

# Accessibility Plan



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Date of last review: **January 2025**

Date of next review: **January 2026**

## Aims

This plan outlines how UCM aims to increase access to education for students with additional educational needs and those who are physically disabled, in the three areas required under the Isle of Man Equality Act 2017:

1. Improving access to the curriculum.
2. Improving access to the physical environment.
3. Improving access to information.

This plan aims to:

- Increase the extent to which students with additional educational needs and those who are physically disabled (AEND) can participate in the curriculum;
- Improve the physical environment of UCM to enable students with additional educational needs or physical disabilities to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- Improve the availability of accessible information to students and visitors with additional educational needs or physical disabilities.

The above aims will be delivered within a reasonable timeframe and in ways determined after considering students' additional educational needs and disabilities and the views of parents/carers and students. In preparing an accessibility strategy, the DESC will have to consider the need to allocate adequate resources for its implementation.

The DESC and UCM also recognise their responsibilities towards employees with disabilities and will:

- Monitor recruitment procedures to ensure that individuals with additional educational needs and physical disabilities are provided with equal opportunities;
- Provide appropriate support and provision for employees with additional educational needs and physical disabilities to ensure that they can carry out their work effectively without barriers;
- Undertake reasonable adjustments to enable staff to access the workplace.

UCM is an inclusive college. Our aim is to treat all stakeholders, including students, prospective students, staff, governors, and other members of the community, favourably and, wherever possible, take reasonable steps to avoid placing anyone at a disadvantage. Our provision for disability access was audited in November 2024.

UCM is committed to ensuring staff are trained in equality issues in accordance with the Isle of Man Equality Act 2017, including understanding disability issues.

Any concerns relating to accessibility in UCM can be raised, following the DESC Complaints Policy & Procedure which can be found on the DESC website.

This plan will be made available in the policy section of UCM's website, and paper copies are available upon request.

## 2. Definitions

In line with the (IOM) Equality Act 2017, "indirect discrimination" is defined as if a person (A) discriminates against another (B) if A applies to B a provision, criterion or practice which is discriminatory in relation to a relevant protected characteristic of Bs.

For the purposes of subsection (1), a provision, criterion or practice is discriminatory in

relation to a relevant protected characteristic of B's if —

- (a) A applies, or would apply, it to persons with whom B does not share the characteristic,
- (b) it puts, or would put, persons with whom B shares the characteristic at a particular disadvantage when compared with persons with whom B does not share it,
- (c) it puts, or would put, B at that disadvantage, and
- (d) A cannot show it to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- (a) age;
- (b) disability;
- (c) gender reassignment;
- (d) marriage and civil partnership;
- (e) race;
- (f) religion or belief;
- (g) sex;
- (h) sexual orientation.

### 3. Legislation and Guidance

This document meets the requirements of Schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2017 and the DESC Accessibility Strategy 2024 – 2027. The Equality Act 2017 defines an individual as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' adverse effect on their ability to undertake normal day-to-day activities. 'Long-term' is defined as 'a year or more' and 'substantial' is defined as 'more than minor or trivial'. The definition includes sensory impairments, such as those affecting sight or hearing, and long-term health conditions such as asthma, diabetes, epilepsy and cancer. UCM is required to make 'reasonable adjustments' for students, staff and visitors with disabilities under the Equality Act 2017, to alleviate any substantial disadvantage that a student with disabilities faces in comparison with a student without disabilities. This can include, for example, the provision of an auxiliary aid or adjustments to premises.

### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Vice Principal: Students and Environment will be responsible for:

- Creating an Accessibility Plan with the intention of improving UCM's accessibility, in line with UCM's legal obligations and the principles outlined in this policy;
- Ensuring that staff members are aware of students' additional educational needs, physical disabilities (AEND) and medical conditions, where necessary;
- Working with the Support for Learning Team and Key Stage Leaders to establish whether a new student has any additional educational needs, physical disabilities or medical conditions of which UCM should be aware of;
- Working with the Student Services Team and Head of Faculties to coordinate a multiagency approach to supporting students facing challenging situations that make individuals vulnerable to exclusion;
- Working closely with DESC and external agencies to effectively create and implement UCM's Accessibility Plan.

The Student Services Manager and Programme Manager Access to Education will be responsible for:

- Working closely with the Vice Principal to ensure that students with additional education needs and physical disabilities are appropriately supported;
- Ensuring they have oversight of the needs of students with additional educational needs and those who are physically disabled attending UCM, and advising the Principal concerning those needs, as appropriate.

Staff members will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this Accessibility Plan at all times;
- Supporting students with a disability to access their environment and their education wherever necessary, e.g. by making reasonable adjustments to their practice;
- Ensuring that their actions do not discriminate against any student because of their disability.

All staff members will partake in whole-UCM training on equality issues. Designated staff members will be trained to effectively support students with medical conditions.

#### 5. Links with other policies

This Accessibility Plan is linked to the following policies and documents:

- Organisation and Management of Safety Statement/Policy;
- Assess Arrangements Policy;
- Assessment Policy;

## Baseline Audit

### Curriculum:

- UCM offers a comprehensive curriculum for students where modifications are made on an individual basis.
- We use resources tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum.
- Curriculum resources may include examples of people with additional needs.
- Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students with additional needs.
- The curriculum is reviewed to make sure it meets the needs of all students.
- Information obtained on prospective students is facilitated through school liaison and UCM visits prior to transition.
- Well-established procedures for the identification and support of students with Additional Educational Needs (AEN) which includes disabilities.
- Detailed student information on AEN students given to relevant staff
- Students with additional needs may have individual learning plans (ILPs) to support them with their learning.
- Close working relationships with external agencies established (e.g. CAMHS)
- Provision of specialist resources to support specific needs by request e.g. writing slopes, pencil grips, coloured paper and overlays, ICT curriculum access resources.
- Medical training is offered to staff concerning student needs e.g. Epipen/Anaphylaxis, where required.
- High-quality curriculum to enable all students to feel secure and make progress.
- All students can access the Academic Support Centre and Education Support Officers/lecturers are deployed to support identified students and intervention lessons are implemented, to meet the needs of students.
- Risk assessments are carried out for all UCM external trips.
- Individual risk assessments may be put in place for students with a high level of need.
- A fully detailed curriculum map that can enables students to identify what level of study is suitable for them or determine progress and potentially their next steps.
- Health Care Plans are in place for students, as appropriate.
- Promote and encourage high achievement and expectations for all.
- Key staff trained on personalised and inclusive practice and examples of other bespoke training include peg feeding, moving and handling and toileting, where appropriate.
- Key staff, with the Foundation Learning area, are trained on Team Teach positive handling techniques.
- Reasonable adjustments are made where practicable in the learning environment and during examinations.

### Physical Environment:

- Ramps for wheelchair access.
- Accessible toilets with shower room and hoist facility for toileting.
- Corridors are wheelchair accessible across UCM.
- Corridor lighting and contrasting colour schemes to support visual impairment.
- The UCM will take account of the needs of students, staff and visitors with physical disabilities and sensory impairments when planning and undertaking future improvements and refurbishments of the site and premises.
- Dedicated staff EVAC Chair trained.

#### Provision of information to students with AEN:

- Website includes accessibility and digital documentation.
- Letters available at request in large print.
- Student welfare and counselling support is available to all students.
- Additional recommendations can be provided from the SENCo.
- All students have access to Office 365.
- Provided through review meetings, parents' meetings and meetings with external agencies and stakeholders, as required.
- UCM has and promotes open-door procedures and parents/carers may contact UCM at any time if they feel they need advice or additional information. Students may need to give permission before this takes place.
- Prior to a student commencing at UCM, our staff work closely with secondary schools to ensure appropriate information is shared, to lead to a successful transition for all students.
- Parents/carers of children with Complex Learning Needs may be invited to a transition meeting to discuss their child's particular needs.
- Our aim is to ensure that the transition of students is well-planned for, including students with AEN.

<b>Strand 1</b>	<b>Improving Access to the Curriculum</b>
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<b>Aim</b>	<b>Good Practice</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
Provide an inclusive curriculum provision for all students. Our curriculum is developed to accommodate the needs of all students with Additional Educational Needs and Disabilities (AEND)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UCM offers a personalised curriculum;</li> <li>• UCM uses resources tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum;</li> <li>• Curriculum progress is tracked for all students, including those with AEND;</li> <li>• Targets are set effectively and are appropriate for students with AEND;</li> <li>• The curriculum is regularly reviewed to make sure it meets the needs of all students;</li> <li>• Our curriculum permits access to all areas and where reasonable adjustments are necessary, these are made;</li> <li>• UCM offers a diverse range of enrichment opportunities accessible to all students.</li> <li>• SENCo reviews monitor student progress against specific targets. Studentvoice is a key consideration.</li> <li>• Inset/CPD training is provided for staff on AEND students.</li> <li>• AEN information is updated and shared with relevant staff termly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Published broad curriculum maps</li> <li>• Student feedback</li> <li>• EBS tracking information</li> <li>• Individual Learning Plans</li> <li>• Academic Board</li> <li>• Student feedback</li> <li>• Student Services records</li> <li>• ILP</li> <li>• ILP and student feedback</li> <li>• Evidence of feedback</li> </ul>
Teaching and support are tailored to the needs of students who require support to access the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students identified at an assessment/through school referral have an Individual Learning Plan (ILP);</li> <li>• Where necessary, students' timetables are modified to provide a bespoke pathway to meet needs.</li> <li>• UCM seeks feedback from students and parents of students with AEND.</li> <li>• UCM works collaboratively with external agencies in order to support students with AEN.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Services/SENCo records</li> <li>• Records of meetings</li> <li>• MIS restrictions criteria</li> <li>• SENCo</li> <li>• Academic meeting/records</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition meetings are essential in preparing students effectively for their next phase of learning;</li> <li>• Appropriate and necessary information is only shared with the relevant staff</li> <li>• All students with Complex Needs have their ILPs reviewed termly</li> <li>• Lecturers consider learning styles preferred by students with AEND and planlessons accordingly;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILP reviews</li> <li>• Student Voice presented &amp; Student Council members are aware</li> <li>• CPD records</li> <li>• As required and strictly limited</li> </ul>
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<b>Strand 2</b>	<b>Improving access to the physical environment</b>
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<b>Aim</b>	<b>Good Practice</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintaining access to the physical environment of the UCM, adding specialist facilities/physical aids, as necessary.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walkways and corridors around the UCM are kept clear of hazards and the site will clearly signposted for visitors, students and parents/carers.</li> <li>Improve and maintain access to physical environment.</li> <li>Emergency evacuation procedures take account of students with AEND</li> <li>Evacuation chairs are installed. Relevant staff trained. Regular inspection of Evacuation Chairs by Site Team.</li> <li>Vice Principal: Student &amp; Environments, Site Manager and Health and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All students and staff to be able to move around the building easily and safely. Clear, well displayed signage and directions.</li> <li>Accessible toilet facilities. Disabled parking bays. Lifts. Site is cleaned and well maintained. Well-lit.</li> <li>Plan in place to ensure emergency procedures protect all staff and students. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) completed for all students with accessibility issues. PEEPS are regularly reviewed.</li> <li>UCM is well maintained, clean and safe. Thorough site inspections to ensure site is accessible and any remedial work is identified, reported and undertaken</li> <li>Staff trained on use of Evacuation Chair Training. Six monthly inspection of Evacuation Chairs by site team and completion of a checklist.</li> <li>Lifts are regularly serviced and maintained.</li> <li>Students can be successful learners and not be</li> </ul>

	<p>Safety Advisor to undertake regular Health and Safety Walks. Regular site inspections, alongside checks on stairs and lifts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide environments that are conducive to learning. Purchase of furniture/equipment to meet the needs of known students with disabilities, based on specialist advice received.</li> </ul>	<p>negatively impacted or influenced by the environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor Improvements and Repairs activity plan</li> <li>• Provide appropriate furnitureand/or equipment.</li> <li>• Identified within Budget Centres.</li> </ul>
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**Strand 3****Improving access to information**

<b>Aim</b>	<b>Good practice</b>	<b>Success Criteria</b>
To make written information more accessible for students with AEN.	Ensure the efficient use of visual resources E.g. enlarged resources and exam papers. An electronic version of all UCM/home communication. To use a variety of real objects/photos/symbols to support students at their different levels of communicative need. Social Stories are to be used as necessary to aid students' transitions with permission(s). Improve students' use of Office365	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students will have greater access to information.</li><li>• Records</li><li>• Evidence in various areas</li><li>• Monitoring of media</li><li>• Student Focus Group</li></ul>
To improve the delivery of information for students with AEN	All UCMs use various communication methods to ensure information is accessible. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Internal signage</li><li>▪ Large print resources</li><li>▪ Braille</li><li>▪ Induction loops</li><li>▪ Pictorial or symbolic representations</li><li>▪ Makaton</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• UCM can respond quickly to requests for information in alternative formats.</li></ul>

## UCM Action Plan

An Accessibility Audit took place at the UCM in November 2024. The audit was undertaken by UCM's Learning Environment Team (LET). The audit detailed areas for improvements within UCM and was rated according to priority. The priorities are graded as follows:-

Priority A: Where there are potential health and safety risks or where failure to implement changes would be highly likely to attract legal implications. Immediate action is recommended to put changes into effect.

Priority B: Where action is recommended within the short term to alleviate an access problem or make improvements that will have a considerable impact.

Priority C: Where action is recommended within 12 - 24 months to improve access.

Priority D: Where the recommendation involves excessive costs or should be implemented as part of a long-term plan

The UCM Accessibility Plan details how areas identified for improvement will be prioritised from the accessibility audit and the recommendations made within it.

An accessibility advisory group will be established, with relevant specialist members of UCM, that will action, monitor and review the accessibility plan throughout the academic year.

The UCM Accessibility Plan underpins and supports the Department of Education Sport and Culture Accessibility Plan 2024 – 2027 found here and the eight Strategic Priorities contained within it "Enabling all students to access the curriculum, physical environment and information at their UCM."

### Department of Education, Sport and Culture – Strategic Priorities

- Strategic Priority 1. Engage students and parents around diversity and inclusion.
- Strategic Priority 2. Ensure that statutory responsibilities are carried out efficiently and effectively in accordance with legislation.
- Strategic Priority 3. Share information to promote students' wellbeing.
- Strategic Priority 4. Work collaboratively in the development of access to the curriculum, and the physical environment and make information accessible for all.
- Strategic Priority 5. Recognise the variety of disabled students' needs and maintain and develop high-quality provision in education settings in the Isle of Man.
- Strategic Priority 6. Support professional development (this includes on the job coaching, mentoring, attending training sessions) for all staff to ensure that high standards of service delivery and provision are achieved.
- Strategic Priority 7. Trained DESC personnel will conduct access audits in all educational settings to ensure access to the physical environment is achievable.
- Strategic Priority 8. Encourage all stakeholders to be active partners in developing positive attitudes towards diversity, equality and people with disabilities.

The Action Plan is currently an internal document that targets specific actions for improvements to accessibility across all three strands, which include:

Priority	Number of actions	DESC Strategic Ref.
A	7	SP4
B	10	SP4
C	19	SP4 & SP6
D	1	SP4