network is well resourced and supported to enable its broader impact and reach providing advocacy, representation, and proliferation of disability pride.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the contribution of Staff with Disability Network members through time allocation in service, APP and or in PRD.</li> <li>• Provide an annual budget to enable the network to fund activities and initiatives.</li> <li>• Engage the Staff with Disability Network in consultation over matters which impact staff with disability.</li> </ul>	Human Resource Services; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	Accessibility Champions Network	2024, 2025	Chief People and Culture Officer	Staff
<b>1.6</b> Recruitment procedures reflect a commitment to inclusive employment which promotes strategies in place to support applicants with disability, including support of reasonable adjustments in the application process.	Implement improvements within recruitment processes and procedures to enhance inclusivity for applicants with disability, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of recruitment guidelines to specify how inclusivity and flexibility can be facilitated.</li> <li>• Training talent acquisition staff on inclusive practices.</li> <li>• Inclusivity measures promoted in recruitment advertisements.</li> </ul>	Human Resource Services	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	Chief People and Culture Officer	Staff
<b>1.7</b> Student employment recruitment guidelines reflect inclusive recruitment measures and practices to facilitate an equitable applicant experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and adjust existing student recruitment guidelines.</li> <li>• Ensure hiring managers understand the amendments to the guidelines and where to access extra support if required.</li> <li>• Trial the new guidelines and provide advice for refinement with the University Libraries.</li> </ul>	Careers and Employability	Human Resource Services – Talent Acquisition; University Libraries; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	DVC (Academic)	Student



OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
<b>1.8</b> Onboarding procedures reflect a commitment to inclusive employment that encourages the identification and support of reasonable workplace adjustments.	Review and redevelop onboarding procedures and activities to ensure an inclusive, accessible, and welcoming experience for new employees with disability, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of the Health and Hazard Questionnaire.</li> <li>• Creation of a framework for disability disclosure conversations.</li> <li>• Identification of required reasonable adjustments.</li> <li>• Creation of a welcome information resource with links to internal and external supports.</li> <li>• Development of a personalised orientation and induction protocol on campus or in the use of relevant digital systems and equipment (specific to impairment type).</li> <li>• Develop capability of onboarding officers.</li> </ul>	Human Resource Services	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit; Digital Technology Solutions; Infrastructure and Facility Services; Change and Improvement – Staff Engagement	2024	Chief People and Culture Officer	Staff
<b>1.9</b> Managers and leaders are supported to demonstrate excellence in workplace disability inclusivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information and training to people leaders during onboarding, to ensure capability to navigate disability disclosure conversations and to facilitate reasonable workplace adjustments with confidence.</li> <li>• Support people leaders through periodic staff communications on related topics to ensure they are aware of their obligations.</li> </ul>	Human Resource Services	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit; Change and Improvement – Staff Engagement	2025	Chief People and Culture Officer	Staff
<b>1.10</b> The University attracts and supports Doctorate qualified early research career staff.	Embed disability inclusivity in the planning for “Researcher of the Future” training and schemes.	Research and Innovation	Human Resource Services; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	DVC (Research and Innovation)	Staff
<b>1.11</b> The University demonstrates leadership in creating equitable career ready placement opportunities for students with disability.	Provide career ready placements annually across the University’s business units earmarked for students with disability.	PVC (Education and Innovation)	Careers and Employability; College Assistant Deans career ready placements	2024, 2025	PVC (Education and Innovation)	Student
<b>1.12</b> Accessibility becomes a core consideration in change management processes to ensure all new and revised projects and activities are inclusive of people with disability.	Update the Change Management Framework to ensure an accessibility consideration is included in the ‘aspects of change’ list.	Human Resource Services	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024	Executive Director, Change and Improvement	Student and Staff



OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
<b>1.13</b> Future students, alumni and donors have the opportunity to view messages about the University's commitment to and demonstration of accessibility and disability inclusive culture and actions.	Incorporate relevant information into communications strategies that promote: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility features available to students and staff.</li> <li>• The University's commitment to and demonstration of disability inclusive culture across pathways, Undergraduate, Postgraduate and HDR programs.</li> <li>• Student or staff stories.</li> <li>• Visual representation of students and staff with disability.</li> </ul>	Future Students and Communications, Engagement; Office of Alumni and Philanthropy	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit; Student Central's AccessAbility	2025	DVC (Global)	Student and Staff
<b>1.14</b> Future students with disability experience demonstrations of inclusivity in action from their earliest interactions with the University.	Provide Student Ambassadors with training and support to enable them to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate inclusive and welcoming actions towards future students with disability.</li> <li>• Advise future students with disability about supports, services and inclusive features of the University.</li> </ul>	Future Students and Communications and Engagement	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	DVC (Global)	Student
<b>1.15</b> Sponsorship partners demonstrate values of equity and inclusivity in their engagement with the University.	Sponsorship and partnership agreements will require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstration of alignment with the University's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion values.</li> <li>• Community/partnership activations must consider and facilitate accessibility.</li> </ul>	Future Students and Communications and Engagement	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2025	DVC (Global)	Student
<b>1.16</b> University marketing reflects disability as a natural and positive element of university life.	Ensure disability representation in existing diversity guidelines for photography, videography and use in marketing materials.	Future Students and Communications and Engagement	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	DVC (Global)	Student and Staff
<b>1.17</b> Internal communications help promote the DIAP, its objectives, and reinforce capability development, information provision and promote disability pride.	Feature disability-related communications, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updates on the DIAP.</li> <li>• Stories about staff with disability (where disability may or may not be the feature point).</li> <li>• University accessibility and inclusion initiatives.</li> <li>• Capability development.</li> </ul>	Change and Improvement – Staff Engagement	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit; Assistant Deans Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	2024, 2025	Executive Director Change and Improvement	Staff
<b>1.18</b> Inclusive practice in internal communications is documented to ensure future communications maintain the same high standards.	Create Standard Operating Procedures that accurately reflect current good practice in ensuring inclusivity of internal communications.	Change and Improvement – Staff Engagement	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	Executive Director Change and Improvement	Staff



# FOCUS AREA TWO: EQUITABLE LEARNING

## Focus area objectives:

- The University will progress towards ensuring an enabling philosophy and inclusive teaching and learning methods are embedded across all course delivery to benefit all students.
- Students will be empowered to enhance their own learning through the use of accessibility tools and assistive technology.
- Academics will be supported and empowered to utilise teaching technology to optimise accessibility.

OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
<b>2.1</b> Inclusive teaching and learning design and delivery is an embedded criteria for approval of new programs and courses at PCAC.	Require all new or reviewed courses to meet inclusive teaching design requirements and documented in the course outline approval process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of processes and materials created under 5.9, 5.11 and 5.12 of the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, Accessibility Action Plan.</li> <li>• Create a repository of successful, best-practice examples is created to assist future course development.</li> </ul>	College PVCs	College Assistant Deans Education; College Senior Managers Education and Innovation; Deputy Heads of School (Education); PVC (Education and Innovation); Assistant Deans Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	2025	DVC (Academic)	Student
<b>2.2</b> An enabling philosophy and inclusive teaching and learning practices are embedded across all course delivery.	Form a subcommittee under the University Teaching and Learning Committee to advance the uptake of inclusive learning pedagogy across course delivery, considering policy, processes and or education needs between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning Design and Teaching Innovation.</li> <li>• Pathways and Academic Learning Support.</li> <li>• Student Central's AccessAbility .</li> <li>• Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit.</li> <li>• Digital Technology Solutions.</li> <li>• Careers and Employability.</li> <li>• Other relevant and subject matter experts including academic teaching staff, PVC (Education and Innovation).</li> </ul>	PVC (Education and Innovation)	Heads of Schools; Learning Design and Teaching Innovation; Student Central's AccessAbility - Student Advocacy - Counselling and Psychological Services; Pathways and Academic Learning Support; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit; University Libraries; Assistant Deans Equity, Diversity and Inclusion	2024, 2025	DVC (Academic)	Student
<b>2.3</b> Teaching staff will utilise inclusive teaching and learning design.	Present inclusive teaching and learning material to teaching staff for implementation in student Centred Course Design workshops (pilot).	Pathways and Academic Learning Support	Learning Design and Teaching Innovation; Student Central's AccessAbility; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	DVC (Academic)	Student



OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
<b>2.4</b> Students will be empowered to learn about and utilise assistive technology and accessibility features in their studies.	Create and upload quick reference resources on use of accessibility tools.	Student Central, AccessAbility	Learning Design and Teaching Innovation; Digital Technology Solutions	2025	PVC (Student Experience)	Student
<b>2.5</b> Students with disability have equitable access to and engagement with career ready placement opportunities.	Assist students with disability to engage with career ready placements: • Recruit specialist staff with knowledge of reasonable workplace adjustments and knowledge of government support funding to assist employers to facilitate placement of students reasonably and inclusively with disability.	PVC (Education and Innovation); PVC (Student Engagement)	Student Central's AccessAbility - Careers and Employability; Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	DVC (Academic)	Student
<b>2.6</b> Inclusivity, flexibility, and accessibility is enabled and promoted in HDR programs.	Review relevant guidelines and processes to incorporate greater accessibility considerations into current practice, such as: • Confirmation guidelines. • Implementation of Reasonable Adjustment Plans to HDR students. • Administrative processes that HDR students need to engage with.	Graduate Research	Student Central's AccessAbility - Student Information, Communications; Future Students, Communications and engagement	2024, 2025	DVC (Research and Innovation)	Student

# FOCUS AREA THREE: INCLUSIVE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

## Focus area objectives:

- The University will ensure a future where all University digital technology solutions are accessible to all staff and students who need to use them.
- Staff and students will be empowered to utilise and promote to others the built-in accessibility features of digital platforms.

OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
<b>3.1</b> Accessibility is embedded as an essential success criterion in the scope of all digital initiatives to ensure the University's ongoing provision of inclusive digital infrastructure.	Embed mandatory accessibility criteria including WCAG202 AA into digital solution procurement activities; experience design, solution design and review practices; testing and benefits realisation.	Digital Technology Solutions	Strategic Procurement	2024, 2025	Chief Digital Officer	Student and Staff
<b>3.2</b> Staff will have awareness of and capability in the use of accessibility tools and features.	Embed information about accessibility features and Accessible Technology training materials into DTS publications, training materials and communications.	Digital Technology Solutions	Change and Improvement	2024, 2025	Chief Digital Officer	Staff
<b>3.3</b> DTS staff will have increased knowledge to help staff and students using assistive technology by ensuring they have access to training and information on commonly used assistive technologies and escalation paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and publish knowledge base articles into ServiceNow platform for standard DTS solutions with accessibility features.</li> <li>• Include information and training on assistive technologies and escalation paths in Service Desk onboarding program.</li> <li>• Develop process to ensure Service Desk staff are aware of other support services including referral to specialist resources such as AccessAbility team.</li> </ul>	Digital Technology Solutions	Human Resource Services –Capability and Development	2024, 2025	Chief Digital Officer	Student and Staff
<b>3.4</b> Provide access to the latest accessibility features in teaching and learning spaces.	Upgrade all teaching space and student learning computers to include the latest operating system version; latest versions of core solutions such as Microsoft365 and Zoom and investigate options to allow end users to access accessibility features without the need for DTS intervention.	Digital Technology Solutions		2024, 2025	Chief Digital Officer	Student and Staff
<b>3.5</b> University collateral and templates will demonstrate excellence in accessibility.	Review marketing collateral, forms and templates to ensure a high-level of accessibility for those utilising, distributing and viewing materials.	Future Students and Communications and Engagement		2024, 2025	DVC (Global)	Student and Staff



# FOCUS AREA FOUR: ACCESSIBLE CAMPUSES AND FACILITIES

Focus area objectives:

- Students and staff with disability will enjoy more comfortable and accessible environments on campus.

