

# The Universitas 21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Report

Partnering globally to champion change

**Part Four: Universities support for staff with a disability**

June 2025

*Image illustrates the global collaboration of U21 and this project - the image on the title page is a map of the world with orange circle symbols of each member university appearing on the city where they are based.*





Fudan University



Korea University



KU Leuven



Lund University



McMaster University



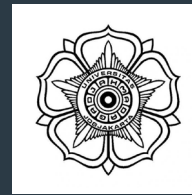
National University of Singapore



Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile



Shanghai Jiao Tong University



Universitas Gadjah Mada



Tecnológico de Monterrey



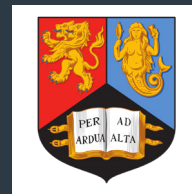
UC Davis



University of Amsterdam



The University of Auckland



University of Birmingham



University College Dublin



University of Connecticut



University of Delhi



The University of Edinburgh



University of Glasgow



The University of Hong Kong



University of Johannesburg



University of Maryland



The University of Melbourne



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University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign



The University of Queensland



The University of Sydney



University of Zurich



UNSW Sydney



Waseda University

# Background

Throughout 2023 and 2024, the Universitas 21 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group undertook the development of a Network-wide framework to guide EDI efforts across member institutions.

As part of this process, the U21 Disability Community of Practice (COP) was consulted during the drafting of the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement. Recognising the value of this Framework, the Disability COP sought to support and enhance the leadership of U21 universities in advancing EDI, particularly in the area of disability inclusion.

Building on this momentum, the Disability COP proposed the U21 Disability Policy Mapping Initiative. This initiative invited university leadership to submit all relevant public documents pertaining to the inclusion of persons with disabilities. Each institution was also asked to nominate a contact person to facilitate the provision of these policies and to participate actively in the Disability COP.

Professor Paul Harpur OAM, as co-lead of the Disability COP and with established funding and strong backing from U21, offered to lead a Comparative Interpretive Policy Analysis (CIPA) of the collected documents. This analysis aimed to identify common commitments and best practices across the network, culminating in recommendations for a U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Report.

In April 2024, the U21 Senior Leaders' Group formally adopted the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement and endorsed the U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Initiative. Throughout 2024, the Disability COP received substantial support from the U21 secretariat in finalising and distributing a survey to all thirty universities within the network. The survey was completed, and relevant documents were collected. Additional data collection and analysis were required following the inclusion of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in the U21 Network. A dedicated team of staff and students from across the U21 Network contributed to data collection, analysis, and the drafting of this report, with a full list of contributors included in the attached document.

# Table of Contents

Background .....	3
Introduction to the U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Report .....	5
Executive summary .....	8
Chapter 4: Report recommendations .....	10
List of authors and contributors.....	12
Method and approach .....	15
Part 4: Universities support for staff with a disability .....	18
Chapter 4.1. Universities support for staff with a disability.....	19
Chapter 4.2. Staff with a disability that travel for work.....	25
Chapter 4.3. Awareness raising and Disability Inclusion .....	28

The above table of contents lists the parts and chapters of the report. Each chapter is authored by staff from across the U21 Network, who may use variations of inclusive language as best matches their experience.

# Introduction to the U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Report

**Professor Paul Harpur OAM**

## Introduction

In this introductory chapter I want to share my personal vision, as well as the vision of many colleagues involved in this journey of change.

I believe universities are a force for good in society. University education opens opportunities to individuals and provides our nations with the workforces they need for economic growth. Universities employ thought leaders who produce research and innovation which grows economies, enhances policy responses, and leads to transformational scientific discoveries.

Discoveries which have strengthened food security, the environment, health, modelling and other benefits to society. Highly visible benefits of such research include the development of vaccines, such as for COVID-19 and the HPV viruses, GPS technology, and web browsers.

The universities who feature in this report, the 30 member universities of the Universitas 21 (U21) Network, individually and collectively are enriching, empowering, and enabling the communities they serve. Those communities are stretched over 20 countries, collectively including 1.3 million students, over 220,000 staff, have approaching 2.5 million alumni, and stretch their positive impact into towns, cities and across the globe.

Those of us privileged to work in a U21 Network university, work in an institution that is committed to positive change. For many of us who want to have a positive impact upon the world, when we advance our personal visions, we find we are aligned to the vision of our university. The energy of those involved, along with the support for this report, has already led to impact and to the successful completion of this report.

## Structure of this report

In addition to this introductory part, this report has 5 parts. The parts of this report groups chapters according to most universities' organisational structures. Accordingly, Part 1 addresses university-wide governance on disability inclusion and Part 2 groups chapters concerning key priority of research-intensive universities: research. These chapters introduce new norms pertaining to disability inclusive research and analyse how U21 Network universities are responding. The Report then turns to policies supporting students with disabilities. This part includes chapters where universities are responding to the profound shifts in norms and laws pertaining to disability inclusion. In an often-overlooked area, Part 4 addresses how universities can and should be supporting their staff with disabilities. Finally in Part 5, this report includes chapters on digital, physical, and library services that are used by students, staff, and the wider community. In addition to mapping out policies, each chapter makes recommendations to enhance the impact of this report.



**Although reports generally do not have impact until they are published, the process of producing *this* report has already led to positive impact.**

## Impact

Impactful change occurs when top down and bottom-up inclusion initiatives intersect. This is the reality on disability inclusion in the U21 Network.

The reality is that many of our universities are leading on inclusion, but many others operate in regulatory ecosystems where inclusion is less supported. The U21 Senior Leaders' Group has recognised and responded to the challenges by adopting in April 2024 the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement.

In addition to adopting the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement in April 2024, the U21 Senior Leaders' Group agreed to support the U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Initiative. When considering whether they should support this initiative, the U21 Senior Leaders' Group would have been aware that strategic, policy, and practical efforts on disability inclusion in higher education can be mixed. Despite the risk of adverse findings, the U21 Senior Leaders' Group decided to support this initiative and send a message that there is high-level commitment to identifying ways of doing better on disability inclusion.

By supporting the gathering of data from 30 member universities, the U21 Senior Leaders' Group have both sent a message across our communities that disability inclusion matters, plus provided tangible support to the gathering of data which has enabled this overview of current disability inclusion policies to be produced.

This top-down support was heard by people working in U21 Network member universities and has contributed to bottom-up efforts to respond to this opportunity and build lasting collaborations. Therefore, this report acknowledges the PhD staff members who contributed to authoring a thematic chapter.

The thematic groups that have come together have recognised the value in collaborating and thematic sub-groups of the U21 Disability Community of Practice have been proposed.

Already this report is contributing to lasting change.

Lasting change in the policy delivery space has been created by providing examples of workable solutions that exist in U21 Network universities. The U21 Network provides an avenue where universities with identified best practices, can share their experiences directly with other member universities, and thus build stronger responses to inclusion across the U21 Network.

With respect to informing responses, the professional and academic staff involved in this analysis have drawn upon their expertise when analysing the data to help generate a large list of recommendations. The recommendations called for by the authors in this report would profoundly shift the teaching, staffing, service delivery, and research ecosystems in our institutions. Transformation of this magnitude does not occur in the short term; however, reports of this nature occur infrequently, thus some recommendations might be adopted in the short-term, whereas others will take more time.

Often recommendations are grouped by what is possible in the short, medium, and long term. The different situations of universities across the U21 Network, caused by differences in cultures and regulatory environments across over 20 countries and by universities themselves, means that segmenting recommendations by implementation timeframes is not viable. Instead, recommendations are grouped by the domains in the report so that those reviewing their position can more easily identify the recommendations most relevant to their needs.

## Conclusion

To support the U21 Network and its university members to become disability champions of change, this report underscores the transformative potential of universities in fostering disability inclusion. By leveraging the collective strength of the U21 Network, we can drive significant advancements in creating inclusive educational, work and research and innovation eco-systems. This report not only highlights the current state of disability inclusion policies but also provides actionable recommendations to enhance these efforts.

The commitment from both top-down leadership and grassroots initiatives within our universities is crucial for sustained progress. As we continue to share best practices and collaborate across institutions, we can make meaningful strides towards a more inclusive society.

The work presented here is a testament to the power of commitment by those working in U21 Network universities and the U21 secretariat action and the dedication to improving how our universities operate and the lives of persons with disabilities. On disability, our universities train students with and without disabilities, employ staff with and without disabilities and produce research and innovation which can create a more inclusive world.

U21 is a place where we can come together to share, learn, and enhance our collective responses. Those responses will impact upon our universities, our U21 Network, to over 20 countries where our universities are situated and more broadly across the globe.

**// Changing the world for the better starts with a single step. I believe this report is such a step.**

Professor Paul Harpur OAM

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# Executive summary

**Between 15% and 20% of the world has a disability and in many of our universities more than 10% of our communities live with a disability.**

Universities train the disability leaders of tomorrow, employ the disability leaders of today, and produces research and innovation that leads to a better and more inclusive world. Drawing upon existing policies and practices from Universitas 21 (U21) Network member universities, this report provides a pathway for our universities, separately and collectively through the U21 Network, to more effectively and efficiently realise our missions, and through this, do better at what we do best: **Create and share knowledge for the betterment of all.**

This report was made possible following the adoption of the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement and the support from the U21 Senior Leaders' Group to support this initiative. With over 100 U21 staff volunteering, this report involved 30 member universities across over 20 countries, resulting in a comprehensive analysis of disability inclusion within the U21 Network. This report, led by Professor Paul Harpur, aims to support U21 universities in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the disability space.

