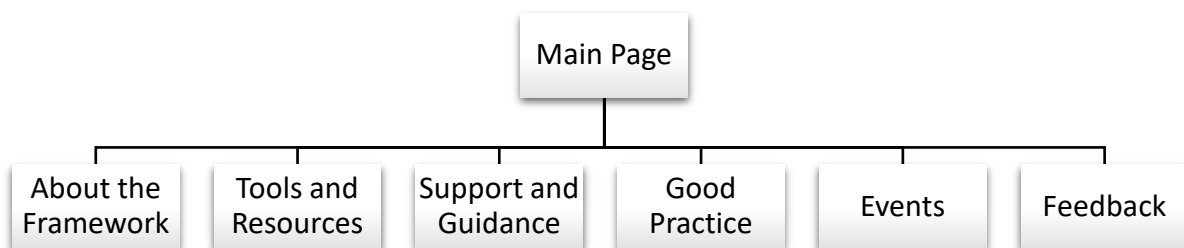


Summary of Inclusivity and Accessibility Framework

This document will provide a summary of the content included in each section of the 'Inclusivity and Accessibility Framework' web pages. The web pages will follow the structure outlined in the diagram below.



Main Page

This page will:

- Provide an overview of the University's commitment to inclusive and accessible education.
- Outline the aims of the Inclusivity and Accessibility Framework.
- Detail the scope & groups covered within the Framework.

The University of Aberdeen's Commitment to Inclusive and Accessible Education

As part of the University of Aberdeen's [2040 strategy](#), the University is committed to delivering inclusive and accessible education to provide all students with the opportunity to reach their full potential. The University recognises the importance of inclusion and accessibility in its education practices, its physical and digital learning environment and the importance of developing an approach which addresses harmful stereotypes and/or limited perspectives, to offer students a rich variety of views in their educational experience.

Aims of the Inclusivity and Accessibility Framework

The Inclusivity and Accessibility Framework aims to enable accessibility and inclusion to be more fully integrated in education within the University and to set clearer expectations, and limits, for all.

The Framework also aims to embed a mindset of openness to inclusion and accessibility in our daily work from the start of a course or project.

Students are encouraged to have regard to inclusion and accessibility when engaging with other students and with staff.

Scope and Groups

Reflecting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010, the University will not disadvantage or discriminate directly or indirectly in relation to education. All protected characteristics detailed in the Equality Act 2010 will be covered in the Inclusivity and Accessibility Framework.

The University will also seek to ensure that no staff or student is discriminated against, directly or indirectly or disadvantaged based on an unfair distinction. In particular, the following list comprises characteristics, status or experiences which the University has chosen to commit to protecting, for example through the University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, commitments to pledges, representation on the University's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee or are part of the University's approach to widening access in recruitment.

(A link will be provided to specific list of groups).

About the Framework

This page will:

- Provide a background to the framework – draws from and builds upon existing guidance, resources & support.
- Outline new process for Schools.
- Cover reasonable adjustments.
- Link the framework to the University's commitments and obligations to inclusion & accessibility.