OUTCOME	ACTION	LEAD	SUPPORT	TARGET DELIVERY YEAR(S)	EXECUTIVE SPONSOR	STUDENT/ STAFF
4.1 Improve accessibility of student accommodation facilities and community.	Ensure meaningful consultation during design/planning of new facilities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop guidelines for inclusive community events.</li><li>• Ensure resident communications meet the needs of a diverse cohort of students.</li><li>• Post-occupancy review of new accommodation at Honeysuckle (2026).</li></ul>	Student Central - Student Living	Infrastructure and Facility Services; Student Central's AccessAbility - Counselling and Psychological Services - Student Information and Communications	2024, 2025	PVC (Student Experience)	Student
4.2 End user (students and staff) consultation with people with disability is mandatory for the design, development, and commissioning of new and refurbished built projects.	Develop a protocol whereby the Student Feedback Community (1.3) and Staff with Disability Network (1.5) are consulted for all relevant and appropriate new, refurbishment and maintenance works.	Infrastructure and Facility Services	Student Central - Student Systems and Business Enablement; Staff with Disability Network	2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer	Student and Staff
4.3 The current status of building accessibility is understood.	Audit of all existing buildings on all campuses to establish a baseline status of the accessibility.	Infrastructure and Facility Services		2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer	Student and Staff
4.4 Consultants and contractors engaged by the University are inducted into the University's values, related policies and support for students and staff with disability.	Develop and induction module/short workshop that is made available to staff, consultants and contractors engaged by the University to provide new or refurbished built projects.	Infrastructure and Facility Services	Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit	2024, 2025	Chief Operating Officer	Student and Staff

# APPENDIX 1

# APPLICABLE POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

Many social policies are relevant to the development of the DIAP. While the University is not mandated to have a DIAP by any state-based or Commonwealth legislation, there are many obligations of law and objectives of policy that are well addressed through the implementation of a DIAP.

## AUSTRALIA'S DISABILITY STRATEGY 2021-2031

The Disability Strategy is a national framework developed to improve the lives of Australians with disability.

The strategy has an outcome area and policy priorities relevant to the University. The first outcome area of the strategy relates to improving employment and financial security for Australians with disability. Specific policy priorities include Policy Priority 1: Increase employment of people with disability; Policy Priority 2: Improve the transition of young people with disability from education to employment. All state governments are signatories to the strategy.

## COMMONWEALTH DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACT 1992 (DDA)

The DDA makes direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of disability against people with disability and their associates unlawful. The DDA applies to access to premises, accommodation, goods and services, education, employment, health care and transport.

Part 3 of the DDA discusses the development of Disability Action Plans, however, it does not mandate any agency, organisation or authority to have a disability action plan. If an agency, organisation or authority does choose to create a disability Action Plan, the DDA stipulates essential requirements under this part.

The DDA has associated standards which are unlawful to contravene. Particularly relevant to the University are the Disability Standards for Education 2005 and the Access to Premises: Buildings Standards 2010 .

## CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD)

Australia ratified the CRPD in 2008, becoming a States Party to the convention. States Parties are obligated to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of human rights and freedoms of persons with disabilities while promoting respect for inherent dignity.

Of particular relevancy, Article 24 – Education, sets out those rights and freedoms relating to receiving an education. Similarly, Article 27 – Work and Employment promotes the right of persons with disabilities to be able to work on an equal basis with others and to have access to open, accessible and inclusive employment.

## NSW DISABILITY INCLUSION ACT 2014

The Disability Inclusion Act first mandated NSW government departments, agencies and local councils to have a DIAP. Guiding this obligation is the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan, which sets out areas of action for these relevant public authorities in line with four outcome areas:

- Improve attitudes and behaviours
- Create liveable communities
- Improve meaningful employment outcomes
- Better systems and processes

Part 2 of the Act sets out requirements of disability action planning. While the University is not obligated to undertake planning in line with this Act, the structure created ensures appropriate consultative processes to be undertaken and action to be planned in line with social policy priorities as outlined above. The NSW Government has also created resources and guidelines to assist those creating DIAPs: Disability Inclusion Action Planning resources.

It is recognised that the framework of a DIAP as articulated by this framework is a best-practice model. However, it is noted that not all aspects of the structure suit the University environment as it is not created to suit higher education. As the University is not obligated to follow the structure, it has utilised those elements which enhance the planning and implementation, and adjusted others where required.





THE UNIVERSITY OF  
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