



Making Course Materials Accessible to All

One of a series of fact sheets for staff

CONTENTS

- 2 What is print disability?
- 2 What is accessible format?
- 2 What is adaptive technology?
- 3 Role of the Disability Service
- 3 Role of Liaison Librarians
- 3 Role of CALT
- 4 Role of academic schools
- 6 Copyright and copying for persons with print disability
- 8 Checklist for academic and general staff

INTRODUCTION

All students, including those with disabilities, require course materials prior to start of semester to enable preparation for study and optimise the time available for learning when classes get under way. The University also has a legal obligation under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) to provide course materials in accessible format, on time for students with disabilities.

In October 2004 Academic Senate approved an amendment to the Code of Conduct for Teaching and Learning whereby,

'Unit Descriptions, including lists of required reading texts and required readings, will be published on the Course & Unit Database a minimum of 6 weeks prior to semester to facilitate timely availability of texts and readings for all students immediately prior to start of semester'.

The aim of this amendment is to ensure that required reading texts are available to all students (from Campus Bookshops, Libraries & Printery) and in the case of students with print disability, in accessible format, by start of semester.

This fact sheet contains information to assist staff to meet their obligations to students and provides guidelines for producing accessible course materials. The fact sheet has been developed with a particular focus on students with print disability because 'getting it right' for them ensures that it is right for everyone.

**Checklist for Academic and General Staff
see page 8 of Fact Sheet**

WHAT IS PRINT DISABILITY?

People with print disability are those who cannot obtain access to information in a print format because they:

- are blind or vision impaired;
- have physical disabilities which limit their ability to hold or manipulate information in a printed form; or
- have perceptual or other disabilities which limit their ability to follow a line of print or which affect their concentration.

Students with print disability at UTAS will usually have met with a Disability Adviser and made application to the Faculty Associate Dean of Teaching & Learning for the approval of services, teaching and assessment accommodations listed in a Learning Access Plan (LAP). The LAP will indicate how their disability affects their ability to access print and the format in which they require course materials.

WHAT IS ACCESSIBLE FORMAT?

For students with print disability to access information contained in textbooks, reading packs and handouts the material must be in accessible format. The type of print disability that the student has will determine the format required.

Types of accessible formats are:

- electronic text (rtf, Word or accessible PDF documents);
- audio recording;
- Braille or raised-line illustration; and
- enlarged print hardcopy documents.

WHAT IS ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY?

Adaptive technology is software and hardware designed to assist people with disability using computers to create, access, process or present information.

Adaptive technology in use at UTAS includes: Adaptive Software

- ZoomText – Screen enlargement software that provides students with vision impairment the capacity to enlarge certain areas of the screen.
- JAWS – Sophisticated speech synthesis software that enables students who are blind and vision impaired to listen to all aspects of the computer environment. This screen reader software translates most text and accessible images to speech.
- Read and Write Gold – This is visual and speech synthesis software that allows students with perceptual (learning) disability to simultaneously see and listen to text.

Adaptive Hardware

- Closed Circuit TV – Equipment that enlarges text of books, maps, music or other documents for access by students with vision impairment.
- Audio-cassette recorder – enables students to listen to texts, readings and lectures.

ROLE OF THE DISABILITY SERVICE

The Disability Service is responsible for facilitating equal access to learning for students with disabilities at UTAS and has developed and implemented the following procedures to assist academic schools to meet the needs of students with disabilities:

- A process for developing individual Learning Access Plans which contain the student's study accommodations and learning requirements and are approved by Faculty Associate Deans, T&L. This includes details as to how a student's disability affects their ability to access information.
- Case management of students with high support needs that advises all stakeholders of expectations and responsibilities.
- An in-house process for the transcription of class materials, such as handouts.
- Provision of advice, fact sheets and web-based information for UTAS staff.

ROLE OF LIAISON LIBRARIANS

The Faculty Liaison Librarian should be lecturers' first port of call when organising reading lists, required texts and unit readers. Communication with the Liaison Librarian will reduce the amount of time, work and expense involved in providing material in accessible format.

Liaison Librarians can assist academic staff with:

- the identification of course materials that exist in accessible format;
- access to texts on electronic reserve;
- advice about recent updates, new editions and possible alternative materials;
- the names of publishers who provide texts in accessible format;
- advice about copyright implications and limitations; and
- arranging transcription of hardcopy to accessible format.

A list of the Liaison Librarians for different subject areas can be accessed at:

www.utas.edu.au/library/about/liais.html

ROLE OF THE CENTRE FOR ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING & TEACHING

CALT provides leadership and support for the advancement of Teaching and Learning and web development at UTAS. CALT staff can provide assistance in many program areas including making web resources accessible and also work with staff across the University to evaluate emerging technologies for use in teaching and web development.

General information on accessibility of online materials is available at:

www.utas.edu.au/accessibility/webct

General accessibility advice can be sought from Web Development Coordinators or Educational Designers in CALT:

www.utas.edu.au/calt/contact.html

ROLE OF ACADEMIC SCHOOLS

Developing Accessible Course Material

Developing course material includes listing required texts and readings, recommended readings, producing unit readers, preparing lecture material in PowerPoint or on OHT and class handouts. Timely access for students with print disability can be ensured if the material is made available in MSWord or Rich Text Format (RTF). These document types interact well with the adaptive software in use at UTAS and can also be easily transcribed into Braille when necessary.

Adobe PDF documents can also be suitable as long as they are text-based, which makes them readable for adaptive software. Adobe PDF documents come in two basic types, text-based and image. An image PDF document is essentially a picture of text on the page and cannot be read by adaptive software. Image PDF documents need to be transcribed to Word 2000 or RTF.

Required Texts

If a required text is already available electronically it is much easier to make these accessible to students with print disability. Lecturers/unit coordinators should ascertain whether a required text is available in accessible electronic text (e-text) before deciding on which book to prescribe for the course. Required texts are usually the most difficult items to obtain in accessible e-text.

Library staff at UTAS have established strong relationships with most academic publishers. In deciding on required texts lecturers should make early contact with their Liaison Librarian about which publishers will provide e-texts and the availability of the texts required. There can be lengthy time delays when acquiring e-texts from international publishers and the Library and Disability Service require sufficient time to arrange transcription of hardcopy texts to accessible format if they are not available electronically.

Required and Recommended Readings

Timely delivery of accessible information to students can be facilitated if the lecturer/unit coordinator checks with their Liaison Librarian to identify readings already available in accessible format. Also consider identifying readings on the web. Recent journal articles are usually available in e-text, but older articles will generally have to be transcribed. Again it is important for lecturers to complete these reading lists within the timeframe required to enable transcription when necessary.

Unit Readers

Unit Readers must also be available in accessible format to students with print disability. The UTAS Printery currently produces compilation Unit Readers for some subjects by scanning hardcopy documents into image PDF document type. This format is not accessible to screen reader adaptive software and must be transcribed into accessible e-text.

The lecturer/unit coordinator should contact their Liaison Librarian to ascertain whether readings are already available in accessible format. This should also be done when deciding on additions to or deletions from the Unit Reader.

Including hardcopy of electronic journal articles in Unit Readers or directly copying them into WebCT can be a breach of copyright. The best practice is to provide students with the web URL of the electronic journal articles for reading online.

Liaison Librarians and Disability Service transcription services are able to transcribe hardcopy Unit Readers, but it is important to ensure that the quality of the article to be converted to e-text is of a good quality, preferably the original or a first generation copy and the text should be clear of annotation and underlining.

Lecture and Class Materials

The following inclusive practice guidelines will ensure that students with print disability can access lecture and class materials:

- PowerPoint slides – enter information into the slide components by using the master slide setup so that students can easily convert text to MSWord or RTF.
- Overhead transparencies – produce electronically with font size no smaller than 18 point to be used in lectures and provide copies to students before lectures.
- Lecture notes – make these available on the web and/or facilitate audio-taping of lectures.
- Handouts – produced electronically – these can be transcribed if only available in hardcopy (i.e. newspaper article).
- Advise guest lecturers of the need to ensure that any lecture notes or class readings they provide or recommend are to be available in accessible format.

Transcription

The Library can arrange for the transcription of course materials from hardcopy to accessible format, but the following factors affect the timely provision of materials when using this process:

- time at which reading lists, course guides and other materials are made available;
- quality of the original material – poor photocopies don't scan well and result in the need for costly editing;
- delays in receiving copyright permission; and
- increased volume of demand at busy times.

Teaching Strategies

Lecturers should invite prospective and beginning students to advise them of their disability-related needs and promote the support available from the University. Once academic staff become aware that they have a student with print disability enrolling in their course, it is advisable to refer to the following checklist:

1. Has the student seen the Disability Adviser to have a Learning Access Plan completed? If not, consider referring the student.
2. Meet with the student (and Disability Adviser if required) to identify and clarify:
 - the type of accessible format required by the student;
 - the type of information medium used by the student (including an overview of how any adaptive technology works);
 - a mechanism for ongoing communication with the student; and
 - any alternatives which may assist both parties.
3. Seek advice from CALT about inclusive teaching strategies.

COPYRIGHT AND COPYING FOR PERSONS WITH PRINT DISABILITY

The University can reproduce copyright material in an accessible format for students with print disability, subject to certain procedural requirements and limitations under the Copyright Act.

Under the Copyright Act, a person with print disability is:

- a person without sight; or
- a person whose sight is severely impaired; or
- a person who is unable to hold or manipulate books or to focus or move his or her eyes; or
- a person with a perceptual disability.

Statutory Licence Provisions

The statutory licence permits institutions to make reproductions and communications of published literary and dramatic works for use by people with print disability. The University is licensed by the Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) which is the collecting society approved by the government to administer the statutory licence. This statutory licence gives the copyright owner a right to be paid 'equitable remuneration' out of the licence fees paid to CAL.

The statutory licence covers literary and dramatic works only. Literary and dramatic works are materials that are reduced to writing or some other material form by a creator. Works may be in electronic or hardcopy form and may include letters, emails, articles, novels, poetry, song lyrics, timetables, databases and computer programs. The statutory licence does not cover artistic or musical works. Artistic works may include drawings, photographs, diagrams and maps, as well as paintings, sculptures, sketches, blueprints, plans and buildings or models of buildings. However, artistic works that are incidental – such as a graph on a page illustrating a point in the accompanying text – can be copied.

The work can only be copied to provide assistance to a person with print disability and the University is required to make a reasonable investigation to identify that the work is not available commercially, within a reasonable period of time, in the format required by the person with print disability.

The statutory licence permits the making of reproductions or communications of works in any of the following specified accessible formats:

- sound recordings;
- Braille versions;
- large print versions;
- photographic versions; and
- electronic versions – HTML, Word, XML etc.

The University can keep a 'master' for the purpose of making subsequent copies where this is done to assist a person with print disability. There is no limit to the number of copies that can be made from a master provided that each copy is made to provide assistance to a person with print disability. The master has to be reported to CAL within three months. The University can outsource the creation of a master of a required work into one of the five accessible formats.

The University can make works available on an intranet site, as long as the work is not available (in that format) within a reasonable time at an ordinary commercial price; and must be for the assistance of a person with print disability.

The University can charge for copies made under the statutory licence, but only on a cost recovery basis. There must be no intention to make a profit from works copied under print disability provisions.

Copying Outside the Licence

Some material copied by the University falls outside the statutory licence. In order to copy this material the University needs to obtain permission from the copyright owners to reproduce their works in an accessible format. Individuals with print disability may reproduce works in an accessible format for the purposes of research or study under the 'fair dealing' exception in the Copyright Act. Contact the University Copyright Officer (ext. 2228) for more information.

Administration of Copying for People with Print Disability

The procedures and processes are more complicated than for standard multiple copying for students. The Library and the Disability Service copy materials for students with print disability. Academic staff needing to copy documents for a person with print disability should contact their Liaison Librarian.

Contact the University Copyright Officer (ext. 2228) for advice.

If you require any further information about providing course materials in an accessible format contact the Disability Service on your campus:

Hobart 6226 2381
Launceston 6324 3787

www.utas.edu.au/services/disability

Checklist for Academic and General Staff

FOR PREPARING LISTS OF REQUIRED TEXTS & READINGS AND PRODUCING UNIT READERS & CLASS HANDOUTS

1. Prior to finalising lists of required texts & readings and content for unit readers, contact your Liaison Librarian, who can check for:
 - the availability of accessible electronic texts direct from publishers;
 - reading materials that already exist in accessible format; and
 - possible alternative texts listed in the UTAS database of accessible materials.
2. When producing Unit Readers from hardcopy originals, photocopy compilations should:
 - be only first generation copies;
 - not be reduced in size;
 - be correctly aligned (not have dark edges);
 - not have any text chopped off;
 - include correct pagination; and
 - include accurate bibliographic details for each reading.
3. Record the list of required texts & readings in the Unit Description on the Course and Unit Database at least 6 weeks prior to start of semester.
4. When publishing the Unit Outline, include:
 - the list of required texts & readings; and
 - dates for completion of readings relevant to the schedule of study tasks.
5. When providing class handouts that are available only in hardcopy:
 - the Disability Service can have hardcopies transcribed into e-text as long as there is 3 working days notice prior to classes.