

Access and Inclusion Process for Teaching Staff

Purpose:

To outline the process for supporting students with disability (including temporary disability), medical conditions, mental health conditions, carer responsibilities, or other access requirements through Access Plans and reasonable adjustments

What is Access & Inclusion (A&I)?

Access & Inclusion works with students with disability (including temporary disability), health conditions, mental health conditions, carer responsibilities or other barriers to participation in their studies. The team develops individual Access Plans outlining reasonable adjustments to support equitable access to learning and assessment.

We follow strict processes and legislation, including the:

- > Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- > Disability Standards for Education 2005

This ensures that all adjustments are reasonable, fair, and legally compliant, providing staff with confidence that processes are consistent and evidence-based.

How Students Access Support

To be eligible for an Access Plan, students must provide supporting evidence from a relevant medical or health professional that confirms the impact of their condition on their studies. This documentation is assessed confidentially by the A&I team and forms the basis for any recommended adjustments.

If students are experiencing barriers to accessing appropriate health professionals or obtaining supporting documentation, our team will work with them to explore options and minimise barriers to access.

What is an Access Plan?

An Access Plan is a confidential document provided to teaching staff outlining reasonable adjustments a student requires. It might include things like:

- > Extensions on assessment due dates
- > Adjusted exam conditions
- > Alternative formats for learning materials
- > Access to assistive technology

Important: Access Plans do not disclose a student's diagnosis or personal medical information

Your Role as Teaching Staff

When you receive an Access Plan:

- > Review it carefully and ensure any relevant adjustments for your unit are implemented
- > Implement the adjustments in a timely and respectful way. Be sensitive with the information you are provided, and do not share this information in class settings or with other students.
- > Reach out if unsure. If you have questions about applying adjustments, contact the A&I Team at inclusion@cdu.edu.au

Adjustments are not optional. They're a legal requirement under the Disability Discrimination Act and Disability Standards for Education.

Placements and Work Integrated Learning (WIL)

If a student requires adjustments for a placement or WIL activity:

- > In the first instance, students are strongly encouraged to speak directly with their Placement Team and/or Course Coordinator about any potential issues or concerns.
- > The A&I team can then support by formalising adjustments where/if possible and in most instances, if the adjustment needs to be approved, we will ask the Course Coordinator for that approval before confirming anything with the student
- > This process ensures adjustments are reasonable, practicable, and appropriate within the placement environment.

Important: To allow enough time for reasonable adjustments to be arranged with placement providers, students should contact A&I and their Placement Team at least 3 months prior to the placement commencing.

Who We Support (and Who We Don't)

A&I provides support to students with:

- > Disability
- > Mental health conditions
- > Medical health conditions
- > Temporary injuries impacting study
- > Carer responsibilities for a family member with a disability, medical, or mental health condition

We do not provide Access Plans for students purely based on being a parent. While we acknowledge the challenges of balancing study and parenthood, this is different from having caring responsibilities for someone with a disability or health condition. Students can still speak with academic staff directly about general flexibility, but this falls outside the A&I framework.

A&I Process Overview

For Students:

1. Student registers with A&I and submits supporting medical documentation
2. A&I meets with the student to discuss support needs
3. Access Plan is developed based on evidence and student consultation
4. It is the student's responsibility to email their Access Plan to their Unit Coordinator(s) as soon as possible and at the beginning of each semester for every enrolled unit.
5. A&I advises students of this responsibility during their meeting and in follow-up emails confirming their plan.

For Teaching Staff:

1. Receive Access Plan from the student
2. Review and implement required adjustments
3. Contact A&I if you have concerns or need advice

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Do adjustments apply to group work and placements?

A: Yes, adjustments must be considered for all learning activities, including group work and placements. For placements, in most instances, if an adjustment requires approval from the Placement Team or Course Coordinator, we'll seek that before confirming adjustments with the student.

Q: How does the Access Plan renewal process work?

A: Access Plans are regularly reviewed and renewed to make sure they still meet students' needs. Renewal timeframes vary, usually between 1 and 3 years depending on the condition. We send reminder emails to students 1 month before their plan expires to ask if they want to renew or if updated supporting documentation is needed. Students are responsible for keeping their plans current by communicating with Access & Inclusion.

Contact Access and Inclusion

inclusion@cdu.edu.au

www.cdu.edu.au/current-students/life-health-wellbeing/access-inclusion

