



Disability and Inclusion Action Plan

**Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa
Massey University**



2024–2027



Disability and Inclusion Action Plan

2024–2027

In recent years, Massey has seen an increase in the diversity of our learners. Underserved learners' including those with diverse minds, accessibility challenges, part-time learners, first-in-family, mature-age and professionals, in addition to learners who have historically been excluded by virtue of their culture or economic background, currently make up a substantial and increasing component of Massey's total learner cohort.

This trend reflects patterns seen in other parts of the world where a widening participation agenda has resulted in universities shifting from being institutions primarily catering for the educational elite, to much more a universal, broad and open access model. Massey has embraced equity paired with excellence in everything that we do, and in doing so we are challenging the traditional 'monocultural' model of a New Zealand university and finding our distinctive place in the tertiary system in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The establishment of distance education at Massey, now known as 'online, blended and digitally enabled' education, has characterised our flexible education delivery for over six decades and made our university accessible to a broad range of learners. Our commitment to serve students wherever they are located ensures our university makes a distinctive and unique contribution to higher education in Aotearoa New Zealand; we view this as growing stronger in the future.

Massey has more mature students (61.4% of our domestic students are 25 and over, compared to 35.8% for the university sector average), female students (67.6% of our domestic students are female, compared to 60.7% for the university sector average),

part-time students (54.4% of our domestic students are part-time, compared to 31.6% for the university sector average), and distance students (64.2% of our domestic students are distance/online, compared to 18.5% for the university sector average).

In addition to the diversity of learners who come to study with us, we acknowledge the different places they start from, the knowledge and practices they already have, the range of outcomes the learners themselves are hoping to achieve, and how well they are prepared for university study.

In 2023, the retention rates for learners who have disclosed a disability or registered for disability support has been recorded as 88.4%. This can be broken down into full time disabled learners at 91.4%, and part time disabled learners at 85.3%. As a group, and in comparison, to the general retention rates of the university this group is performing very well. The successful course completion rates for learners who have disclosed a disability or registered for disability support has been recorded as 81.6%. This can be broken down into Internal disabled learners at 86.1% and distance disabled learners at 78.3%. As a group, and in comparison, to the general successful course completion rates of the

university this group is performing very well. We acknowledge our past and the structural inequities and injustices that have their origins in past decisions, practices, and ways of treating others. The Vice-Chancellor and Senior Leadership Team of the University are committed to resourcing, monitoring and reporting on the actions and outcomes identified in this plan with a view to continuous quality improvement and challenging our own normative expectations and practices, both inside and outside the curriculum.

Massey is committed to not only making

education accessible but ensuring it is inclusive. At Massey we want to celebrate diversity and the strength it brings our community. Our goal is that disabled learners and their whānau are fully included in all aspects of university life and that they have appropriate, equitable and empowering experiences. Moreover, we seek to position Massey as a place where diverse minds and disabled students feel they are seen and understood, where they can share their rich talents and realise their full potential.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

While Te Tiriti o Waitangi makes no explicit mention of disability, the Waitangi Tribunal report *Hauora: Report on Stage One of the Health Services and Outcomes Kaupapa Inquiry (Hauora Report) 25 (Wai 2575)*, outlines five Treaty principles for the future health system.

We wish to uphold these principles in the creation, implementation and application of the Massey Disability and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).

These principles are:

- Recognition and respect for tino rangatiratanga;
- Commitment to equitable outcomes;
- Active protection to ensure equity, tino rangatiratanga;
- Partnership; and
- Options including kaupapa Māori services and mainstream services.

Current Context

Massey University's commitment to equity and inclusion for all our people is enshrined in our new University Strategy 2022-2027, which commits the University to providing "a supportive study and work environment that is reflective of our Te Tiriti o Waitangi commitment, in which all students and staff can feel safe, respected, dignified and able to flourish in work, learning and research."

In addition, the strategy also commits to working to develop an inclusive, respectful and safe environment where positive engagement is encouraged, and our shared productive efforts are celebrated. Our university will foreground the importance of health, safety and wellbeing for all who engage with us.

Key priorities for the next five years identified in the strategy include:

- Providing equity of access to university study, services and platforms, ensuring university systems of advising and support are seamless, well-aligned and comprehensive; and
- Providing a wide range of support services for our students, that recognize their different stages of life and learning, and that are proactive and contemporary in their approach to learner wellbeing and safety.

University policy

The University Equal Employment Opportunities Policy includes commitments to providing 'equal opportunities for recruitment, retention, development and promotion of all of its current and prospective employees, regardless of sex, marital status, religious/ethical belief, colour, race, ethnic or national origins, disability, age, political opinion, employment status, family status, or sexual orientation' and the identification and elimination of 'all aspects of policies and procedures or other institutional barriers that cause or perpetuate inequity in respect of the employment of any person or group of persons'.

The Equity of Access to Educational Opportunities Policy states the university's commitment to attracting and supporting students from diverse backgrounds by endeavouring to provide assistance for all current and prospective students (irrespective of; age, belief, colour, disability, employment status, ethnic or national origin, family status, marital status, race, religious, sex or sexual orientation) who meet the University's entrance requirements, to attend and succeed at University.

About our students

In 2023, 692 students were registered with Disability Services, with 227 (33%) of students identifying with multiple types of impairments which include:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (32.2%)
- Mental health/psychological disorders (31.8%)
- Chronic medical health conditions (23.6%)
- Specific Learning Differences (SLD) (17.6%)
- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), including Asperger's Syndrome (11.6%)
- Physical impairments including mobility and fine motor (9.5%)
- Blind and low vision (3.8%)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing (3.3%)
- Head injuries (3.2%)
- Neurological conditions (3%)
- Other (4%).

Students at Massey enrol with support services through our standard enrolment processes, as part of which they are asked if they "live with the effects of a significant injury, long term illness or disability." Those who answer "yes" are provided with information about Disability Services and exam support. It is worth noting that many students register after their study has commenced by either self-directing or being referred to the Service by academic staff and other support services. We also note that many students with impairments do not disclose them at all, for a range of complex reasons, which means that our official numbers represent only a portion of the overall population of students living with disabilities. Under-reporting in this area is a well-recognised phenomenon that is evident through the history of disability in Aotearoa New Zealand.

It has long been recognised that a gap persists between how students respond to this question and those who choose to register for support. In recent years, only 27.4% of those who answered "yes" registered for support, while 22.5% of students who were registered with Disability Services had not responded "yes" to the annual question. Those who answer yes but do not register are followed up by email to ensure they are aware of the service and how to engage should they wish to. Students can engage with support services at any time before or during their studies, ranging from early engagement with prospective students and their whānau, teachers, or support workers, through to learners seeking support with their final months of study. Support is available to students regardless of level or mode and operates in tandem with other support services, including those that provide cultural, health or wellbeing support.

Many learners also access support through Disability Services without completing registration. This includes students without official diagnoses (especially with SLD, ADHD, ASD); those with difficulty providing support documentation due to pressure on medical, mental health and specialist services, difficulty in locating older assessment documentation especially from childhood diagnoses, or financial barriers; those who believe they are registered for support but have not completed the process; and those who prefer not to officially register due to fear of identification or discrimination, especially with selected entry and competitive programmes or fields of practice. Disability Services also indirectly supports students through its engagement with teaching staff by providing advice about supporting specific learners or groups of learners, and by promoting inclusive practices built on the principles of Universal Design.

While students are positive about the individualised support they receive and the positive effect this has on their studies and wellbeing, the University can do much more to address accessibility and implement embedded Universal Design and inclusive approaches for the systematic improvement of disability (and inclusion) regardless of direct engagement with the Service.

This Disability and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) thus reflects the University's commitment to ensuring equity and inclusion for all students, whether they have visible or invisible impairments and whether (or not) they choose to disclose these.

Our goals

To support further the commitments made in the University Strategy 2022-2027, six key outcomes or themes have been identified in the development of this plan. These outcomes or themes are focused on the areas identified by our students and staff as providing an opportunity for improvement and they have provided the framework for this, and future, plans and actions.

Through the implementation of this plan our aims include:

1. Staff are supported to be disability confident and to address barriers by designing for accessibility as part of their regular mahi.
2. Disabled students are informed and have a sense of belonging as a valued as members of the Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University community.
3. The university takes an accessibility-first approach, supporting digital inclusion and successful outcomes for all students.
4. The policies and data management practices of the University demonstrates our commitment to a safe, accessible and inclusive learning environment.
5. Campus built environments and facilities are safe and accessible for disabled students, staff and visitors.
6. Disabled students are aware of, and feel confident accessing, a range of safe, inclusive and culturally appropriate general and specialist services and personalised reasonable adjustments.

The Plan

In 2022 the Kia Ōrite Toolkit was used to facilitate a self-review and an initial Disability and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) was developed. The toolkit includes a series of standards that Massey used to compare current University practices with best practice. It was, and is, intended that the plan will be updated regularly as part of an iterative process of engagement and application of the disabled student voice. This plan replaces the previously published work and is framed around six thematic areas to effectively enable both the plans execution and future developments.

As with other work within Pūrehuroatanga, the Disability and Inclusion Action Plan takes a whole-of-university approach and focuses on what we as a University need to change in order to create an inclusive and accessible environment for all our students.

Disabled student and staff engagement

Through 2023 a key focus was the development and inclusion of disabled student and staff voices in future versions of the DIAP. This has included, but was not limited to:

- Regular engagement with our disabled student representative group, Disability at Massey, affiliated with Te Tira Ahu Pae, the University's student association.
- Publication and promotion of the initial Disability and Inclusion Action Plan and the establishment of a feedback email channel.
- A series of staff hui, including members of the disabled staff community, to discuss their views on the self-review and resulting actions.
- A survey to disabled students asking for feedback on improvement areas and for participation in future interest groups.
- Feedback from Ākonga Māori on their experiences.
- A student-led consultation project focused on the neurodivergent student experience.
- Student Experience Survey results.

Future workshops and hui with disabled students are scheduled in the latter half of 2024 and these voices will continue to influence future revisions and the implementation of the actions outlined in this plan.

Governance and implementation

This Disability and Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) is a multi-pronged plan that requires sustained engagement from staff from across the University, as well as the engagement of students, whānau, community and disability sector advocacy groups.

The plan is overseen by an Senior Leadership Team (SLT) led governance group and as part of the Pūrehuroatanga work programme as well as through an operations group and specific subject-matter working groups drawn from experts across the University.

As part of Pūrehuroatanga, this plan, and the actions implemented, will take a coordinated whole of university approach and the plan's implementation has received some specific strategic funding.

Responsibilities

Whilst Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University has a team of dedicated disability and inclusion advisors supporting both students and staff of the University, achieving the objectives outlined in this Disability and Inclusion Action Plan are the responsibility of all staff at the University. All staff, professional and academic, have both the agency and responsibility to foster an inclusive, respectful, and safe environment in which all students are positively engaged and able to bring their whole selves to their learning experiences.

Champions for specific actions within the plan have been identified, but successful implementation of the Disability and Inclusion Action Plan is a collective responsibility.

Timelines

The Disability and Inclusion Action Plan 2024-2027 articulates specific outcomes and actions that will be undertaken over this 3-year period. Work will continue throughout 2024 to establish detailed timelines based on a prioritisation workshop being undertaken with our students and staff. This additional detail will be published in quarter four of 2024.

The structure of the plan

The Disability and Inclusion Action Plan has been divided according to the six outcomes or themes, each with an overarching outcome statement. The plan then details specific actions that will be taken over next three years and, to aid in the monitoring and evaluation of our progress, specific objectives have also been developed for each thematic area.

Objectives



Outcomes



1 Outcome/Theme One

Kaimahi Capability Building and Awareness

Objectives

1. Staff understand the importance of creating an accessible learning environment for students.
2. Staff understand Te Ao Māori perspectives on disability.
3. Staff are provided guidance, training and support to provide inclusive learning environments and assessments.
4. This guidance, training and support encompasses a range of conditions and addresses the experiences and needs of students who belong to multiple equity groups.
5. Disability confidence, responsiveness and inclusion training is designed and delivered in partnership with a diverse group of disabled students and their whānau, and their time, efforts and expertise are appropriately compensated.



Actions

A disability awareness campaign is delivered across the University. This includes:

- Student and staff stories
- Wānanga about Whānau Hauā
- Guest lecturers speaking on disability issues
- An opportunity for a range of staff to highlight good practice in their area
- The development of an inclusive practice excellence award.

Guidance and training opportunities for staff are developed and delivered in the following areas:

- Legal obligations under the Human Rights and Privacy Acts, the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights and other relevant legislation, including in the assessment of admission applications
- Creating a safe, supportive, and welcoming space for disabled students
- Universal Design for Learning and inclusive pedagogy, teaching and assessment practices across a range of modes
- Creating accessible learning resources, environments, and assessments
- Common barriers to participation, engagement, and success

Actions (continued)

- Reasonable accommodations and how to support students with a range of impairments, including with Work Integrated Learning
- How to refer disabled students to general and specialist support
- Communication accessibility
- Estates staff are trained in physical access provisions and considerations
- How accommodations and alternative arrangements can be provided to disabled students when barriers are identified
- Creating alternative formats for promotional materials, policy and procedure documents
- The use of assistive technology in teaching, assessment and learning support
- Culturally appropriate support approaches for ākonga whaikaha.

Enabling actions:

- A special category is created in the Educator Resource Hub for teaching and/or learning resources related to supporting disabled students
- A dedicated 'curated collection' is developed and housed on the Capability Development web pages
- Training attendance is monitored, recorded and is embedded in staff inductions
- A kaimahi capability building and awareness advisory group is established to provide input into the guidance and training provided to staff at the University.



Outcomes

Staff are supported to be disability confident and to address barriers by designing for accessibility as part of their regular mahi.

2 Outcome/Theme Two

Community Building and Information Sharing

Objectives

1. Prospective and new disabled students are welcomed into the university community.
2. Disabled students do not experience institutional barriers to taking part in the university community activities.
3. Relevant and accessible information is available to guide, support and connect disabled students.



Actions

A prospect and commencement management plan is developed for disabled prospective students. This includes details of how:

- Recruitment initiatives help guide and connect prospective disabled students for holistic planning about their options and support needs
- Prospective disabled students, their whānau and support networks connect with the university and support services
- Recruitment and marketing materials are made accessible and reflect the diversity of our student body
- Students who identify as disabled at admission and enrolment are proactively provided with information about the supports available to them in accessible formats
- Orientation, transition and induction programmes provide targeted guidance and support for disabled students
- Recruitment initiatives to increase the number of ākonga whaikaha.

An event inclusion guide is developed and implemented for all in person and online events. This includes:

- The redevelopment of the event notification process and forms to ensure disabled students are accommodated
- A revision of the club grants policy to include requirements for accessible activities
- A review of student accommodation event procedures and practices.

Actions (continued)

Opportunities for disabled students to connect with each other are supported and promoted. This includes supporting a student lead representative group and support for the voices of ākonga whaikaha.

Enabling actions:

- The procurement and implementation of appropriate tools to improve accessibility of online event platforms
- Collaboration with Te Tira Ahu Pae regarding student governed events and their accessibility
- Physical access information for event spaces is available to those registering for and attending on-campus events.



Outcomes

The policies and data management practices of the University demonstrates our commitment to a safe, accessible and inclusive learning environment.

3 Outcome/Theme Three

Digital Inclusion and Assistive Technologies

Objectives

1. The provision of alternative formats to students with a print disability is widened.
2. The university improves the coverage and quality of captioning available to students.
3. Accessibility considerations are embedded in future technology purchases.
4. The use of assistive technology in online tests and examinations is improved.



Actions

Anthology ALLY is implemented in the university's Learning Management System, Stream, and regular audits are completed and part of the Programme Incubator development process.

A procurement plan is developed to find an appropriate captioning provider for the university. The requirements will include support for:

- Reo Māori and blended reo Māori/reo Pākehā speech
- Live online events
- Quality automated captioning within the learning environment in Mediasite and Stream, including for synchronous sessions
- Human captioning, transcription and audio description for students with higher access needs and assets on the university website.

Additions are made to the ITS business case development process to require the documentation of the needs of disabled students. This will include a requirement to detail consultation with disabled students and the clear articulation of any limits new technology will have in terms of our accessibility-first commitment.

A whitelist of common assistive technologies that are pre-approved for use in Online Supervised Exams (OSEs) is created and disseminated alongside an invitation to discuss accommodations and support needs with students who use other software or equipment.

Assistive technology that supports digital reader and writer functionality in the provision of online tests and examinations is prioritised as part of any future exam/test platform procurement.

Actions (continued)

A roadmap for the procurement of individual use assistive technology is developed in consultation with disabled students. This will include the classification of the types of provision explored by the university such as:

- Universal access
- Limited seat licences
- Those supported through individualised funding applications to MSD training support funds, university hardship funds and internal and external scholarships.

Enabling actions:

- Guidance and training about online tools, technological platforms and device-based software for learning are provided to students and staff
- Staff are provided guidance, support and tools to increase the audio quality of recordings to improve clarity and captioning accuracy
- A community of practice is formed to identify and explore assistive technologies and tools that support learning, teaching and research in reo Māori.



Outcomes

The university takes an accessibility-first approach, supporting digital inclusion and successful outcomes for all students.

4 Outcome/Theme Four

Inclusive Policies and Data

Objectives

1. The university develops or updates its policies, procedures and guidelines to ensure they clearly articulate our commitment to the inclusion and success of disabled students.
2. The university ethically collects and uses data to better understand, design for and support disabled students.
3. A safe environment is provided for the disclosure of disability and impairment information.



Actions

Reviews of the following policies areas and associated procedures are undertaken to ensure consistence with commitments made in this plan:

- Accessible and inclusive learning environments, experiences and materials
- The provision of alternative arrangement assessments, including tests and examinations
- Complaints, appeal and disciplinary procedures
- Selection and admission procedures, including for selected entry programmes, postgraduate research and international student
- The maintenance and development of the built environment including capital expenditure
- Procurement of online tools, technological platforms and device-based software
- Access to services and events.

Guidance is developed to ensure future policy development/reviews will detail consultation undertaken with disabled students and the clear articulation of any impacts to disabled students.

Policies, procedures and guidelines are available in accessible and alternative formats.

Guidelines for the ethical use of disability data are developed in partnership with disabled students, recognising data sovereignty principles and in accordance with privacy legislation. These guidelines include how and when data is collected, stored and shared, and are available in accessible formats.

Actions (continued)

Guidance is developed on how institutional data can be collected and used to identify barriers and improve accessibility and disability inclusion, including the use of LMS analytics and reports, accessibility audits and plans, and unit-specific data sets.

Enabling actions:

- Baseline administrative and survey data on disability is improved to ensure the university understands its disabled students community and their experiences, plans appropriate support provision and can accurately report on student engagement and outcomes.



Outcomes

Disabled students are informed and have a sense of belonging as a valued as members of the Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University community.

5 Outcome/Theme Five

Physical Inclusion

Objectives

1. The accessibility of our physical learning environments are improved and maintained.
2. Physical access information is available in both the built environment and online.
3. Disabled students and staff are notified of recent or temporary changes that may affect physical access on their campus.
4. Fire, evacuation, health, safety and security procedures consider all disabled students.



Actions

An annual schedule is developed for regular review and improvement of physical access and safety on campuses. This review is undertaken in partnership with disabled students and staff, and accessibility and safety improvements identified will be prioritised and resourced responsively. Included in the review is:

- Plant overgrowth on paths that may impinge on access. This schedule will align with appropriate harvesting times and follows tikanga for plants like harakeke
- Lighting
- Signage, ensuring accessible routes, features and transport information can be easily navigated and found in the physical environment
- Evacuation chair numbers and locations.

Accessible route maps are developed in collaboration with disabled students.

Key access information is available on the university's website including accessible route maps, details about mobility parking and Assistive Listening System locations.

Following an accessibility audit, all location maps are updated to reflect relevant information and identify accessible features. Key access features and routes are clearly signed and identified on location maps. Standard procedures for their review and maintenance are established between Estates, ITS and disability support services.

A plan to address and prioritise accessibility issues is developed to meet the recommendations from a accessibility audit and in partnership with disabled students and staff.

Actions (continued)

Early priorities may include:

- Improving accessible routes and signage
- Reviewing mobility parking allocations, locations and signage
- Upgrading non-automatic doors along accessible routes within and between buildings
- Reviewing accessible and universal wharepaku and signage
- Ensuring tiered lecture theatres have wheelchair seating and writing tablets
- Identifying opportunities to provide low sensory spaces.

Signage practices are developed to ensure information on alternate accessible routes is available for all affected by temporary access issues as well as contact information to report issues and access support.

A process for subscribing to updates on events and changes that may affect disabled students and staff access on their campus is established.

The process for reporting an access issue is reviewed and promoted to all students and staff.

Regular staff training on the use of evacuation chair is delivered and incorporated into a least one trial evacuation per year. A review of health and safety procedures related to disabled students is conducted.

Evacuation and emergency procedures and plans for students living in student accommodation are reviewed.

Practices for developing and communicating Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) are reviewed to ensure they meet the needs of all students who may require evacuation support including neurodivergent students and distance students who visit our campuses. PEEPs are built into learning access plans for students registering with disability support services.

Evacuation and emergency training is reviewed to ensure the needs of disabled students and staff are understood, planned for, communicated and accommodated.

Enabling Action:

- Funds are allocated for a physical access audit to be completed by independent auditors.



Outcomes

Campus built environments and facilities are safe and accessible for disabled students, staff and visitors.

6 Outcome/Theme Six

Support Services and Adjustments

Objectives

1. Disabled students are aware of the services and adjustments available to them.
2. Disabled students are proactively engaged and advised about the supports and services available to them, how to access them and how to confirm their support arrangements.
3. Disabled students can access the range of services and reasonable adjustments available to them.
4. Services and reasonable adjustments available to students are safe and culturally appropriate.



Actions

A special question set is included in the Student Experience Survey asking about the wider student populations awareness of the service and adjustment options available to disabled students.

An evaluation is undertaken of the Disability Service. This will focus on:

- Awareness
- User experience
- The academic outcomes of users

Resulting recommendations will be incorporated into the services annual planning.

A systematic review of SSF funded services is undertaken in partnership with disabled students. The review will look at:

- Access
- Information
- User experience, including specifically the experience of ākonga whaikaha

The review findings will be reported back to the SSF Advisory Group and resulting recommendations will be incorporated into the services annual planning.

Admission and enrolment processes are reviewed in partnership with disabled students. Resulting recommendations will be incorporated into the services annual planning.

The assessment of, and appeals related to, selected entry applications and international and postgraduate admissions are reviewed to ensure they are safe, accessible and inclusive. Resulting recommendations will be incorporated into the services annual planning.

Actions (continued)

Inherent requirement profiles are developed for professional and accredited courses to clearly communicate necessary abilities, attributes, skills and behaviours to disabled students and guide discussions about reasonable accommodations.

A review and set of recommendations are developed regarding requirements from the University for supporting documentation. Resulting recommendations will be incorporated into annual planning or committee agendas.

A single process is developed where students can identify and communicate their support needs without having to disclose their circumstances multiple times. This process will incorporate:

- Disability information disclosure during admission and enrolment
- Registration with disability support services and support planning
- Application for alternative examination arrangements and communication of these arrangements
- Application for specific remedies such as aegrotat/impaired performance consideration, fee returns and extensions.
- An agreed approach to the communication of adjustments and support needs to teaching staff.

A community of practice is established to provide support and advocacy for student inclusion and diversity, with representation from staff supporting Māori, Pacific, Takatāpui/Rainbow and international students.

Enabling Actions:

- Disability data is brought into the data university data warehouse to allow analysis
- Continued rollout and refinement of CRM usage considers the wholistic support needs of disabled students
- The completion of the Specific Circumstance Framework IT Projects



Outcomes

Disabled students are aware of, and feel confident accessing, a range of safe, inclusive and culturally appropriate general and specialist services and personalised reasonable adjustments.

Scan code to access the web version

Disability and Inclusion Action Plan



For further enquiries, contact the team at diap@massey.ac.nz



TE KUNENGA | MASSEY
KI PŪREHUROA | UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND