

# A1.4 Being inclusive in module and course design

## Ensure learning outcomes can be achieved by a diverse group of students

### How?

Consider whether some students might be excluded from demonstrating success in the course. Reflect on whether the required skill, knowledge or attribute is justifiably designated as a competence standard. Advance HE provides further information in this article on ‘[Competence standards and reasonable adjustments](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/student-recruitment-retention-and-attainment/inclusive-learning-and-teaching/competence-standards-and-reasonable-adjustments)’.

You can find out more about student needs and disabilities and how these relate to pedagogy and teaching methods using the modules developed as part of the [SCALE project](https://scale.wp.worc.ac.uk/?page_id=15) undertaken by the University.

### Why?

We have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure all practices are non- discriminatory, whether this is direct or indirect discrimination. If learning outcomes are likely to exclude anyone (e.g., such as acquiring a certain physical skill), you must ensure that the barrier is necessary. All students must have equal opportunity to participate and evidence their ability. See the Advance HE webpages for further information on [equality legislation in the UK](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/equality-legislation).



## Write learning outcomes clearly

### How?

Refer to the University guide to [writing learning outcomes](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/LearningOutcomesGuide-PrinciplesforCourseDesign.pdf) and ensure the course handbook is clear on how these will be assessed .

### Why?

Your cohort may include students with specific learning differences (SpLDs) or students for whom English is not their first language so ensure learning outcomes are clearly defined and unambiguous. If students understand the learning outcomes, they will be able to understand better how they relate to the course content and assessments.

## Specify key learning outcomes in course and module promotional material

### How?

Ensure this information is made available to prospective students.

### Why?

Students need to be able to make an informed choice about thesuitability of the course or module. If there are genuine competency standards where reasonable adjustments cannot be made, this may pose difficulties for some disabled students.

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## Stagger assessment deadlines

### How?

Ensure that deadlines are not tightly bunched together at particular times of year.

### Why?

Many students’ personal circumstances and learning styles mean that they can struggle to manage their time and work on multiple projects simultaneously. These difficulties can be exacerbated by the additional impact of stress when there are several deadlines clustered closely together. Staggered deadlines help students to organise their time more efficiently.

## Offer different assessment options

### How?

Consider offering students a variety of ways to demonstrate they have achieved the learning outcomes. See the Inclusion Toolkit guide ‘A4.2 Being inclusive in designing assessments’ for further information on how to achieve this.

### Why?

Allowing all students a choice will enable them to choose assessment options which suit their skills and learning style. This will also reduce the need to design alternative assessments ad hoc as part of reasonable adjustments for disabled students.



## Provide an overview of the course or module

### How?

Set out an overview of the course or module content and learning activities so that students know what is coming. Include this in the course or module handbook.

### Why?

Some students will benefit greatly from having a visual representation of how the content fits together. Showing how the content covered in the course or module is linked will help students to embed their learning and help them to organise their revision.

## Be flexible in order to meet student needs

### How?

Ensure you have clear policies and procedures for students to follow if they can’t attend a session. Make learning materials available on the VLE so that students can catch up on what they have missed.

### Why?

Bear in mind that students may not be able to attend all sessions and that they may sometimes be late and miss some of the content. This could be due to travel difficulties, a medical condition or caring responsibilities.

# Useful links and resources

[Competence standards and reasonable adjustments](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/student-recruitment-retention-and-attainment/inclusive-learning-and-teaching/competence-standards-and-reasonable-adjustments), Advance HE

[Creating an inclusive learner journey](https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/creating-an-inclusive-learner-journey), Jisc, 2021

[Equality legislation](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/guidance/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/equality-legislation), Advance HE

[Principles for course design: guide to writing learning outcomes and developing assessment criteria](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/LearningOutcomesGuide-PrinciplesforCourseDesign.pdf), University of Worcester

[Supporting successful student transitions resources](https://www.membershipresources.qaa.ac.uk/teaching-learning-and-assessment/flexible-pathways-and-student-transitions/supporting-successful-student-transitions), QAA, 2021

[The good practice framework: supporting disabled students](https://www.oiahe.org.uk/media/1039/oia-good-practice-framework-supporting-disabled-students.pdf), OIA, 2017

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