

Policy and Guidance on Posting Lecture Notes in Advance of Teaching Sessions

1. Introduction

- i. The purpose of this policy is to meet the University's obligations under The Equalities Act (2010) specifically for students with certain disabilities and students with dyslexia. However, this policy is an example of Universal Design for Learning, whereby making changes for a specific group of students has the added benefit of helping a wide range of other students as well, notably International Students.
- ii. For the purposes of the policy "lecture notes" refers to any support material that a member of University staff might use in their teaching. This could be, but not limited to, documents containing pre-prepared notes, the slides that are going to be delivered or workbooks. The form of the material will depend on the nature of what is being taught and staff are best placed to judge what is appropriate. The programme handbook should communicate to students, what tutors define as "lecture notes" and therefore what students can expect to receive.
- iii. For some lecture notes, it may not be appropriate for lecture notes to be available in advance for reasons related to how the session is being taught. An example might be answers to problems being posed in the session. Where this is the case these part of the notes do not need to be posted in advance but the rest of the material should be posted in advance.
- iv. Providing lecture notes in advance enables learners to focus their attention on understanding the material presented. Tutors may be concerned that if students have the lecture notes before the session then attendance will suffer. However, there is no clear evidence that this occurs and this does not constitute an exceptional circumstance under 2.ii below.

2. Expectation on the provision of lecture notes

- i. Lecture notes must be posted to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) at least 24 hours in advance of a taught session. Some students may prefer to print out the notes and add to them directly during the session. Having them available at least 24 hours in advance gives students time to prepare for the teaching session.
- ii. In exceptional circumstances and where there is a compelling pedagogic reason not to provide all or some of the notes in advance, the relevant member of staff should:
 1. Notify students before the taught session that notes will not be available in advance.
 2. Provide a brief summary of the teaching session in advance.
 3. Post appropriate notes or other material after the teaching session.
- iii. Posting lecture notes in advance does not mean that changes cannot be made to slides or other lecture notes immediately before a taught session. In this case, the lecture notes, as they were 24 hours in advance, should have been posted to the VLE and then an updated version can be posted after the taught session. Students should be notified in the taught session that updates have been made. Providing multiple versions of the same session can be confusing. If changes are made then it is best practice to delete the previous version when updating the lecture notes.

- iv. It is the responsibility of the individual teaching the session to ensure lecture notes are made available in electronic format on the relevant module site in the VLE. Module leaders should ensure that this happens for all taught sessions on the module.

3. Additional guidance

- i. The type of lectures notes and the extent of the notes will depend on the type of teaching session and the discipline that is being taught. Staff should use their professional judgement to decide what is appropriate.
- ii. Lecture notes should follow good practice in relation to accessibility requirements. Guidance on the design of student material is available on the supporting students' needs website, <https://www.brookes.ac.uk/staff/academic/inclusion/supporting-students/design-of-student-materials/>
- iii. The VLE has functionality that allows the time-release of lecture notes. This means that notes can be uploaded at the start of semester and then released at the appropriate time during the course of the semester.
- iv. Tutors should make it clear that a transcript of the lecture will not be provided. If a student requires this, in accordance with university policy, they should record the lecture or ask the tutor to make a recording.
- v. Students should be encouraged to see the lecture notes as a starting point that provides a useful framework for further study.

For further information about this policy, please contact the Head of OCSLD.

Approved by: Academic Enhancement & Standards Committee, 18 April 2018