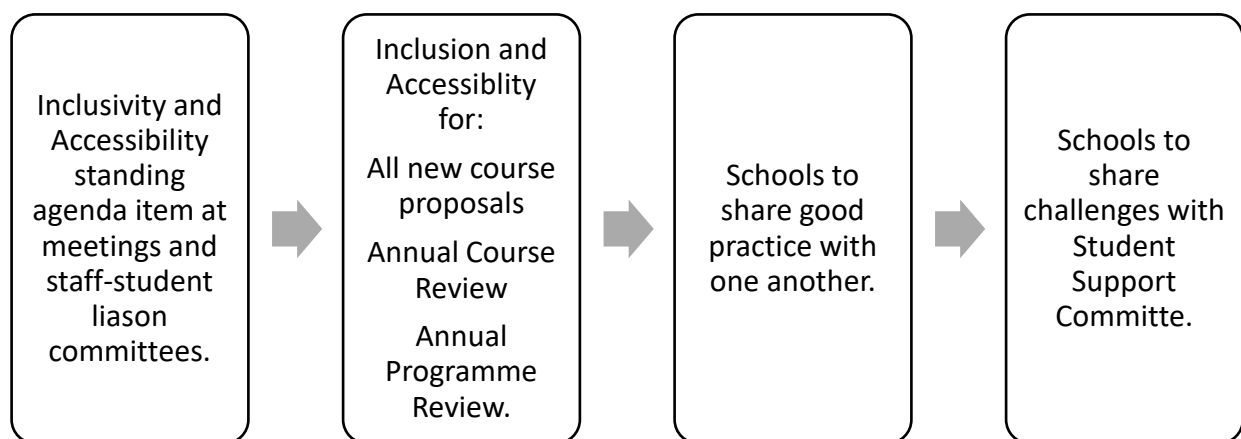
Background to the Framework

The Inclusivity and Accessibility Framework will explore how inclusion and accessibility in education are to be delivered, while also ensuring and enabling challenging debate, professional autonomy and academic freedom, intellectual property, the privacy, freedom of expression and freedom of belief of staff and students, external regulatory requirements and considering how these factors and their limits can be proportionately balanced.

The Framework draws together guidance, resources and support and specialist training provided to staff and students, notably by the [Disability Team](#), the [Assistive Technology Team](#) and the [Centre for Academic Development](#). It also includes an Inclusivity and Accessibility Reflection (a sample of this is included at the end of the document). This is to assist staff in exploring opportunities and challenges and enable regular reviewing of steps being taken across the University and to identify areas where further change, resources and support may be needed and plans made, with a focus on enhancement and collaborative development.

Suggestions for Schools and Directorates

Schools should consider having accessibility and inclusion as standing agenda items at meetings when Education as defined is discussed and at staff-student liaison committees. Schools should consider having all new course proposals, Annual Course Reviews and Annual Programme Reviews confirm that an Inclusion and Accessibility Reflection has been carried out. The carrying out of Annual Inclusion and Accessibility Reflections should be considered for any other activities within the definition of Education. Schools are encouraged to ensure that good practice and challenges are shared with the Student Support Committee. The chart below outlines the process for this suggestion.



Reasonable Adjustments

In situations when inclusion and accessibility cannot be directly assured, reasonable adjustments will need to be provided on an objective basis, taking all factors into account. Embracing inclusion and accessibility can mean that the need for additional change through reasonable adjustment will be reduced; and if this is not possible, reasonable adjustment is likely to be more readily made able to be made. In some cases, the adjustment needed for the student to take part goes beyond what is reasonable. It is important that such issues can be identified as soon as possible.

The need for reasonableness does not remove the need to explore change and possible new approaches. Reasonable adjustment can be needed in light of disability, for which formal systems are in place and also in the light of the other characteristics listed. To assist in this, students will continue to be encouraged (including before arrival) to share details of disabilities and to engage as soon as possible in processes for financial support (when available) and for assessment of their needs and adjustments to be put in place.

In some cases, the adjustment needed for the student to take part goes beyond what is reasonable. It is important that such issues can be identified as soon as possible. The need for reasonableness does not remove the need to explore change and possible new approaches. Reasonable adjustment can be needed in light of disability, for which formal systems are in place and also in the light of the other characteristics and experiences listed. To assist in this, students will continue to be encouraged (including before arrival) to share details of disabilities and to engage as soon as possible in processes for financial support (when available) and for assessment of their needs and adjustments to be put in place. The University is also considering creating formal systems and adjustments for e.g. student carers and the same encouragement will be provided.

