



21/10/24

Review Date: 21 October 2025

**Orchard Academy**

[www.orchard-academy.com](http://www.orchard-academy.com)

## **Accessible and Inclusive Learning Policy**

### **1. Rationale**

At Orchard Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all learners can achieve their full academic potential. We believe that teaching and learning should be accessible and inclusive for every student, regardless of individual needs or circumstances. By embedding inclusive practices into all our educational processes, we aim to create a learning environment where individual interventions for accessibility are the exception rather than the norm.

We strive to uphold the principles of the Equality Act (2010) and the UK Quality Code, ensuring our learning, teaching, and assessment methods are equitable, accessible, and inclusive.

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### **2. Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure full compliance with the Equality Act (2010) and relevant sections of the UK Quality Code by offering accessible and inclusive learning, teaching, and assessment for all students. The policy seeks to guarantee that every learner, irrespective of disability or individual challenges, can meet their course learning outcomes without additional barriers.

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### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all provisions within Orchard Academy, including:

- Students: All students enrolled in any programme.
  - Staff: All staff members holding contracts of employment with the Academy.
  - Learning Opportunities: All teaching, learning, and assessment opportunities provided by Orchard Academy, including virtual classrooms, online resources, and assessments.
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### **4. Policy Provisions**

#### **4.1 Availability of Teaching Materials**

- Course Materials: All teaching materials will be made available electronically via the learning platform at least one week prior to the relevant teaching event to allow students adequate preparation time.
- Follow-up Materials: Any follow-up materials, including summaries, slides, or additional resources, will be made available electronically within three working days following the completion of the related teaching event.
- Format: All teaching and learning materials will comply with the Academy's Digital Accessibility Guidance, ensuring compatibility with screen readers and other assistive technologies.

#### **4.2 Accessibility of Learning, Teaching, and Assessment Methods**

- Course Information: Comprehensive course documents detailing delivery methods, assessment formats, marking criteria, and key dates must be made available electronically to all students.
- Assessment Adjustments: Adjustments to assessment methods (e.g., extended deadlines, alternative formats) will be provided in consultation with course tutors and in accordance with individual learning needs as identified through student support plans or disability services.
- Digital Accessibility: All digital resources must conform to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 to ensure usability for students with disabilities.

### **4.3 Notification of Changes**

- **Timetable Changes:** Students will be informed of any changes to their timetable, course structure, or assessment methods in writing via email and other accessible means (e.g., notifications on the learning platform) at least five working days in advance, where feasible.

### **4.4 Class Recording**

- **Safeguarding Considerations:** In line with our Safeguarding Policy, classes are not recorded. Exceptions may be considered where it would substantially benefit accessibility, provided that safeguarding protocols are strictly followed.

### **4.5 Complaints and Concerns**

- **Complaints Procedure:** Any formal complaints regarding accessibility or inclusivity are to be handled through the Academy's existing Complaints Policy framework.
  - **Student Concerns:** Students are encouraged to raise concerns about digital accessibility or any other barriers to learning directly with their course tutors or through the Academy's student support services.
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## **5. Roles and Responsibilities**

The successful implementation of this policy requires a coordinated effort from all members of the Academy community:

- **Teachers:** Responsible for ensuring that teaching methods and materials are accessible and inclusive.
- **Students:** Encouraged to actively communicate any accessibility issues or needs.
- **Course Tutors:** Accountable for making reasonable adjustments to course content, delivery, and assessments.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead:** Oversees safeguarding considerations linked to accessibility, particularly in relation to online interactions.

- Management Committee: Responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented and periodically reviewed to meet regulatory standards and the evolving needs of the Academy.
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## **6. Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed and updated by the Management Committee. The next formal review is scheduled for September 2025. Any interim changes will be approved by the Management Committee based on regulatory updates or feedback from students and staff.

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## **7. Relevant Legislation and Guidance**

- Equality Act 2010: Orchard Academy is fully compliant with the provisions of the Equality Act, ensuring no student is disadvantaged due to disability or other protected characteristics.
  - UK Quality Code: We adhere to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, with a focus on inclusivity and fairness in teaching and assessment.
  - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG): The Academy aims to ensure that all digital content meets WCAG 2.1 AA standards.
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## **8. Approval and Next Review**

- Approved by: Management Committee, Orchard Academy
  - Approval Date: October 2024
  - Next Review Date: September 2025
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