This report contains 5 main parts, each focusing on a different aspect of disability inclusion in the university setting. While these standalone parts like this one are available for convenience, readers seeking further context and detailed recommendations should refer to the complete report. A consolidated list of recommendations is provided after the Executive Summary.

## Part 1: Disability Governance Norms

This part explores the establishment of new norms on disability governance within the U21 Network. It emphasises the importance of fostering equitable partnerships among member universities and ensuring disability representation in governance structures. The report highlights the need for clear leadership roles, strategic integration, continuous improvement, and adequate funding to support disability inclusion initiatives. Additionally, it addresses the intersectionality of disability with other marginalised identities, such as Indigenous, LGBTQIA+, and age-conscious frameworks.

## Part 2: Disability Inclusion and the Research and Innovation Ecosystem

Part 2 examines how U21 universities can align their research and innovation practices with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It underscores the importance of integrating CRPD norms into ethics and grant review processes, enhancing data collection, and implementing co-design methodologies. It also discusses the role of university research groups in championing disability inclusion and the need for comprehensive disability inclusion research and innovation, drawing from the best model at plans of inclusive practices. It calls for increased representation of people with disabilities in research leadership roles and the establishment of formal benchmarks within institutional disability policies. For the sake of this report, the CRPD describes disability in Article 1 to **“include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.”**

## Part 3: Creating an Inclusive Community for Students with Disabilities

This part focuses on the transition from reasonable accommodations to universal design and universal design for learning (UDL). It advocates for a proactive approach to designing inclusive educational environments that anticipate and remove barriers to learning. The report highlights the importance of enhanced outreach programs, pre-orientation and orientation programs, and accessible housing options for students with disabilities. Additionally, it addresses the need for clear access to disability support information for international and exchange students and the importance of tailored career counselling and work-integrated learning opportunities to support students with disabilities in their transition to employment.

## Part 4: Universities Support for Staff with Disabilities

Examining the measures adopted by U21 universities to create disability-inclusive workplaces, this part discusses proactive measures to promote the recruitment and retention of staff with disabilities, the implementation of universal design, and the streamlining of reasonable accommodation processes. Part 4 also addresses the challenges faced by staff with disabilities who travel for work and recommends central funding for disability-related travel expenses, mechanisms for non-disclosure, and internal booking systems with accessibility information. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of awareness-raising activities, including mandatory training, inclusive events, and the development of comprehensive resources to support ongoing education and awareness efforts.

## Part 5: University Services and Disability Inclusion

Part 5 explores the role of university services, including libraries and digital and physical spaces, in promoting disability inclusion. It emphasises the importance of integrating accessibility into all library policies and strategic planning, developing physical spaces and assistive technology, and providing ongoing training for library staff. The report also discusses the need for capacity building across university staff to ensure understanding and implementation of digital accessibility standards. It advocates for the development of digital inclusion roadmaps, publicising compliance and monitoring metrics, and partnering with other universities and software vendors to enhance digital accessibility. Additionally, it addresses the importance of establishing design guides and capital works plans for the built environment and creating dedicated positions, such as Campus Accessibility Officers, to oversee accessibility and inclusion initiatives.

# Chapter 4: Report recommendations

The following consolidated list of recommendations is drawn from and referenced in the chapters of this report.


## Part 4: Universities support for staff with disabilities

### Chapter 4.1. Universities support for staff with a disability

- a) **Proactive measures to promote staff with disabilities:** Universities should implement proactive measures to address the inequalities experienced by staff with disabilities. This includes targeted recruitment initiatives and the promotion of staff with disabilities to ensure they are represented at all levels of the institution.
- b) **Universal design implementation:** More efforts are needed to remove disabling barriers through universal design. Universities should ensure that all facilities, services, and resources are accessible to everyone, including staff with disabilities.
- c) **Streamlined reasonable accommodation processes:** The process for requesting and receiving reasonable accommodations/adjustments should be streamlined. Funding for these accommodations should come from a central fund to separate the decision-making process from budgetary constraints.
- d) **Enhanced recruitment and promotion practices:** Universities should adopt more inclusive recruitment and promotion practices. This could include setting quotas for hiring staff with disabilities and ensuring that promotion criteria are inclusive and equitable.

### Chapter 4.2. Staff that travel for work

- a) **Central funding:** This builds on the funding structures that currently exist within various universities. The disparate forms of funding at departmental, faculty, and university levels result in a confusing landscape for users. A centralised funding system to cover additional costs borne by staff with disabilities when they travel for work is essential to consolidating the requirements for funding. This centralised university funding should be designed as an initial port of call rather than as a last resort to be approached only after all other funding sources have been exhausted; taking this view would significantly reduce the invisible labour of tracking and revealing unsuccessful applications to other funding sources. Consistency in funding policies and administration can also alleviate stressors related to time complications resulting from different funding applications.

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- b) **Mechanisms for non-disclosure:** Centralised funding structures can also facilitate the mechanisms to access to the fund without disclosure of disability to direct supervisors and / or managers. Such mechanisms would provide psychological safety to staff with disabilities. They eliminate the need for disclosure which can create situations where staff with disabilities could be unduly judged by their disability instead of by their performance. This disclosure can also be recorded in confidential systems, eliminating the need for staff with disabilities to repeatedly disclose any conditions, unless there has been a change in circumstances. The emotional labour of disclosure is another form of invisible labour, which can be reduced through considerate administrative design.
  - c) **Internal booking systems:** Recommendations to improve the experience for staff travelling for work emphasises the inclusion of specific information related to a range of considerations for staff with disabilities in any internal booking systems. Accessibility policies of transport and accommodation providers can be appended to internal booking systems so that staff with disabilities can make travel decisions and arrangements independently.
  - d) **Network for travel with disability:** Beyond internal systems, a network of travel agents specialising in accessible travel can be established by the university to encourage flexibility. Such networks can facilitate better information flows from travel experts familiar with accessibility needs and staff who need to access them. Once again, this reduces the need for discussion and disclosure with intermediaries uninvolved in the travel process (such as direct supervisors) while recognising the agency of the staff with disabilities in tailoring their travel according to their needs.

### Chapter 4.3. Awareness raising and disability inclusion

- a) **Expand mandatory training:** Universities should consider expanding mandatory disability awareness training to all staff and students. These should be a baseline understanding and commitment to inclusion across the institution.
- b) **Promote inclusive events:** Organise events such as Disability Inclusion Week, Neurodiversity Celebration Week, and conferences on disability rights to raise awareness and celebrate diversity.
- c) **Develop comprehensive resources:** Create and disseminate resources like tip sheets, allyship guides, and multimedia content to support ongoing awareness and education efforts.
- d) **Integrate into curriculum:** Incorporate disability awareness into the curriculum through dedicated courses, minors, or modules. This can ensure that all students graduate with an understanding of disability issues.
- e) **Support research and innovation:** Encourage research on disability awareness and inclusion and recognise innovative practices through awards and recognition programs.
- f) **Engage in global networking:** Encourage participation in global networks and communities of practice to share best practices, success stories, and resources. This can help universities learn from each other and continuously improve their training programs.

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## Individual acknowledgements

We further want to acknowledge the Universitas 21 Network, its members, and individuals who have contributed to the success of this report.

## First Nations Acknowledgment

We recognise that due to the impacts of colonisation, Indigenous peoples are more likely to be living with disability and / or chronic illness compared to the wider population. This Review acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which the 30 U21 Network universities are situated, and pays respects to their Elders, past and present.

The status of traditional owners of lands differs across the footprints of the U21 Network's 30 universities, and the lead author Professor Paul Harpur OAM is based at The University of Queensland (UQ) and thus will provide an acknowledgement which is more reflective of the traditional lands on which he and many authors work.

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and their custodianship of the lands on which UQ operates. We pay our respects to their Ancestors and their descendants, who continue cultural and spiritual connections to Country. We recognise their valuable contributions to Australian and global society.

The traditional owners acknowledged here include all those who are the traditional owners of the lands on which UQ operates. The UQ main campuses include 3 campuses in or around Brisbane city, being St Lucia, Dutton Park and Herston, as well as a campus at Gatton in the Lockyer Valley. The UQ geographical footprint includes off-campus sites with the Translational Research Institute, marine research stations at Heron and Stradbroke Islands, mineral research centre, seismograph station, veterinary and agricultural science teaching and research centres at Gatton, UQ Business School Brisbane City, social science research at Long Pocket, and teaching hospitals, health centres and other medical research facilities. The University's overseas establishments include UQ's North America office in Washington D.C., and the UQ-Ochsner Clinical School in Louisiana, United States of America.