University's Commitment and Obligations

The Framework reflects the University's commitment and obligations to the following:

- The [Sustainable Development Goals Accord](#) which include good health and wellbeing, quality education, gender equality and reduced inequalities.
- The University's legal obligations in respect of accessibility and inclusion, including the [Equality Act 2010](#) and the [Public Sector Bodies \(Websites and Mobile Applications\) \(No. 2\) Accessibility Regulations 2018](#).
- The University's obligations under the [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#) regarding treating students with fairness, dignity and respect.
- The University's accreditation through Disability Confident and Athena Swan, and its signing of the Advance HE Race Equality Charter and it being a Stonewall Scotland Diversity Champion.
- The University's active engagement with the higher education sector (e.g. JISC, Advance HE, Universities UK, QAA), with industry (e.g. Blackboard, Panopto, AI Media) and with relevant networks (e.g. Association of Learning Technology, Scottish Heads of Disability Services, AbilityNet) to drive delivery of inclusion and accessibility.
- The University's [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#) of 2019 which (a) expresses that the University "is committed to a positive culture, based on tolerance and inclusion for all its staff, students and visitors and to promoting the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion across all of its places of work and study".

Tools and Resources

This page will:

- Include the Inclusivity & Accessibility Reflection Document.
- Link to current checklists and guidance ([Inclusivity and Accessibility checklist](#), [Course readiness checklist](#), [eLearning Guidance](#), [Content Advice Guidance](#))

- Links to literature (Inclusive Learning and Teaching, Inclusive Pedagogies, Content advice etc.).

Support and Guidance

This page will detail where staff & students can go for further guidance & support, including:

- Training available from [CAD](#)/others.
- The [Disability Team](#) who can advise on reasonable adjustments (Note: the statement of adjustment/provision does not include details of the underlying position or diagnosis of the student, for example autism, dyslexia. This is because this is the health information of the student, because different students have views on wishing information about them to be shared and because the responses to different diagnoses/needs/differences will vary. Some colleagues do have full information about a student to assist them in supporting the student. This is complemented by students being made aware that information about them is not shared with all course coordinators and all colleagues who will teach them, and students being encouraged to be proactive in approaching course coordinators and all colleagues who will teach them and explain their situation and what will work best for them, if they would like to do so.
- The [University Estates](#), [IT](#) & [Room Bookings](#) Teams who will continue to enhance the physical & digital accessibility of teaching spaces.
- The [School Disability Coordinators](#) who should be contacted if a member of staff finds a room is not accessible.
- Support available to students such as through the [Student Learning Service](#) and [Student Support Team](#).

The Disability Team (and in the future, possibly other members of Student Support) will be part of discussions about what a reasonable adjustment means for a student in a particular situation in the light of the core competences explored by the course or the nature of the Education event. Other key members are the student and the course coordinator and they are encouraged to be proactive in starting these conversations as soon as possible. School Disability Coordinators will check the Disability Database regularly and raise points with colleagues. It can be recognised that this is time consuming and it is for this reason that the main focus of the University is to encourage an inclusive and accessible approach which reduces the need for reasonable adjustment.

Good Practice

This page will outline examples of good practice for staff, including:

- Examples of inclusive courses.
- Case studies.
- Interviews.
- Sharing examples on dealing with specific types of situation.

Sharing Examples

Staff and students should engage with each other using **inclusive language and terminology**. This should include use of gender-neutral terms (such as police officer) and an awareness that use of particular terms (such as “mecca”, “massacre”) have particular significance for groups and should not be used informally.

Schools and course coordinators should take as flexible an approach as possible to the **allocation and changes of teaching times** which have been made available to the course (such as if here is a choice of tutorial and practical slots) and to changing of these slots for religious or philosophical and parenting or caring reasons, bearing in mind that this may not always be possible.

Communications to students and staff (such as regarding courses, support and advertisement, recruitment and delivery of placement and co-curriculum opportunities) should have regard to the fact that students and staff may have learning differences (which may or may not have been diagnosed or shared). Consideration should be given to using a variety of forms of communication (eg VLE announcement, University email with short sentences and paragraphs, recordings or diagrams); messages being in places where there can be readily retrieved (which may not be through email); and to opportunities for students to speak to staff and to each other.

