

# A3.2

Inclusion at the University of Worcester



## Assess inclusively Being inclusive in Designing Assessments

When designing assessments, refer to the University guide Staff guidance for inclusive assessment & making reasonable adjustments ([https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Staff\\_Guidance\\_for\\_inclusive\\_assessments\\_web\\_version\\_Jan\\_2021.pdf](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Staff_Guidance_for_inclusive_assessments_web_version_Jan_2021.pdf)), University Policy and Procedures for Inclusive Assessment ([https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Inclusive\\_assessment\\_and\\_reasonable\\_adjustments\\_policy\\_and\\_procedures.pdf](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Inclusive_assessment_and_reasonable_adjustments_policy_and_procedures.pdf)) and Reasonable Adjustments and University Assessment Policy (<https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/AssessmentPolicy.pdf>).

### What?

Include variety across a course.

### How?

Consider the balance of different assessment methods throughout a course. Where appropriate consider providing a model, or example, where assessment formats may be unfamiliar to some students.

### Why?

This ensures that the widest possible group are catered for as different types of assessment will be more suited to some students than others. For example, students who are weaker at traditional essay style assessments may excel in other forms of assessment e.g. presentation based assessments.

Make greater use of formative assessment using technology.

Consider use of e-assessments (<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/making-assessments-accessible>) where students can get instant feedback to check their knowledge and understanding.

Electronic methods of assessment allow disabled students to use their own assistive technology, at their own pace. As the feedback is automated and factual, there is no human interaction involved which will suit students on the autism spectrum and some students with mental health conditions. Frequent formative assessment of understanding benefits all students.



## What?

Consider barriers in assessment design and offer alternative assessment options.

## How?

Plan a choice of assessment methods from the outset for students to demonstrate that learning outcomes have been met; for example group presentations could be undertaken as a one-to one or written assignment.

Try to ensure that the method of assessment does not put any students at a disadvantage, and if you find this to be the case, consider whether you can offer alternative ways for students to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes. For example presentations as an alternative to written reports. See University Policy and Procedures for Inclusive Assessment and Reasonable Adjustments ([https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Inclusive\\_assessment\\_and\\_reasonable\\_adjustments\\_policy\\_and\\_procedures.pdf](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Inclusive_assessment_and_reasonable_adjustments_policy_and_procedures.pdf)), and also refer to staff guidelines ([https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Staff\\_Guidance\\_for\\_inclusive\\_assessments\\_web\\_version\\_Jan\\_2021.pdf](https://www2.worc.ac.uk/aqu/documents/Staff_Guidance_for_inclusive_assessments_web_version_Jan_2021.pdf)) for further detail and advice.

## Why?

This may enable students to choose assessment formats that fit in with their personal circumstances, learning styles and needs<sup>12</sup> and ensure they can effectively demonstrate their learning. Offering choice will reduce the need to design alternative assessments as a one-off reasonable adjustment. Allowing all students a choice will provide options to suit individual skills strengths and learning styles.<sup>3</sup>

The way that an assessment is designed may create barriers for some students. The skills required to carry out a certain type of assessment may not be related to the learning outcomes. For example, if the assessment includes group presentations, this may be a barrier for students with particular disabilities or students who experience high levels of anxiety with public speaking or difficulty with verbal communication.

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Include extra time in in-class tests.

Incorporate the needs of students who have 25% extra time (standard recommendation for most dyslexic students) by shortening the test, e.g. from 1hr to 40 minutes so that those with extra time can still finish within the allotted hour.

By assuming there are likely to be students who need extra time in the group, it is less likely that you will need to make ad hoc arrangements, which may be time consuming.

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## What?

Be explicit about requirements for written English.

## How?

Let students know in advance whether their technical accuracy in written expression is a specific learning outcome and is therefore going to be assessed.

## Why?

Students with SpLDs and those without English as a first language will be at a disadvantage where this is the case, and may need to access additional support in order to achieve the learning outcomes.

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Provide detailed assessment criteria.

Be explicit about the requirements and the level of detail, knowledge and skill that's expected for a high grade. Discuss assessment criteria with students at the beginning of the module and explain the meaning of the criteria; where possible record this so all students receive the same information.

Students will find it difficult to use feedback on their work constructively if they can't understand why some areas of the work are weaker than others. The terms used in assessment criteria are not always self-explanatory to students. Feedback indicates this is a key source of anxiety and dissatisfaction for students.

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<sup>1</sup>Waterfield, J. and West, B. 2006. Inclusive assessment in higher education: A resource for change. Plymouth: University of Plymouth. [Online]. [Accessed: 1 August 2018]. Available from: [https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/3/3026/Space\\_toolkit.pdf](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/3/3026/Space_toolkit.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> JISC (2016) 'Inclusive assessment' [Online] [Accessed 4 August 2018] Available from: <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/transforming-assessment-and-feedback/inclusive-assessment>.

<sup>2</sup> Williams, P., Wray, J., Farrall, H. and Aspland, J. 2014. Fit for purpose: traditional assessment is failing undergraduates with learning difficulties. Might eAssessment help? International Journal of Inclusive Education. 18(6), pp.614-625.

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<https://inclusiveteaching.leeds.ac.uk/>; <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/your-university/teaching-and-learning/inclusivity>.

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