

Western Sydney University Accessibility Action Plan 2025 - 2027

Acknowledgement of Country

With respect for Aboriginal cultural protocols, and out of recognition that the campuses of Western Sydney University occupy the Traditional Lands of multiple Aboriginal Nation and Language Groups, the authors of this document acknowledge and offer our deepest respects to the Darug, Eora, Dharawal, and Wiradjuri peoples. In addition, we pay our respects to the surrounding Aboriginal Nations and Language Groups that may also have connections to these lands, and all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who visit, learn, and work at Western Sydney University.

Accessibility at WSU

Western Sydney University (WSU) has been built upon a strong commitment to the principles of equity and social justice and we have always proudly celebrated the diversity of our University community. This commitment is continued and reaffirmed in WSU's overarching *Sustaining Success 2021-2026* strategic plan which identifies Equity as a core principle and Fairness as a guiding value. The University's People Plan upholds these values, providing a strong framework for the ongoing development of a University culture that prioritises care for our people, accountability, accessibility and inclusion and belonging across our community. The core principles and values that underpin these strategic plans are embedded throughout our University community, driving the provision of quality inclusive learning and working experiences.

This long-standing commitment to equity and social justice has enabled WSU to establish a strong foundation of inclusion, to progressively remove barriers to access and to continue to work to ensure that students and staff with disability have the opportunity to excel in a safe, inclusive and equitable environment. This *Western Sydney University Accessibility Action Plan 2025 – 2027* builds on this foundation and the outcomes achieved through previous Accessibility Action Plans and demonstrates our ongoing commitment to providing an inclusive, equitable and accessible place of learning and working for students and staff with disability.

In line with our commitment to the support of students and staff with disability, the University recognises its legal responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and the Disability Standards for Education (DSE). WSU is committed to the principle of reasonable adjustment, the elimination of discrimination and ensuring that students and staff with disability can participate on the same basis as others.

Development of the Accessibility Action Plan

This *Western Sydney University Accessibility Action Plan 2025 – 2027* has been developed through extensive consultation with stakeholders from across the University. Following an initial analysis of sector practices and accessibility trends, insights were sought from a diverse range of stakeholders, including WSU students and staff with disability, and staff members providing relevant services and support within the University. Two key perspectives were considered: users of services, facilities and systems, and those responsible for their provision and management.

This broad stakeholder consultation was crucial in identifying the complex nature of accessibility challenges and potential opportunities. Stakeholders provided valuable feedback through focus groups, interviews, surveys, submissions and roundtable discussions. Integral to this consultation and the development of the action plan was the voice and the lived experience of students and staff with disability, obtained through a student /staff survey, targeted focus group sessions, representation from students and staff with disability at roundtable discussions and input from student representatives.

The stakeholder consultation process enabled students and staff to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. Stakeholders highlighted varied issues such as a need for increased disability awareness, a lack of centralised accountability for digital accessibility across the University, challenges with campus navigation and the opportunity for increased engagement and belonging. Many stakeholders also distinctly acknowledged the supportive efforts by specialist staff and the effectiveness of existing resources in supporting people to reach their educational and professional goals. Leveraging advances in technology and artificial intelligence (AI) was also identified as an important opportunity and will be an ongoing consideration in the implementation of actions that form part of this plan.

Approach to the plan

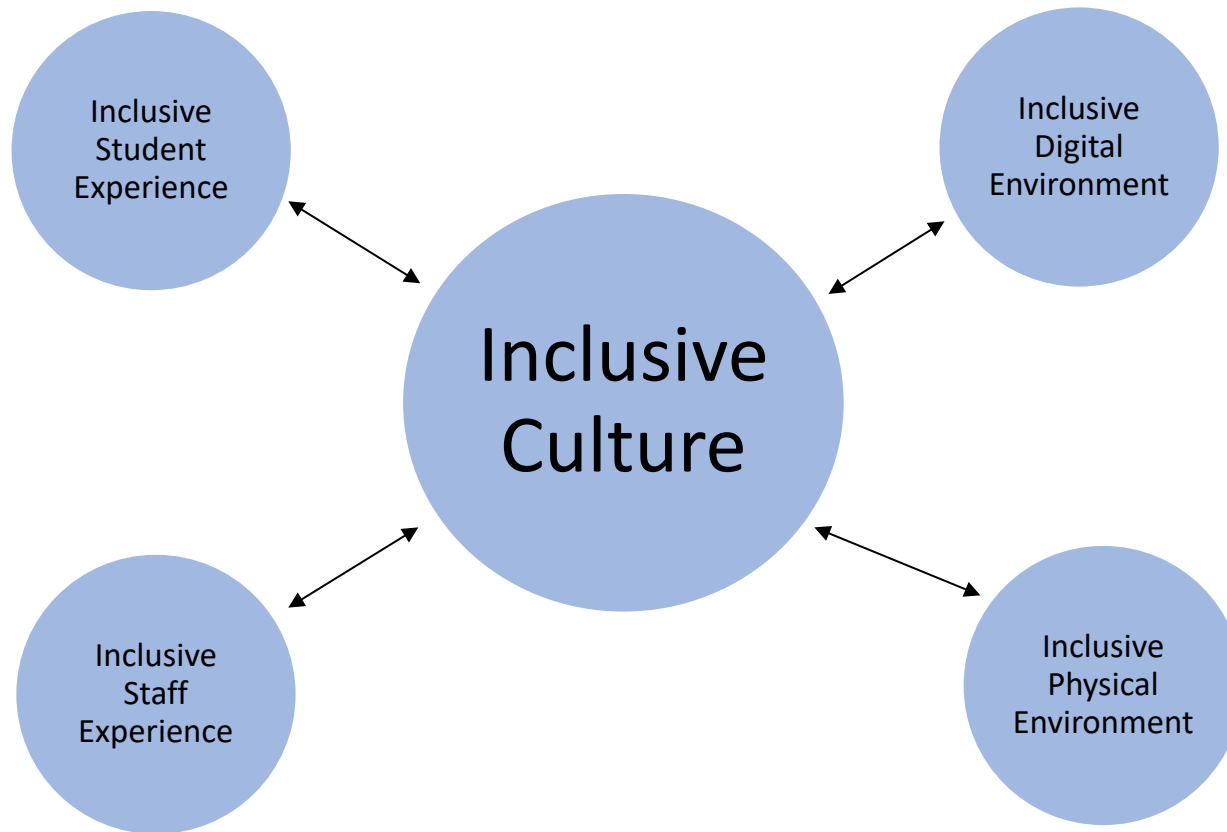
This *Western Sydney University Accessibility Action Plan 2025 – 2027* will operate according to the below timeline.

Action Plan: January 2025 – December 2027

Plan review and reporting: July 2027 – December 2027

Key focus areas

The goals and actions incorporated within the *Western Sydney University Accessibility Action Plan 2025 – 2027* align with five key focus areas:



INCLUSIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Our students are provided with an accessible and inclusive learning environment which supports students with disability to succeed. Supports throughout all stages of the student lifecycle are promoted and implemented effectively and efficiently enabling students to easily integrate supports into their learning journey. Barriers to learning and equitable access are identified and addressed.

INCLUSIVE STAFF EXPERIENCE

Staff work within an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment, where staff with disability can thrive. Staff with disability are valued and the supports that they may need are anticipated through all stages of the employee lifecycle. Supports, including reasonable adjustments, are implemented effectively and efficiently, facilitating staff with disability to engage and perform well in their career at WSU.

INCLUSIVE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Our physical environments are accessible, safe and inclusive and meet the needs of students and staff with disability. Universal design and inclusive design principles guide the development of our physical spaces and our work towards achieving best practice.

INCLUSIVE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Our digital environments are inclusive and accessible to students and staff with disability, supporting equity of access, participation and opportunity for success. Accessibility is prioritised within the procurement of digital solutions. Specialist expertise is available to support and guide staff in developing accessible digital content, assets and communications that meet the diverse needs of our students and staff.

INCLUSIVE CULTURE

WSU embeds accessibility and disability inclusion as a key priority across all aspects of University operations, ensuring a comprehensive university wide approach to achieving an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment for students, staff and visitors with disability. The lived experience of students and staff with disability informs and guides accessibility and disability inclusion initiatives at WSU.

Action Plan

FOCUS AREA 1: INCLUSIVE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Students are provided with an accessible and inclusive learning environment which supports students with disability to succeed. Supports are promoted and implemented effectively and efficiently enabling students to easily integrate supports into their learning journey. Barriers to learning and equitable access are identified and addressed.

Goal	Actions	Accountability
Reasonable adjustments are implemented in a timely manner and any implementation issues are identified and addressed efficiently and effectively.	1. Analyse the options for implementation of an accountability process to support effective and efficient implementation of reasonable adjustments in accordance with the University's legal obligations.	ITDS Disability Service
Supports are promoted effectively and efficiently enabling students to easily access support.	2. Broaden and enhance strategies to raise the visibility of accessibility, disability inclusion and student support services within the University community (students and staff), contributing to a positive student experience and improved retention of students with disability.	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Disability Service

FOCUS AREA 2: INCLUSIVE STAFF EXPERIENCE

Staff work within an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment, where staff with disability can thrive. Staff with disability are valued and the supports that they may need are anticipated through all stages of the employee lifecycle. Supports, including reasonable adjustments, are implemented effectively and efficiently, facilitating staff with disability to engage and perform well in their career at WSU.

Goal	Actions	Accountability
WSU workplace systems and processes are accessible and inclusive and staff with disability can access needed information at appropriate intervals.	3. Review and revise current recruitment, induction and onboarding processes as part of the talent acquisition review to ensure: - the processes are accessible and inclusive for applicants with disability. - information on accessibility, disability inclusion and staff support is made available to applicants / new staff at appropriate intervals. Source external guidance / expertise on inclusive recruitment and induction practices eg. Australian Disability Network “Disability Confident Recruiter” program.	Organisational Development / Talent Acquisition
Workplace systems and resources are provided to enable effective and efficient administration of supports for staff with disability.	4. Source / develop a custom system for recording, distribution and monitoring of Workplace Reasonable Adjustment Plans (WRAP’s) for staff with disability, enabling greater process efficiency.	Safety ITDS

FOCUS AREA 3 - INCLUSIVE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Our physical environments are accessible, safe and inclusive and meet the needs of students and staff with disability. Universal design and inclusive design principles guide the development of our physical spaces and our work towards achieving best practice.

Goal	Actions	Accountability
Provision of accessible and inclusive wayfinding options enable students, staff and visitors to easily navigate WSU campuses.	5. Analyse the costs and benefits of available options for digital wayfinding tools that will support people with disability in navigating WSU campuses and accessing facilities that meet their needs. Make a recommendation to line management for the most appropriate option to be implemented as soon as possible.	Operations and Commercial
Provision of accessible, safe and inclusive physical learning and teaching spaces that meet the needs of students and staff with disability.	6. Embed accessibility and disability inclusion, beyond minimum compliance standards, into the design principles and architectural standards for the construction and fit-out of new buildings and facilities, and any renovation / modification works. This will include internal and external features, furniture, space and technology and will incorporate the principles of universal design.	Operations and Commercial
Provision of accessible and inclusive transport options across the WSU campus network.	7. Implement the “Sunflower Initiative” for supporting students and staff with “invisible disabilities” who may require assistance to navigate shuttle bus services across the WSU campus network	Campus Safety & Security Disability Service Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

FOCUS AREA 4: INCLUSIVE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Our digital environments are inclusive and accessible to students and staff with disability, supporting equity of access, participation and opportunity for success. Accessibility is prioritised within the procurement of digital solutions. Specialist expertise is available to support and guide staff in developing accessible digital content, assets and communications that meet the diverse needs of our students and staff.

Goal	Actions	Accountability
Support, guidance and specialist expertise and training available to students and staff regarding digital accessibility matters, ensuring students and staff are able to receive timely advice and support.	8. Explore the establishment of a dedicated digital accessibility function in order to: - Champion digital accessibility guidelines, requirements, systems and resources. - Troubleshoot systemic issues. - Develop a strategy for testing new / upgraded software and systems to identify and resolve accessibility issues before implementation, including user testing. - Design / source training for the wide range of team members/local webmasters who are responsible for webpages, digital learning content and digital communications. - Provide consultation around tools and techniques for staff overseeing the creation of digital content eg. design, web, learning consultants - Provide consultation in relation to complex technical issues experienced by users with disability - Produce and encourage the use of a varied set of WSU branded accessible templates across a wide range of tools and software. Determine the appropriate placement of the role to enable University wide reporting and tracking of progress.	ITDS Marketing and Communications Learning and Teaching

Digital content, digital assets and digital communications are accessible and meet student and staff user needs.	9. Incorporate accessibility requirements into the current redesign of the university's website to meet accessibility standards set out in WCAG 2.2 guidelines. Work in partnership with students and staff with disability to inform and test accessibility of the design.	Marketing & Communications Learning and Teaching ITDS * Proposed Digital Accessibility role
Digital content, digital assets and digital communications are accessible and meet student and staff user needs.	10. Oversee the production/ updating of guidelines and templates for creation of web content, learning materials and digital assets that establish minimum accessibility standards that must be met, including Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG2.2), and incorporate the principles of universal design.	Marketing & Communications Learning and Teaching ITDS * Proposed Digital Accessibility role
Procurement processes and practices incorporate accessibility as a standard requirement, ensuring the procurement of accessible services and products in line with the University's commitment and legal responsibility.	11. Embed digital accessibility requirements into existing procurement processes, ensuring that accessibility is a minimum standard for future procurement.	Procurement

FOCUS AREA 5 - INCLUSIVE CULTURE

WSU embeds accessibility and disability inclusion as a key priority across all aspects of University operations, ensuring a comprehensive university wide approach to achieving an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment for students, staff and visitors with disability. The lived experience of students and staff with disability informs and guides accessibility and disability inclusion initiatives at WSU.

Goal	Actions	Accountability
Accessible branding templates and guidelines are available as the standard for staff to use and follow.	12. Review and update WSU branding guidelines and branded templates in order to ensure accessibility of both digital and printed content, including meeting Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG2.2). Develop whole-of-University communications and education to staff to raise awareness and understanding of the revised guidelines, templates and requirements.	Marketing & Communications
A comprehensive university wide approach to ensuring accessibility is a key priority at WSU.	13. Develop a university wide capability building and awareness raising program on accessibility and disability inclusion including: - Enhancing leadership capabilities relating to accessibility / disability inclusion - Enhancing academic staff capabilities relating to digital accessibility, Universal Design for Learning and accessible pedagogies, supporting inclusive and accessible learning and teaching practice. - Updating existing EO online training content and integrating into revised mandatory training approach - Development of all staff professional development resources covering: * Disability awareness, confidence, legal, regulatory and policy responsibilities across all WSU contexts, and institutional expectations of inclusion of and support to people with disability * Specific supports available to staff and students and the related	Learning and Teaching Disability Service Diversity, Equity and Inclusion * Proposed digital accessibility role

	processes for implementation of these supports. eg. implementation of an ARAP /WRAP. * Digital Accessibility (the importance and use of digital tools, accessibility standards, creating accessible content and the use of accessibility checkers) - Development of professional development resources relating to accessibility and disability inclusion for specific groups of staff including for example, recruitment, promotions panel members, student support roles. - Providing targeted professional development (internal / external) for staff responsible for developing core digital content (LMS and website), digital assets and digital communications eg. Learning and Teaching, Marketing and Communications. Explore options for mandatory training, and inclusion in onboarding and induction for all staff, including casual staff.	
The lived experience of students and staff with disability guides accessibility and disability inclusion initiatives at WSU.	14. Establish a mechanism for students and staff to provide feedback on accessibility of the physical and digital environments and to identify areas of excellence and of concern. Embed process for recording and responding to feedback and considering and addressing feedback / issues raised.	ITDS Operations and Commercial * Proposed Digital Accessibility role
A comprehensive university wide approach to ensuring accessibility is a key priority at WSU.	15. Establish a governance framework to oversee the implementation of the Accessibility Action Plan and accessibility / disability inclusion across the University.	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Feedback and questions

This is a working document. It will be available online and progress on projects and developments will be updated regularly. If you have any feedback or would like to let us know about work that you are doing please contact the Director - Equity, Inclusion & Belonging at equityanddiversity@westernsydney.edu.au with any questions or comments.

Alternative formats

For an alternative format of this document, please contact:

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at equityanddiversity@westernsydney.edu.au

Accessing support at WSU

The [Disability Service](#) provides advice, assistance and advocacy to students with disability supporting the provision of reasonable adjustments and access to services and supports during study at Western Sydney University.

Staff with disability who require a reasonable adjustment and/or support in the work environment should discuss this with their supervisor or seek advice from the [Safety team](#).