Considering sharing **as fully as possible and in a timely manner what will happen at a practical level**. Possible examples are that there will be a loud noise in the lab (to be made by staff or student), that experiments will be done, the detail of what will happen on a fieldtrip), making everyone aware of this can enable issues to be identified. This could involve students preparing themselves or investigating with staff members other ways of gaining the relevant learning outcome - perhaps choosing not to attend that class, reading about an issue, or watching a recording. For Lab work, an option may be for a student to watch or listen to a class via video and instruct an amanuensis to take the necessary steps so that the experiment can be done or a noise made, while the student is still further removed. This could also be effective for a visually impaired student doing a course which involves labwork.

In choosing **forms of assessment** for a course, consider how the core competencies and learning outcomes can be evaluated in a variety of manners (such as essay, oral presentation, lab book). This can enable all students to develop new skills and have the opportunity to excel in different manners. It must be borne in mind that the more forms of assessments there are for a course, the more this can increase staff workload and student pressure. Accordingly, regard should be had to the variety of assessment across a programme, or options within it - although it is recognised that students frequently take courses from more than one programme. Staff should have regard to inclusion when framing marking guidance.

Events

This page will include:

- Information on upcoming events.
- Previous '[Celebrating Diversity](#)' events the University has held.

Feedback

This page will include:

- A button for ongoing feedback.

Sample Accessibility and Inclusion Reflection:

Course/activity: Law and Lego

Date /period of review: Review October 2021 for period 20-1 and delivery plans

Note the issues will vary according to the activity, the following is set out only as an example.

Issue	Brief detail	Considered (Self/others/students)	Reflection/challenges – met and unable to be met yet	Short term thoughts	Longer term thoughts	Support sought/action needed from others (eg regulator, resources, more help or reduction in other work)
Learning outcomes, content	Too wide	Feedback from self, informal class rep, course review forms	Revise scope to make clear focusing only on IP, corporate control, restricting creativity, drop product safety	Address now	N/A	Course change form

Form and timing assessment and feedback	Presently 2 essays	Some students perform well, some do not	Does not enable students with different skills to flourish and those skilled in writing to develop new skills	Poster assessment	Liaison with Arts and Engineering colleagues in creating more visual assessment option. In asking for structures to be built and then discussed about the family and important building in the community be aware that there may be different answers and not to assume male, female 2.2 kids and a church and not to say anything which might suggest this	Provide examples of posters, clarity on marking criteria
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Delivery (physical, digital) and comms	Can work well on campus and online through eg Minecraft		Be aware of assuming digital literacy, physical manual skills. Aim to develop comparable opportunities digital and physical Will journal any issues that arise. Be aware of assumptions that all will have heard of Lego and also that some way not – are there cultural equivalents? Or not and does this make the point.	Check accessibility of layout Provide training on Minecraft and make clear expectations re IT and financial support to help buy anything needed. Reflect on fact Minecraft now owned by Microsoft and can be seen as an example of giving gin to corporate power	Explore intersections between Minecraft/. digital experience and assistive technology . Is this element actually very inclusive?	Educate self about assisted tech Invite trusted peer to come and watch next time and give feedback in general and regarding inclusion and creating a sense of belonging for students
Balancing acts	None so far involved freedom of expression and academic freedom.					

Reasonable adjustment	Granting of extra time for assessment	All students were made aware of the deadline for the essays and the titles at 3 weeks before the deadline. Students request extensions for mental health reasons	Suggest release titles at the start of term. Provide as much guidance as possible on the nature of the assessment to make it more manageable. Make the poster, construction exercise and essay title ones for which can be no academic integrity issues and so questions about an extension.			
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1495



UNIVERSITY OF
ABERDEEN

CELEBRATING
525 YEARS
1495 – 2020

ABERDEEN 2040

Inclusivity & Accessibility Framework: Structure for Website

November 2021

Outline of Structure

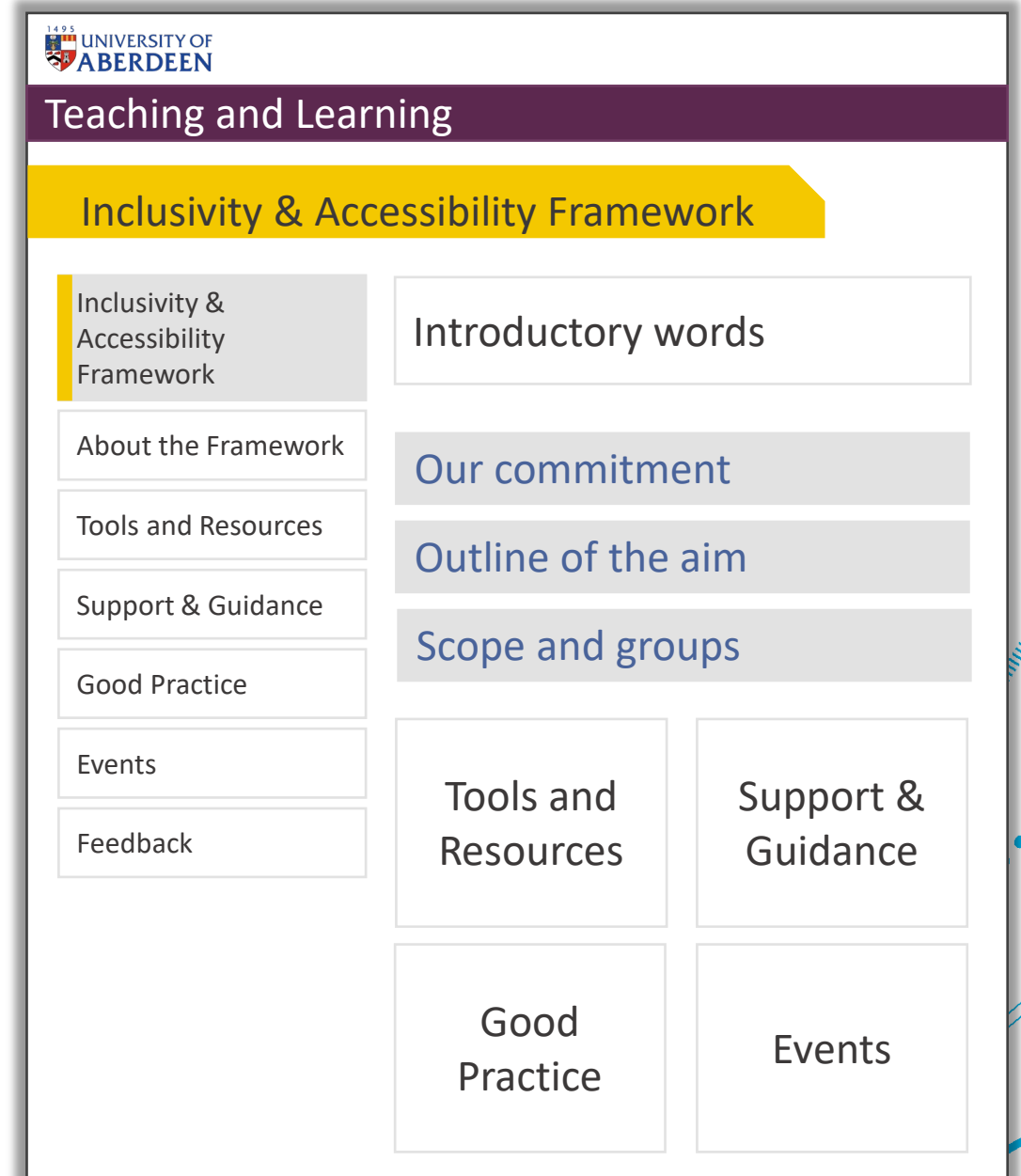
The Inclusivity & Accessibility Framework will replace the current Inclusivity & Accessibility page in the Teaching & Learning section of the website. It will have the following structure:

- Inclusivity & Accessibility Framework (Main page)
 - About the Framework
 - Tools and Resources
 - Checklist and Reflective document
 - Support and Guidance (for staff and students)
 - Good Practice
 - Events
 - Feedback

Main Page

This page will:

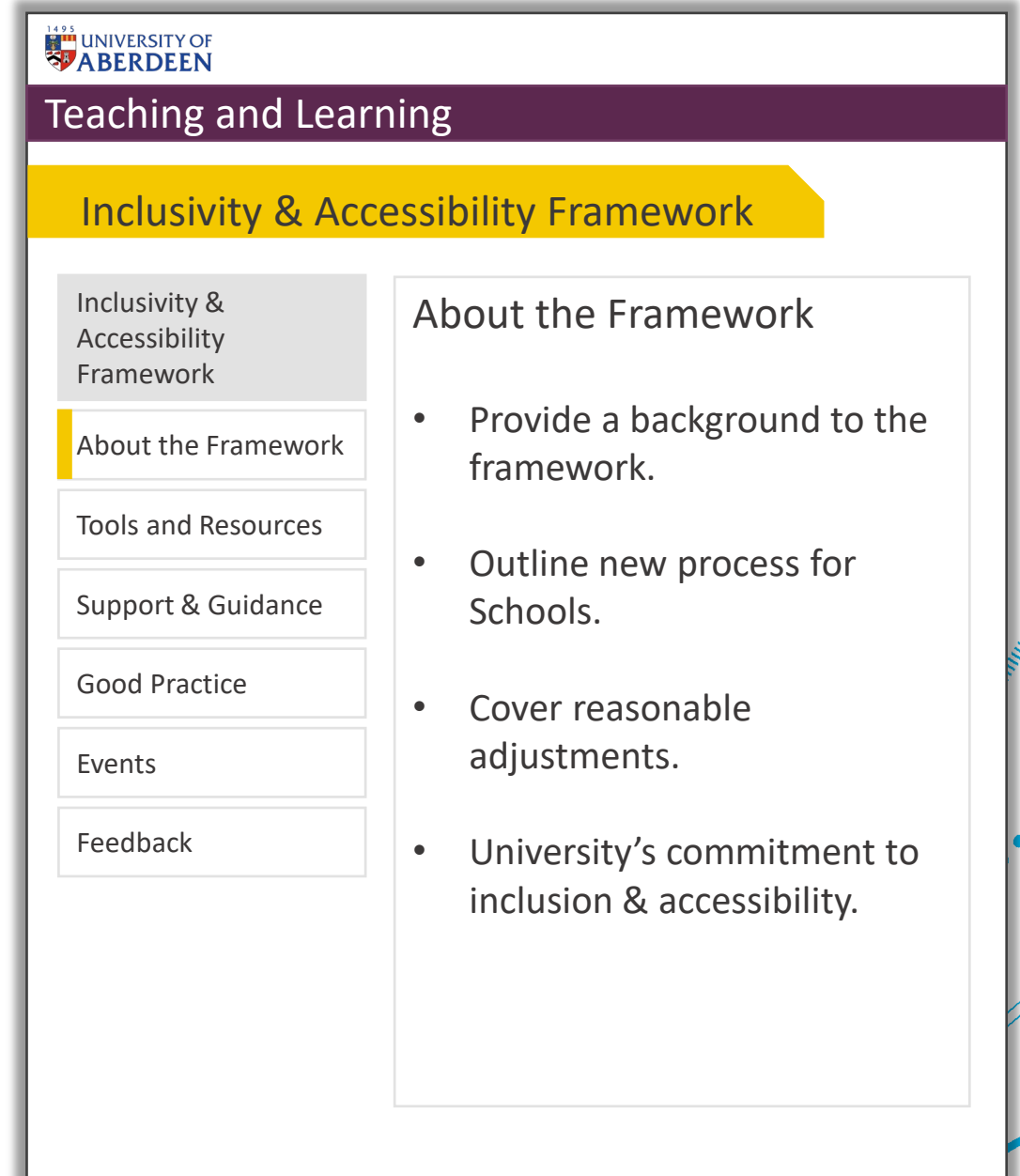
- