Five Principles of Inclusive Design for the MQU Learning and Teaching Context

Inclusive Design at Macquarie: a definition

Inclusive Design in the Macquarie University context means the design of products and environments for optimum usability by the widest group of learners and staff at Macquarie University, without the need for specialised adaptation or conversion.

Clearly there are practical and resource-related implications on the ability of the University and its staff and students to implement inclusive design to the extent envisaged in this definition. Optimisation of usability central to the LTC’s support of Inclusive Design practices in the design of our curriculum, learning experiences and environments.

Inclusive Design at Macquarie: Principles

These principles will underpin development and design work of the new Learning and Teaching Strategy (once it has been finalised).

The five principles are:

1. Equitable use
   - Teaching and resources are understandable and relevant to all students, and accessible to students with a diverse range of abilities.
   - Information is available in various formats at the same time and same cost (i.e. workbooks are available on disk, in print form and on the internet).
   - Assessment is carried out in a flexible manner, enabling negotiation of topic, content, presentation media and due dates.
   - Mistakes are tolerated – allowing for situations such as inexperience with learning technologies, navigational errors, lack of cultural capital and diversity of prior learning and educational background.

2. Flexible access to resources and teaching
   - Students can choose how they access learning experiences and resources (i.e. formal lectures are supported by online material).
   - Teaching modes and resources are designed to accommodate the widest range of users.
   - Learning experiences and resources are adapted to suit diverse learning paces.

3. Easily navigable structure and clear expectations
   - Material is easy to understand and logically sequenced according to importance; presentation is clear and easy to read.
• Requirements, task specifications and assessment criteria are clear and provided in a timely fashion.
• Instruction occurs in a predictable manner and format.
• Feedback is timely and supports further learning.

4. Accessible information

• Information is communicated in multiple ways (i.e. visual and auditory).
• Websites follow the World Wide Web Consortium (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0) guidelines.
• Information is presented in formats compatible with assistive technology.

5. A nurturing community of learners within a welcoming and inclusive learning climate

• The learning environment promotes interaction and communication among students and between students and teachers.
• The curriculum is designed to provide opportunities for collaborative learning.