Most students and staff are based in Brisbane city, which for tens of thousands of years was known by its traditional name, Meeanjin, which means "the place of the blue water lilies." Brisbane is the traditional home of the Turrbal and Yuggera peoples. UQ has geographic footprints on the lands of other traditional owners, and thus we also acknowledge:

- Bundaberg Rural Clinical School: Bailai, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang and Taribelang Bunda peoples
- Gatton campus: Yuggera peoples
- Heron Island Research Station: Bailai, Gooreng Gooreng, Gurang and Taribelang Bunda peoples
- Hervey Bay: Butchulla people
- Meadowbrook - Yugambah Speaking Peoples
- Moreton Bay Research Station and Redland Hospital - Quandamooka people
- Rockhampton Rural Clinical School - Darumbal People
- Veterinary Practice Dayboro - Kabi Kabi people

# Method and approach

## Paul Harpur and Brooke Szucs

### Planning phase

This report has been made possible by the support of the U21 Secretariat and disability inclusion support within member universities. Efforts to build and strengthen collaboration on disability Inclusion was formalised in 2023 with the establishment of the U21 Disability Community of Practice.

When the U21 Senior Leaders' Group was developing the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement they consulted with the U21 Disability Community of Practice. As part of this process, Professor Harpur proposed to the U21 Disability Community of Practice that he led a policy mapping initiative to advance the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement. After consulting with the U21 Disability Community of Practice, as well as colleagues across the network, it was decided to seek support from the U21 Senior Leaders' Group in their April 2024 meeting in Hong Kong for a U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Initiative.

In their April 2024 meeting, the Senior Leaders' Group reiterated their commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion by adopting the U21 Framework for Equitable and Inclusive Global Engagement and by agreeing to support the U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Initiative to be led by Professor Paul Harpur.

Following approval by the U21 Senior Leaders' Group, Professor Paul Harpur reached out to Mr Paul Sheeran to benefit from his project management expertise. Paul Sheeran formed

an Oversight Project Management Group which provided valuable support to this report's success. In particular, the Oversight Project Management Group assisted in the development of a project management plan to manage a project across 30 universities situated in over 20 countries, spread across all inhabited continents, with language barriers and multiple work groups at each university.

A draft of the project management plan was shared with the U21 Disability Community of Practice, as well as key groups within to gain feedback, including the Disability Collaboratory, the Disability Inclusion Group, and the Disability Inclusion and Advocacy Network. After implementing suggested changes, the project management plan was adopted.

The project management plan called for data to be collected via a survey and through a manual document collection process. To facilitate this, existing networks were used to gather U21 staff members to support in finalising the research tools, and to participate in the data gathering, analysis and writing of this report.

In addition to the Oversight Project Management Group, staff were sorted into teams aligned with the thematic chapters in this report. During the process some staff withdrew, and new staff joined the project. Those who made a substantive contribution to thematic chapters have been named as authors.

## Data collection

### The U21 Disability Policy Mapping survey

A literature review was performed by the project team to identify key themes. Drawing upon this, as well as decades of academic and professional experience, the research team co-designed the U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping survey. The survey was piloted tested at and several questions were added which addressed policy questions confronting those who delivered disability inclusion interventions.

The U21 Disability Policy Mapping survey aimed to gather information on disability inclusion policies and practices across the U21 Network of universities. The survey contained 30 questions covering various aspects of disability inclusion. Topics covered included:

1. **Governance:** Structure and evaluation of disability inclusion efforts.
2. **Strategies:** University-wide strategic plans and specific disability inclusion plans.
3. **Research:** Disability inclusion research groups and strategies.
4. **Courses:** Availability of disability studies programs.
5. **Training:** Disability awareness training for students and staff.
6. **Data Collection:** Collection of data on students and staff with disabilities.
7. **Accommodations:** Policies for making accommodations for students and staff.
8. **Support Services:** Support provided by libraries, IT services, and facilities.
9. **Innovative Initiatives:** Examples of innovative disability inclusion initiatives.
10. **Contacts:** Points of contact for sharing findings and participating in the U21 Disability Community of Practice.

The survey sort qualitative responses and relevant documents to inform shared insights and public resources aimed at enhancing disability inclusion across the U21 Network.

Ethical clearance for this project was obtained from UQ under reference number 2024/HE001229. After ethics approval was secured, an invitation to participate in the U21 Disability Inclusion Policy Mapping Initiative was shared across the U21 Network along with invitations to complete the survey being emailed by the U21 Secretariat to their contacts within member universities. In addition, the survey was distributed by members of the U21 Disability Community of Practice to colleagues they knew, at their university and others in the U21 Network, who would be well-equipped to respond.

### Manual searching

During the drafting of the survey tool, it was anticipated that the fragmented nature of disability inclusion policies across universities would result in incomplete responses. As anticipated, the fragmented nature of disability inclusion in universities made it challenging for staff members to provide full responses in all areas of the survey. Thusly, researchers from the thematic teams agreed to perform manual searches to ensure the data set was representative.

Often those working on the thematic chapters had engaged in policy searches of university websites for academic or professional purposes and thus were familiar with search protocols. Where this was not the case, the project lead was able to provide support.

In addition to relying upon staff assigned to thematic chapters, efforts were made to reduce challenges created by culture and language across the U21 Network. Professor Harpur used his ARC Future Fellowship funds to retain Ms Brooke Szucs, who speaks Japanese, German and Spanish, and Mr Nick Yao, who speaks all Chinese languages, to analyse documents and make direct contacts with U21 Network universities where these languages were the primary language of communication to elicit additional data.

## Data collected

A total of 22 universities submitted to the survey, contributing data that formed the foundation of the analysis. The data provided in the survey included qualitative responses along with documents that were uploaded to the survey and in other cases links to policy and websites. Where websites were provided, the documents were downloaded. This process elicited over 300 policy artifacts - policy documents and websites that explains processes.

The survey data was gathered and distributed to the teams working on thematic chapters. A preliminary analysis of the data was performed and gaps identified. To fill the gaps identified, manual data was collected from university websites, as well as requesting staff of target universities support in the provision of data.

## Data analysis

With the exceptions of chapters 1.2 and 2.1 which provide analysis of developing disability norms, and of chapter 1.5, on intersectionality, the approach to data analysis was the same in all other chapters. Even though the methods of chapters 1.2, 1.4 align with the method in this method chapter, the authors of those chapters desired to explain their methods in their chapters and thus those chapters include a method section.

The data was shared with the teams and support was provided to help narrow which

documents were most relevant to each thematic team.

To understand how different universities approached disability inclusion in each area, and to help identify innovative and best practices, each team engaged in a comparative policy analysis over the documents. This involved examining how different universities address accessibility and support based upon the qualitative data provided in the survey, as well as in the policies and websites gathered. Those involved in the analysis drew from their personal expertise working in the relevant policy area, as well as drawing upon scholarship and disability norms. Through this process, recommendations were developed for each chapter.

The involvement of multiple authors resulted in some variation of language, due to differing theoretical perspectives, and some slight variation in how chapters are structured. We fundamentally believe that diversity is a strength and decided that these slight variations strengthened the report.

Progress was monitored through regular communications. Ultimately all the thematic chapters were placed in a single document and shared across those who co-authored chapters for comment and updating of their own thematic chapters. This process resulted in this final report that will be presented to the U21 Senior Leaders' Group in May 2025.

# Part 4:

## Universities support for staff with a disability

Chapter 4.1. **Universities support for staff with a disability**

*Paul Harpur and Jenny Povey*

Chapter 4.2. **Staff with a disability that travel for work**

*Faith Ong*

Chapter 4.3. **Awareness raising and disability inclusion**

*Gloria Liu, Gisselle Gallego, Bernie Ma, Danielle Burgess, and Paul Harpur*

## Chapter 4.1.

### Universities support for staff with a disability

Paul Harpur and Jenny Povey

#### Introduction

Despite being a significant proportion of the population, unemployment rates for persons with disabilities remain high. For illustration, approximately 1 in 5 Australians live with disability (Australian Bureau of Statistics). Australians with disabilities are twice as likely to be unemployed compared to Australians without a disability.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this trend, there is growing evidence that employing persons with disabilities is good for business. For example, Accenture's 2018 report *Getting to Equal: The Disability Inclusion Advantage*, found organisations that embrace leading practices for employing people with disability have 28% higher revenue, twice the net income, and 30% higher profit margins than their peers not implementing best practice.<sup>2</sup> This report also found organisations which are good disability employers are 2 times more likely to have higher shareholder returns than those which are less disability inclusive.

Whereas students with disabilities benefit from a specific right to higher education in the UN CRPD in article 24(5), staff with disabilities receive protection from the right to work and employment in article 27.<sup>3</sup> Article 27 requires States to take various measures to realise an inclusive labour market. Furthermore, Article 27 is supported by the CRPD Committee's interpretative guidance in General Comment 8<sup>4</sup> and Concluding Observations on States. Broadly disability norms now expect that laws and policies will include: 1. Measures which address the inequalities experienced by persons with disabilities; 2. Measures to implement universal design to remove disabling barriers; and 3. Reasonable accommodation / adjustments where universal design does not achieve ability equality.

When compared against students with disabilities, staff with disabilities receive less regulatory and policy attention. For example, the University of Auckland's university-wide disability plan focuses upon students and only benefits staff indirectly.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, despite first lodging a disability action plan with the Australian Human Rights Commission in 1994, the latest The University of Melbourne Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2023 – 2026 is the first plan which encompasses students and staff within its remit.<sup>6</sup> Beyond just being included in equality measures, changes in disability norms and laws have contributed to the employment of staff with disabilities becoming a strategic priority. For example, The University of Queensland's disability action plan 2023–2025 sets out a vision for a better world and achieves this by employing the disability leaders of today, training the disability leaders of tomorrow, and producing research and innovation that makes the world more inclusive.<sup>7</sup> This action plan highlights that the employment of staff with disabilities is regarded as forming part of the University's mission to change society for the better.

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1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. (2024). [People with disability in Australia](#).

2 Accenture, & American Association of People with Disabilities. (2018). [Getting to equal: The Disability inclusion advantage](#).

3 United Nations. (2006). Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. Department of Economic and Social Affairs Social Inclusion. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

4 Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2022). General comment No. 8 on the right of persons with Disabilities to Work and Employment (UN doc CRPD/C/GC/8 CRPD/C/GC/8, 9 September 2022). United Nations. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3995378?v=pdf>

5 University of Auckland. (2022). *Waipapa Taumata Rau - The University of Auckland disability action plan 2022-2025*.

6 University of Melbourne. (2023). Disability inclusion action plan 2023 – 2026. <https://about.unimelb.edu.au/UoM-Disability-Inclusion-Action-Plan-2023-2026.pdf>

7 University of Queensland. (2023). Disability action plan 2023-2025. <https://staff.uq.edu.au/DisabilityActionPlan.pdf>

This chapter will analyse U21 Network's universities policies to create disability inclusive workplaces. This analysis will comprise 3 parts. Part 1 analyses U21 Network universities' measures aimed at increasing their recruitment of persons with disabilities. Part 2 analyses how university policies take proactive measures to support staff with disabilities once they are employed at U21 Network universities. Part 3 analyses how reasonable accommodation / adjustment policies aim to support staff with disabilities where disabling barriers exist. Finally, this chapter will conclude and make recommendations.

## Part 1. Measures aimed at increasing recruitment of Persons with Disabilities (PWD)

The measures adopted by U21 Network universities to advance disability inclusion at work range from inexpensive through to more resource intensive interventions. The inclusion of anti-discrimination statements in job advertisements, such as that at the Waseda University, represents an effective means of encouraging job applicants with a disability to apply.<sup>8</sup> In addition to including a commitment to disability inclusion, The University of Sydney Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2019-24 commits to providing a barrier free and inclusive recruitment process.<sup>9</sup> To attract and recruit people with disabilities, the Disability Action Plan includes a commitment to develop inclusive recruitment practices and to routinely evaluate the accessibility of recruitment activities.<sup>10</sup>

Beyond making the recruitment process disability inclusive, universities adopt measures to create targeted employment opportunities. When creating such positions, has a process to facilitate targeted recruitment and retention measures.<sup>11</sup> Targeted employment options can arise through capacity building activities. For example, the University of Auckland's Waipapa Taumata Rau - The University of Auckland Disability Action Plan 2022-2025 commits to investigating good practices for increasing employment opportunities for students with disabilities, including employment at the University of Auckland.<sup>12</sup>

## Part 2. Supporting staff once employed through proactive measures

Recruiting staff with disabilities will lead to lasting change only if retention and promotion measures are in place. Incidental benefits can arise from general interventions, such as disability-inclusive event guides at the University of Glasgow<sup>13</sup> and Tecnológico de Monterrey<sup>14</sup> or inclusive meeting guides at The University of Queensland.<sup>15</sup>

Universal design measures for students can also benefit staff with disabilities, as shared resources create additional support.

In addition to incidental benefits, universities have adopted retention and promotion interventions specifically targeting staff with disabilities. These interventions range from measures that have a limited focus, to larger systems change. Examples of measures of a more limited nature include the commitments from The University of Queensland<sup>16</sup> and The University of Melbourne<sup>17</sup> to celebrate

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8 Universitas 21. (n.d.). *Spotlight on EDI: Waseda University*. <https://universitas21.com/news/spotlight-on-edi-waseda-university/>

9 University of Sydney. (2019). *Disability inclusion action plan 2019-2024*. <https://www.sydney.edu.au/disability-inclusion-action-plan-2019-24>

10 University of Queensland. (2023). *Disability action plan 2023-2025*. <https://staff.uq.edu.au/DisabilityActionPlan.pdf>

11 University of Queensland. (n.d.). *UQ Guide to increasing under-represented staff through targeted recruitment and retention measures*. <https://www.uq.edu.au/Guide-to-Increasing-under-represented-staff.pdf>

12 University of Auckland. (2022). *Waipapa Taumata Rau - The University of Auckland disability action plan 2022-2025*. <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/.html>

13 University of Glasgow. (n.d.). *Accessible events policy*. <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/policy/accessevents/>

14 Tecnológico de Monterrey (2021). *Diversity and inclusion report 2021*. <https://Diversity-Inclusion-Report-2021>.

15 University of Queensland. (n.d.). *UQ guide to inclusive meetings and committees*. <https://www.uq.edu.au/GuidetoInclusiveMeetingsandCommittees.pdf>

16 University of Queensland. (2023). *Disability action plan 2023-2025*. <https://staff.uq.edu.au/DisabilityActionPlan.pdf>

17 University of Melbourne. (2023). *Disability inclusion action plan 2023-2026*. <https://about.unimelb.edu.au/UoM-Disability-Inclusion-Action-Plan-2023-2026.pdf>

and promote the individual achievements of staff with disabilities – this can include grant success, research outputs, or teaching prizes.

System-change measures can be driven by regulatory interventions. Illustratively, pursuant to section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (2010) public sector bodies, including universities, are required to adopt positive conduct. Accordingly, U21 Network universities in the United Kingdom, such as the University of Glasgow,<sup>18</sup> have adopted Impact Assessment processes to ensure compliance. The public sector equality duty has also motivated universities to participate in the Disability Confident Employer Scheme to gain external accreditation of their practices. The Disability Confident Employer Scheme includes a process through which employers become accredited at certain levels, including level 1. Disability Confident Committed; level 2 Disability Confident Employer; and level 3 Disability Confident Leader.<sup>19</sup> Each level is associated with differing levels of above compliance activities to create inclusive workplaces. The University of Birmingham,<sup>20</sup> University of Nottingham,<sup>21</sup> and University of Glasgow<sup>22</sup> all participate in the Disability Confident Employer Scheme to help as part of their efforts to build an inclusive culture. Although The University of Edinburgh has not signed up to the Disability Confident Employer Scheme,<sup>23</sup> they do hold Athena SWAN Institutional Silver, Stonewall Diversity Champion Scotland, and Carer Positive.<sup>24</sup> Although some of these other schemes do include disability, they are not disability specific.

Similar to the United Kingdom, laws in Canada and Ireland require positive conduct to promote the inclusion of staff with disabilities. For example, laws in Canada and Ireland require all employers, including universities, to implement measures to advance universal design. Accordingly, McMaster University has responsibilities to remove barriers to accessibility under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its related regulations and standards, as well as having duties to combat disability discrimination under the Ontario Human Rights Code. TO fulfil these regulatory obligations, McMaster University has created an Access Hub managed by a group called AccessMac.<sup>25</sup> AccessMac's Portfolio includes:

- ensuring that the University is meeting its statutory compliance obligations;
- advising and working collaboratively to create accessible and inclusive programs, services, classrooms and workplaces;
- providing workshops and training opportunities on accessibility, the duty to accommodate, McMaster University's Accessibility Policy and statutory access obligations; and,
- facilitating connections to disability-related groups and activities within the university.

The employment of university staff with a disability are regulated in Ireland by laws, including the Employment Equality Act 1998-2015, Disability Act 2005, Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014, and Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. The University College Dublin's Supporting the

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18 University of Glasgow. (n.d.). *Equality and diversity unit's EIA policy and guidance*. <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/policy/eias/>

19 United Kingdom Department for Work and Pensions. (n.d.). *Disability confident employer scheme*. <https://www.gov.uk/government/>

20 University of Birmingham. (n.d.). *Jobs at the University of Birmingham*. <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/jobs>

21 The University of Nottingham. (n.d.). *Disabled staff*. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/edi/characteristics/disability-staff.aspx>

22 University of Glasgow. (n.d.). *Disability*. <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/equalitydiversity/staff/disability/>

23 United Kingdom Department for Work and Pensions. (2024). *Disability confident list of employers*. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/disability-confident-list-of-employers.xlsx>

24 University of Edinburgh. (2024). *Equality, diversity and inclusion: reasonable adjustments policy and guidance*. <https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/disabled-staff-support/guidance-disabled-staff-support>

25 McMaster University. (n.d.). *AccessMac - accessibility hub*. <https://accessibility.mcmaster.ca/accessmac/>

Employment of Persons with Disabilities Policy provides the operational framework to realise these regulatory obligations – the obligation on universal design.<sup>26</sup>

Whereas most jurisdictions do not expressly mandate universal design, the Disability Act 2005 requires a statutory obligation to in so far as practicable take all reasonable measures to promote and support the employment of persons with disabilities. This includes obligations to ensure that buildings and services are universally accessible to employees, students and visitors with disabilities. Under the Disability Act 2005, 'universal design' means the design and composition of an environment, electronic systems, any electronics-based process of creating products, services or systems so that it may be accessed, understood and used by persons of any age or size or having any particular physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual ability or disability.

Although phrased differently, the positive duties in Ireland have also led to proactive measures in Ireland, the Disability Discrimination Act 2005; positive duties also exist under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 universities must ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of all their employees. This extends to ensuring that places of work, where necessary, are organised to take account of persons at work with disabilities, in particular as regards doors, passageways, staircases, showers, washbasins, lavatories and workstations used or occupied directly by those persons. Whereas most jurisdictions do not contain positive duties in equality laws to realise universal design, all jurisdictions where U21 Network universities operate have statutory similar to those found in the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005. Thus, the response to managing these similar statutory obligations has wider implications. University College Dublin's Supporting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities Policy encourages staff with disabilities to disclose their impairments to their human resource Partner or the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Unit who will then liaise with the Safety, Insurance and Risk Compliance Office so that any attendant risks can be appropriately assessed.

When disabling barriers are framed as risks to health and safety, then a failure to realise universal design is regarded as a breach of occupational, safety and health (OSH) laws. Whereas a breach of equality laws is survivor enforced with small compensation, OSH laws are State enforced and attract compensation and criminal sanctions.

Even where laws do not include positive duties, all jurisdictions where U21 Network universities operate have OSH laws, also referred to as occupational health and safety (OHS) and work health and safety (WHS) laws. Constructing a failure to realise universal design as a breach of OSH laws is a powerful means to achieve equality outcomes.<sup>27</sup> OSH laws contain positive duties which require universities to take all practical steps to ensure the safety of their employees, students and visitors. These obligations are reasonably similar to universal design found in equality regimes. Although the nature of the duties are similar, there are considerable differences with enforcement. Whereas equality laws are survivor enforced with limited damages, OSH laws are State enforced and include criminal sanctions, which includes fines and potential imprisonment. Accordingly, health and safety departments have far larger budgets and compliance measures when compared with disability inclusion. Thus, when universities who coordinate their responses to these regimes can create better policy outcomes.

Beyond increasing compliance, OSH laws extend obligations to all parties who can reasonably and practicably impact upon health or safety. Thus designers, manufacturers and suppliers all attract

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<sup>26</sup> University College Dublin. (2022). *Supporting the employment of persons with disabilities policy*.

<sup>27</sup> Harpur, P., & Stafford, L. (2025). Leveraging universal design and work health and safety laws to promote and progress SDG 11.7: Access to public spaces for people with disabilities. In J. Dolley, K. Hardy, & T. Matthews (Eds.), *Public space and the sustainable development goals* (pp. 30–44). Edward Elgar Publishing.  
<https://doi.org/10.4337/9781035322411.00008>

duties. Similar to OSH, equality interventions can extend disability inclusion measures beyond the employer / employee relationship. For example, The University of Queensland's Disability Action Plan 2023-2025 includes an expectation on suppliers to enable the University to meet its commitment to best practice.<sup>28</sup> This procurement process aims to ensure the university uses disability-inclusive suppliers where possible and all purchases are made with accessibility options as a consideration.

### Part 3. Supporting staff once employed through reasonable accommodations / adjustments

University policies on reasonable accommodation / adjustments are guided by workplace disability discrimination laws.<sup>29,30</sup> Sometimes the adjustment process focusses on a particular aspect of the university.<sup>31</sup> See for example Korea University's home delivery for books from the library if users are unable to physically attend the library.<sup>32</sup> Addition to measures targeting one aspect of a university, workplace reasonable accommodation / adjustment policies can be found at a significant number of U21 Network universities, including University of Auckland,<sup>33</sup> University College Dublin,<sup>34</sup> University of Johannesburg,<sup>35</sup> University of Connecticut,<sup>36</sup> The University of Queensland,<sup>37</sup> and University of NSW.<sup>38</sup> The reasonable accommodation / adjustment process can do the following:

- make existing facilities readily accessible and usable;
- restructure the job to eliminate non-essential job functions;
- grant a leave of absence or partial leave of absence (reduction in time);
- modify the employee's work schedule or work location;
- acquire or modify equipment, devices or software;
- provide qualified readers or interpreters;
- reassignment to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified.<sup>39</sup>

To access reasonable accommodation / adjustment policies, staff must request the help and can be asked to provide evidence of disability.<sup>40</sup> To understand these processes, staff with disabilities can also access support from networks, such as The University of Edinburgh's Disabled Staff Network.<sup>41</sup> The process of applying for reasonable accommodation and adjustment can be complex for some staff, as well as time consuming; therefore, efforts to simplify it are important. Thus the University of Nottingham streamlines reasonable accommodation / adjustment implementation through a

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28 University of Queensland. (2023). *Disability action plan 2023-2025*. <https://staff.uq.edu.au/DisabilityActionPlan.pdf>

29 University of Hong Kong. (n.d.). *HKU's equal opportunity policy*. <https://www.eounit.hku.hk/images/content/about-us/Equal-Opportunity-Policy.pdf>

30 Lund University School of Economics and Management. (n.d.). [Swedish policy and regulation on disability and work](#).

31 University of Nottingham. (n.d.). *Policies and legislation*. <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentsservices.aspx>

32 Korea University. (n.d.). *Home-delivery service*. <https://library.korea.ac.kr/disabled/en>

33 University of Auckland. (2018). *Staff with disabilities policy*. <https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/staff-disabilities-policy.html>

34 University College Dublin. (2020). *Reasonable accommodation*. <https://www.ucd.ie/equality/support/disability/reasonableaccommodation/>

35 University of Johannesburg. (2020). *Accommodation policy for people with disabilities*. <https://www.uj.ac.za/sdg-impact/sdg-10-reduced-inequalities/>

36 University of Connecticut School of Health. (n.d.). [Americans with disabilities act compliance and accommodations](#).

37 University of Queensland. (n.d.). *Disability inclusion and reasonable adjustment for staff procedure*. <https://policies.uq.edu.au/>

38 University of NSW. (2011). *Reasonable adjustment guidelines for managers of staff and potential staff with disabilities*. <https://www.unsw.edu.au/content/dam/pdfs/governance/policy/2022-01-policies/reasonableadjustmentguidelines.pdf>

39 UC Davis Human Resources. (n.d.). *Accommodation process*. <https://hr.ucdavis.edu/departments/elr/dms/accommodationprocess>

40 University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Office for Access and Equity (OAE). (n.d.). *Accessibility and accommodations*. <https://oae.illinois.edu/>

41 University of Edinburgh. (n.d.). *Support for disabled staff - Disability and learning support service*. <https://disability-learning-support-service.ed.ac.uk/staff/disabled-staff>

passport.<sup>42</sup> This passport is an optional document that is intended to be a live record of any adjustments agreed between the employee and their line manager. It details any impact or issue that can arise due to the interaction between an impairment, condition or other disadvantaging circumstance and the barriers that exist in the workplace that can create a disability or disadvantage at work.

## Recommendations

- **Proactive measures to promote staff with disabilities:** Universities should implement proactive measures to address the inequalities experienced by staff with disabilities. This includes targeted recruitment initiatives and the promotion of staff with disabilities to ensure they are represented at all levels of the institution.
- **Universal design implementation:** More efforts are needed to remove disabling barriers through universal design. Universities should ensure that all facilities, services, and resources are accessible to everyone, including staff with disabilities.
- **Streamlined reasonable accommodation processes:** The process for requesting and receiving reasonable accommodations/adjustments should be streamlined. Funding for these accommodations should come from a central fund to separate the decision-making process from budgetary constraints.
- **Enhanced recruitment and promotion practices:** Universities should adopt more inclusive recruitment and promotion practices. This could include setting quotas for hiring staff with disabilities and ensuring that promotion criteria are inclusive and equitable.

## Conclusion

This chapter has examined the policies and measures adopted by U21 Network universities to create disability-inclusive workplaces. This chapter has highlighted the disparity in regulatory and policy attention across jurisdictions and universities. The analysis revealed that while some universities have made significant strides in inclusive recruitment, retention, and reasonable accommodation / adjustment policies, there is still much work to be done to achieve true inclusivity.

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<sup>42</sup> University of Nottingham. (n.d.). *Reasonable-adjustments-passport-guidance*. <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/edi/reasonable-adjustments/reasonable-adjustments-passport-guidance.docx>

## Chapter 4.2.

### Staff with a disability that travel for work

Faith Ong

#### Introduction

Universities' efforts have primarily focused on environments over which they have control such as workplace adjustments, campus design, university policies and procedures. These are typically tempered with knowledge of local circumstances and levels of disability awareness and accommodation in each locality. Travel presents a different challenge to universities as the multiplicity of approaches to accessibility development, coupled with a lack of control over the environment, add layers of complexity.

#### Part 1. Barriers to Travel

From a user perspective, staff with disabilities who travel for work often face barriers with this aspect of their work compared to their nondisabled counterparts. Barriers include policies that have not taken their needs into consideration, negative attitudes, lack of suitable service options, inaccurate service delivery and a lack of consultation for how these services can be obtained or delivered.<sup>43</sup> When systems are designed without the flexibility of responding to disabilities, this creates additional burden at various parts of the process for staff whose work requires travel. These start prior to the act of travelling, such as risks arising from disclosing disability to direct supervisors and sourcing adequate accessibility information at various destination levels (typically state, national or international) as well as acquiring appropriate services at the destination itself.<sup>44</sup> At the destination, they also include experiencing varying levels of service provision just to travel to and around the work location. The management of factors typically involve staff with disabilities performing substantial invisible labour to approximate the reasonable work travel experiences that their colleagues without disabilities expect.<sup>45</sup>

#### Part 2. Current Policies

Several U21 universities have put in place policies that enable travel for staff with disabilities, and these policies have mostly been part of disability action plans.<sup>46</sup> A few universities – such as The University of Queensland, The University of Sydney and University of Birmingham – have committed to bearing the costs of enabling accessibility for work travel at a university-wide or faculty / department level. The University of Hong Kong considers applications for disability-related special expenses incurred during work-related travel in line with their policies, though the provisions are not explicitly outlined. Such cost coverage enables staff with disability to carry out their work obligations outside their typical campus or university environments, contributing beyond individual universities. Other universities' policies have extended such policies to specific areas (such as use of private vehicles for travel due to disability-related necessity at University of Auckland and

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43 Williams, V., Tarleton, B., Heslop, P., Porter, S., Sass, B., Blue, S., Merchant, W., & Mason-Angelow, V. (2018). Understanding disabling barriers: A fruitful partnership between disability studies and social practices. *Disability & Society*, 33(2), 157–174. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2017.1401527>

44 Karl, M., Pegg, S., & Harpur, P. (2024). Exploring constraints in business travel for disabled workers: An ecological systems perspective. *Disability & Society*, 39(3), 767–790. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2022.2088333>

45 Katzman, E. R., & Kinsella, E. A. (2018). 'It's like having another job': The invisible work of self-managing attendant services. *Disability & Society*, 33(9), 1436–1459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2018.1497949>

46 Karl, M., Pegg, S., & Harpur, P. (2024). Exploring constraints in business travel for disabled workers: An ecological systems perspective. *Disability & Society*, 39(3), 767–790. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2022.2088333>

extension of workplace accommodations to students in work experience roles at University of Maryland).

Only supplied evidence of a disability-specific work travel funding program ('The Disability Travel Support Fund'). Beyond typical justification to qualify the work trip as being related or essential to the university, which would apply to university-funded work travel across all staff, this application also required applicants to demonstrate that the adjustments were required and that existing funding sources (internal and external to their operating unit) were inadequate.

It is pertinent to note the policies noted above still require substantial administrative work to be undertaken by the utilising staff, most of which is not central to their core job function. Such additional work includes sourcing of suitable accessibility providers and shouldering the burden of proof that other funding sources have been exhausted before approaching the university. Having to prove the latter requires a long lead time for applications, dissemination of outcomes, and a constant pulse on the disparate funding sources (internal and external) that could fund work travel. The onus of this invisible labour remains squarely on the shoulders of staff with disabilities but could be alleviated.

## Recommendations

Taking the view that the role of universities as an employer is to enable their employees to perform the function for which they are hired, there are several areas which could be strengthened by universities. The following suggestions build on the existing work championed by the universities outlined above and apply research findings from various authors in this area.

- (a) **Central funding:** The first suggestion builds on the funding structures that currently exist within various universities. The disparate forms of funding at departmental, faculty and university levels result in a confusing landscape for users. A centralised funding system to cover additional costs borne by staff with disabilities when they travel for work is essential to consolidating the requirements for funding.<sup>47</sup> This centralised university funding should be designed as a first port of call rather than as a last resort to be approached only after all other funding sources have been exhausted; taking this view would significantly reduce the invisible labour of tracking and revealing unsuccessful applications to other funding sources. Consistency in funding policies and administration can also alleviate stressors related to time complications resulting from different funding applications as identified above.
- (b) **Mechanisms for non-disclosure:** Centralised funding structures can also facilitate this second suggestion with mechanisms in place to access the fund without disclosure of disability to direct supervisors and / or managers. Such mechanisms would provide psychological safety to staff with disability.<sup>48</sup> They eliminate the need for disclosure which can create situations where staff with disability could be unduly judged by their disability instead of their performance. This disclosure can also be recorded in confidential systems, eliminating the need for staff with disabilities to repeatedly disclose any conditions, unless

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<sup>47</sup> Pegg, S., Karl, M., & Harpur, P. (2021). Negotiating work-based travel for people with disabilities. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(14), 1945-1951.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2020.1801605>

<sup>48</sup> Karl, M., Pegg, S., & Harpur, P. (2024). Exploring constraints in business travel for disabled workers: An ecological systems perspective. *Disability & Society*, 39(3), 767-790.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2022.2088333>

there has been a change in circumstances. The emotional labour of disclosure is another form of invisible labour,<sup>49</sup> which can be reduced through considerate administrative design.

- (c) **Internal booking systems:** Relatedly, recommendations to improve the experience for staff travelling for work emphasise the inclusion of specific information related to a range of considerations for staff with disability in any internal booking systems.<sup>50</sup> Accessibility policies of transport and accommodation providers can be appended to internal booking systems so that staff with disabilities can make travel decisions and arrangements independently.
- (d) **Network for travel with disability:** Beyond internal systems, a network of travel agent(s) specialising in accessible travel can be established by the university to encourage flexibility.<sup>51</sup> Such networks can facilitate better information flows from travel experts familiar with accessibility needs and staff who need to access them. Once again, this reduces the need for discussion and disclosure with intermediaries uninvolved in the travel process (such as direct supervisors) while recognising the agency of the staff with disability in tailoring their travel according to their needs.

The creation of a central travel fund for staff with disabilities, reduction of disclosure burdens and broadening of enabling systems work in tandem to empower staff with disabilities to better perform their core job functions. By reducing the energies expended on the administrative burden of travel, universities can provide a safe space that enables achievement and advancement.

## Conclusion

Universities have made significant strides in creating accessible environments on their campuses, but work-related travel for staff with disabilities remains a policy gap at many universities. The barriers experienced by staff with disabilities include inflexible policies, negative attitudes, lack of suitable services, and the burden of invisible labour required to manage their travel needs. While some universities have implemented policies to support accessible travel, these remain the exception rather than the norm.

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49 Katzman, E. R., & Kinsella, E. A. (2018). 'It's like having another job': The invisible work of self-managing attendant services. *Disability & Society*, 33(9), 1436-1459. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2018.1497949>

50 Pegg, S., Karl, M., & Harpur, P. (2021). Negotiating work-based travel for people with disabilities. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(14), 1945-1951. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13683500.2020.1801605>

51 Karl, M., Pegg, S., & Harpur, P. (2024). Exploring constraints in business travel for disabled workers: An ecological systems perspective. *Disability & Society*, 39(3), 767-790. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2022.2088333>

## Chapter 4.3.

### Awareness raising and Disability Inclusion

Gloria Liu, Gisselle Gallego, Bernie Ma, Danielle Burgess, and Paul Harpur

#### Introduction

Awareness-raising plays a crucial role in creating a more inclusive society and in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities<sup>52</sup> (CRPD). Reflecting this, Article 8 of the CRPD requires States and other actors to raise awareness of disability inclusion through adopting measures including public awareness campaigns, using the education system to foster an attitude of respect for the rights of persons with disabilities, using media to promote acceptance of new disability norms, and promoting awareness training programs regarding persons with disabilities and the rights of persons with disabilities. The CRPD Committee, the United Nations body charged to interpret the CRPD in participating countries, has applied Article 8 against universities. For example, in the CRPD Committee's concluding observations on Kazakhstan, the Committee recommended involving universities in public education awareness programs,<sup>53</sup> and in the Concluding Observation on El Salvador, the Committee recommended promoting disability education as a cross-cutting theme in university courses.<sup>54</sup>

U21 Network universities should and do play an important role in creating a culture of disability inclusion. In 3 parts, this chapter will analyse how U21 Network Universities help raise awareness in their own organisations and in society. This chapter first explores the role of culture and disability. Drawing from university responses to the survey which accompanied this report, part 2 will explore how U21 Network universities described their staff-focused awareness training. Although training is an important awareness raising measure, disability rights norms expect States and other actors to engage in a broad range of other measures. Part 3 will analyse how U21 Network universities advance such measures.

#### Part 1. Creating cultures of disability inclusion

For any awareness training to be effective, it needs to recognise the intersectionality of culture and disability. Different cultures view health, illness and disability differently,<sup>55</sup> and therefore it is important that awareness training takes cultural factors into account. Culture, as [defined by UNESCO](#), is "the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs".<sup>56</sup> Some cultures view disability positively as part of human diversity, while others perceive it as limitations or inferiority. Also, some cultures tend to see disability through a biomedical lens, whereas some cultures attribute the presence of disability to a spiritual perspective, attributing the causes of disability to things such as the will of God or Allah, karma, evil spirits or punishment for parental wrongdoing or ancestral sin.<sup>57</sup> The different

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52 United Nations. (2006). *Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Social Inclusion. <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

53 United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2024). *Concluding observations on the initial report of Kazakhstan: Advance unedited version* (CRPD/C/KAZ/CO/1). United Nations. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4044522?ln=en&v=pdf>

54 United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. (2013). *Concluding observations on the initial report of El Salvador* (CRPD/C/SLV/CO/1). United Nations. <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/767048?v=pdf>

55 Ravindran, N., & Myers, B. J. (2012). Cultural influences on perceptions of health, illness, and disability: A review and focus on autism. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 21(2), 311-319. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-011-9477-9>

56 International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) UNESCO. (n.d.). *Cultures*. <https://policytoolbox.iiep.unesco.org/glossary/cultures/>

57 Caring for Kids New to Canada. (n.d.). *Developmental disability across cultures*. <https://kidsnewtocanada.ca/mental-health/>

perceptions of disability can lead to different attitudes ranging from shame, stigmatisation and marginalisation to acceptance, inclusion and empowerment.<sup>58</sup>

Although the ultimate goal of disability inclusion does not alter, the process of reaching this objective needs to be tailored to the culture and organisation in question. Therefore, it is important for awareness training in disability inclusion to incorporate different beliefs and perceptions and to recognise that some cultures are more open to having a conversation about disability while others might need a more gradual and sensitive approach. This is especially important given the diversity of our campuses with students and staff from many culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Such cultural sensitivity means that awareness training should be designed to help us better understand how the culture we live in shapes our beliefs and attitudes towards disability. For example, training can involve self-reflection on our strengths and limitations in our understanding, helping us to challenge any assumptions or biases in our culture and identify opportunities for growth and improvement.

The effectiveness of awareness training is also closely linked to our cultural competence, which enables us to understand different perspectives and embrace the unique strengths and qualities each person or community brings regardless of their disability, race, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, etc. Essential to cultivating this competence is the opportunity to interact with people from other cultures through global networking, such as through engaging with the communities of practice within U21 to discuss challenges and opportunities, share stories of success and change and leverage our resources and connections.

Culture is dynamic; it can evolve and change over time through contact with new ideas and perspectives. For instance, a culture that traditionally associates disability with shame may begin to see it as part of being human (as indeed an estimated 1.3 billion people live with disabilities, constituting 16% of the world's population<sup>59</sup>). The exchange of ideas through networking will enable us to learn from one another and shape the narratives of disability to create more inclusive and accessible institutions and society.

Organisational culture also plays a critical role in the effectiveness of awareness training. Organisations that embrace a culture of learning and collaboration in their values are generally more creative and productive, engaging diverse stakeholders.

Learning about disability inclusion among students, staff and partners can be achieved by setting aside time for self-paced online modules and in-person sessions for everyone, with or without disability, to learn, share and collaborate.

As we come together, whether in a meeting to discuss policy or during a water cooler chat, we help shape attitudes and actions. Our collective efforts and wisdom will create ripple effects, advancing our mission and promoting the richness of talents. Harnessing this power of collaborative learning will also positively impact other areas of university operations and strategies, fostering a virtuous cycle of excellence and a strong sense of belonging that enable us all to flourish together.

## Part 2. Disability awareness training

Disability awareness training varies between U21 universities from mandatory to voluntary or from comprehensive to *ad hoc*. There is heterogeneity in terms of the content, who is trained (staff, students, support, administrative), how it is provided (online, self-paced, webinars or face to face),

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<sup>58</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). (2017). *Toolkit on disability for Africa: Culture, beliefs and disability*.

<https://www.un.org/esa/disability/Toolkit/Cultures-Beliefs-Disability.pdf>

<sup>59</sup> World Health Organization. (n.d.) *Disability*. [https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/disability#tab=tab_1)

the resources available or if – it is provided by an external body. What follows below is first, the summary from the 12 universities that completed the online survey. Following this we include an analysis from a scan of the websites of the 30 U21 Network universities websites.

### **From the survey**

McMaster University, the university of Birmingham and the University of Nottingham have mandatory training. At McMaster training is mandatory for all staff, student-staff, faculty and volunteers and focuses on human rights as well as the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). At Birmingham staff are required to undertake an online mandatory training course under the Equality and Diversity banner. Hence disability is part of diversity rather the sole focus; disability and disability awareness training are provided within this training. At Nottingham disability training is also under the equity, diversity and inclusion (DEI) training. This is not only provided to new staff members but also staff are asked to complete it every 3 years.

McMaster University, the University of Birmingham and the University of Nottingham also have voluntary training. At McMaster this focuses on Accessible Education Training for Instructional Staff, Accessible Digital Content Training, Employment Equity Training and Strategic department or subject-specific (customised) training is also provided upon request. The University of Nottingham offers voluntary training on disability which explore disabilities in greater depth.

Voluntary training is perhaps most common at Australian Universities. At The University of Melbourne and at The University of Sydney training is provided on an opt-in basis to staff. There are several modules available which include: disability confident workforces, managers and supervisors and recruiters (facilitated by the Australian Disability Network). As well as how to support students with disability, self-paced online learning is offered around inclusion and disability services, digital accessibility for content creators and the hidden disability sunflower lanyard. The document analysis shone a light on other initiatives such as a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) that described the establishment of a “Disability Awareness Training Framework”. This framework includes targeted training for supervisors and managers, academic and professional staff supporting students with disability and an online module that provides an introduction to disability inclusion at the University.

Voluntary disability awareness training is provided through the Disability Inclusion Advocacy Network. This training includes an online Disability Inclusion Course and a masterclass. As well as working with students who have academic adjustments, supporting workers with disabilities and awareness of digital accessibility, a disability inclusion course (self-paced- online) is also available.

European universities also offer voluntary training. The University College Dublin Ireland provides voluntary training to staff on disability awareness with 2 training modules one open to all staff and another focusing on leading disability inclusive teams offered only to managers. The University of Zurich provides regular training on digital accessibility. It also runs a leadership development program where managers learn about inclusive leadership and accessible leadership styles.

Similarly, the University of Birmingham offers voluntary online short courses called the HR- EDI Session Disability and HR- EDI Session Neurodiversity. Their student EDI team at student services has developed what was described by the university as a “sector-leading EDI online training course for students”. It includes a module titled, Access and Success, to educate students on inclusive practices for accessibility to help promote an inclusive campus culture for all. The course also has other modules with relevant resources, such as international travel and EDI tips for disabled students who travel abroad on university business. Moreover, the student EDI team partners with a local National Health Service (NHS) Trust to offer neurodiversity awareness and student support training to student-facing staff.

Universities can also provide ad hoc training to support disability inclusion measures. For example, at Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile there is an “inclusion program” labelled as “Inclusive program for student with special needs” or PIANE for their acronym in Spanish. The focus of the PIANE is to support academic units and staff and offer guidance and advice at any time during the semester. Their professional team is available to help them apply these guidelines according to the particular characteristics of their course.

### From the website scan

The scan identified more detail around awareness training as well as highlighting a range of other initiatives that U21 Network universities are advancing to create a more inclusive society. With respect to awareness training, McMaster University identified that such training could enhance understanding with regulatory obligations.<sup>60</sup> Whereas, The University of Edinburgh observed that awareness training enhances awareness of specific disabilities and learning differences.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, Korea University<sup>62</sup> and the University of Hong Kong<sup>63</sup> noted awareness training benefits all students and creates a more inclusive culture.

Targeted Awareness training can also provide benefits in particular relationships. For illustration, at The University of Queensland, Higher Degree Research (HDR) advisors receive training in relation to supporting HDR candidates living with disability,<sup>64</sup> and at University College Dublin, those involved in recruitment processes receive specific training on disability inclusion.<sup>65</sup>

Related to training is the development and provision of resources to facilitate awareness activities. An example of such a resource can be found on the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. It provides web resources on disability allyship, including Disability Allyship Resources pages.<sup>66</sup> These pages include general information on disability, such as disability oppression, civil rights, and disability identity, as well as information on specific disabilities and processes for self-engagement and engaging with others. Similarly, Disability Services at the University of Johannesburg, have developed tip sheets on hearing disabilities,<sup>67</sup> physical disabilities,<sup>68</sup> speech impairments,<sup>69</sup> and visual disabilities.<sup>70</sup>

## Part 3. Awareness activities beyond training

### Celebrating inclusion

Beyond training and informing, universities also engage in activities to celebrate ability diversity. Illustratively, events aimed at enhancing awareness and inclusion include, for example, [Equal](#)

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60 McMaster University. (n.d.). *AODA and human rights code training*. <https://accessibility.mcmaster.ca/training/aoda-and-human-rights-code-training/>

61 University of Edinburgh. (2024). *Training for staff | disability and learning support service*. <https://disability-learning-support-service.ed.ac.uk/staff/training-for-staff>

62 Korea University. (2023). *Insights - support for students with disabilities starts with enhanced awareness*. <https://www.korea.edu/en/>

63 University of Hong Kong. (2021). *Equal opportunity policy*. <https://www.eounit.hku.hk/images/content/about-us/Equal-Opportunity-Policy.pdf>

64 University of Queensland. (2024). *Champions of change disability inclusion research and innovation Plan 2024-2026*. <https://research.uq.edu.au/2024-09/disability-inclusion-research-innovation-plan-design-version.pdf>

65 University College Dublin. (2022). *UCD policy supporting the employment of persons with disabilities policy*. <https://www.ucd.ie/equality/>

66 University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. (n.d.). *Disability allyship resources - disability resources and educational services*. <https://dres.illinois.edu/disability-allyship/>

67 University of Johannesburg. (n.d.). *Disability services tip sheet: hearing impairments support*. [https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/psycad-tip-sheet\\_hearing-impairments.pdf](https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/psycad-tip-sheet_hearing-impairments.pdf)

68 University of Johannesburg. (n.d.). *Disability services tip sheet: physical disabilities - people in wheelchairs*. [https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/psycad-tip-sheet\\_physical-disabilities.pdf](https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/psycad-tip-sheet_physical-disabilities.pdf)

69 University of Johannesburg. (n.d.). *Disability services tip sheet: speech impairment guide*. [https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/psycad-tip-sheet\\_speech-impairment.pdf](https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/psycad-tip-sheet_speech-impairment.pdf)

70 University of Johannesburg. (n.d.). *Disability services tip sheet: visual impairment support*. <https://www.uj.ac.za/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/psycad-tip-sheet-visual-impairment.pdf>

[Opportunity Festival](#) at the University of Hong Kong,<sup>71</sup> [Disability Inclusion Week](#) at The University of Sydney,<sup>72</sup> [Neurodiversity Celebration Week](#) at the University of Birmingham,<sup>73</sup> [International Conference on Disability Rights \(ICDR\)](#) at Universitas Gadjah Mada.<sup>74</sup>

Awareness raising activities also utilise universities' media and communications strengths. An example, which is not specifically addressing disability, can be found at the the University of Amsterdam. The University of Amsterdam has a social safety awareness campaign.<sup>75</sup> The social safety campaign is aimed at raising awareness of, and helping to recognise and name undesirable behaviour, for and by everyone in the organisation. The social safety awareness campaign includes campaign messages with quotes, for example for social media posts, newsletters, posters and screens that refer to a campaign page. Additionally, the campaign includes a webpage on the University of Amsterdam website with help on how to recognise undesirable behaviour and unsafe situations and how to make them open for discussion.

Other multimedia assets are used by universities,<sup>76</sup> including using university newsletters. Examples of university newsletters promoting awareness can be illustrated by news items at Fudan University,<sup>77</sup> University of Queensland,<sup>78</sup> and Universitas Gadjah Mada.<sup>79</sup>

## Using teaching to raise awareness

Universities can go beyond promoting awareness of disability inclusion and build this into core activities like teaching and research. At The University of Melbourne there is an attempt to raise disability awareness by auditing courses with the aim of ensuring every student graduates with an understanding of disability.<sup>80</sup> Students' awareness and understanding of disability is enhanced at McMaster University by facilitating a reading group for students on disability.<sup>81</sup>

Although having courses on disability is not normally regarded as awareness raising activities, the presence of such courses does provide an avenue for increasing understanding of disability. Reflecting this benefit, this chapter will note that some universities, such as the University of Maryland,<sup>82</sup> have a minor in disability studies, whereas others, such as the University of Auckland,<sup>83</sup> The University of Queensland,<sup>84</sup> The University of Melbourne,<sup>85</sup> and The University of Sydney, have single courses.<sup>86</sup>

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71 The University of Hong Kong. (2024). *Equal opportunity festival 2024*. <https://www.eounit.hku.hk/en/news-and-events/eo-festivals/763-equal-opportunity-festival-2024>

72 University of Sydney. (2023). *5 things to do at Disability inclusion week*. <https://www.sydney.edu.au/study/student-life/>

73 University of Birmingham. (n.d.). *Neurodiversity celebration week 2025 events schedule*. <https://www.neurodiversityweek.com/events>

74 Universitas Gadjah Mada. (2023, November 28). *UGM hosts Australia Indonesia disability conference, emphasizes disability rights*. <https://ugm.ac.id/ugm>

75 University of Amsterdam. (n.d.). *About the social safety awareness campaign*. <https://www.uva.nl/en/campaign/about-the-campaign.html>

76 University of New South Wales. (2022). *Disability inclusion action plan 2022-2025*. <https://www.unsw.edu.au/edi/>

77 Fudan University. (2024). *Graduation ceremony will be held the day after tomorrow, blind girl Zhu Lingjun will graduate* (translated). <https://mp.weixin.qq.com/>

78 University of Queensland. (2021). *Visionary educator wants universities to be disability champions*. <https://www.uq.edu.au/news/>

79 Nugroho, A. (2024). *UGM graduate with hard of hearing and minor cerebral palsy thrives despite obstacles*. <https://ugm.ac.id/en/news/>

80 University of Melbourne Disability Institute. (2019). *Strategic plan 2019-2021*. <https://disability.unimelb.edu.au/MDI-Strategic-plan.pdf>

81 McMaster University. (2019). *Crippling graduate school: a disability and mad studies reading group* (renewal). <https://gs.mcmaster.ca/>

82 University of Maryland College of Education. (n.d.). *Disability studies, minor*. <https://education.umd.edu/programs/undergraduate/disability-studies-minor>

83 University of Auckland. (n.d.). *Disability studies*. <https://www.calendar.auckland.ac.nz/en/faculty-of-education-and-social-work/disability-studies.html>

84 University of Queensland. (n.d.). *Foundations for social work practice in disability (SWSP3076)*. <https://programs-courses.uq.edu.au/>

85 University of Melbourne. (n.d.). *Disability human rights law (LAWS90087)*. <https://handbook.unimelb.edu.au/2025>

86 University of Sydney. (n.d.). *EDUF3046: Empowering learners across the lifespan*. <https://www.sydney.edu.au/units>

University of Sydney. (n.d.). *OLET1135: Disability awareness and inclusivity*. <https://www.sydney.edu.au/units>

## Using research and innovation to raise awareness

Universities are knowledge creators and can use their research and innovation strengths to advance disability awareness. This can include human resource prizes for innovative or leadership on disability awareness, such as those at UC Davis,<sup>87</sup> as well as more traditional academic research. At the University of Connecticut, for example, their A.J. Pappanikou Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities Education, Research and Services commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut to conduct a study of undergraduate and graduate students.<sup>88</sup> The purpose of this project was to assess current awareness of disability issues and the impact on student and faculty interactions with students with disabilities. The study sought to better understand the attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge of undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty at the University of Connecticut regarding disability-related issues and to provide recommendations to make the campus more hospitable for all students.

## Recommendations

- (a) **Expand mandatory training:** Universities should consider expanding mandatory disability awareness training to all staff and students. These should be a baseline understanding and commitment to inclusion across the institution.
- (b) **Promote inclusive events:** Organise events such as Disability Inclusion Week, Neurodiversity Celebration Week, and conferences on disability rights to raise awareness and celebrate diversity.
- (c) **Develop comprehensive resources:** Create and disseminate resources like tip sheets, allyship guides, and multimedia content to support ongoing awareness and education efforts.
- (d) **Integrate into curriculum:** Incorporate disability awareness into the curriculum through dedicated courses, minors, or modules. This can ensure that all students graduate with an understanding of disability issues.
- (e) **Support research and innovation:** Encourage research on disability awareness and inclusion, and recognise innovative practices through awards and recognition programs.
- (f) **Engage in global networking:** Encourage participation in global networks and communities of practice to share best practices, success stories, and resources. This can help universities learn from each other and continuously improve their training programs.

## Conclusion

Disability norms and U21 Network university policies emphasise the importance of disability awareness measures. Training is recognised as a vital component in fostering an inclusive and respectful environment within universities. The diverse approaches taken by U21 Network universities highlight the importance of tailoring training to cultural contexts and organisational needs. Effective awareness training not only enhances understanding and compliance with regulatory obligations but also promotes a culture of inclusion and respect for diversity.

By integrating disability awareness into various aspects of university life, from mandatory and voluntary training to media and communications, to celebrations of ability diversity, inclusion in curricular, in research and in university prizes, universities can significantly contribute to the creation of a more inclusive society.

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<sup>87</sup> UC Davis Human Resources. (2022). *Disability awareness recognition awards*. <https://hr.ucdavis.edu/news/disability-awareness-recognition-awards>

<sup>88</sup> University of Connecticut. (n.d.). *Disability awareness at the University of Connecticut*. <https://uconnucdd.org/disability-awareness/>



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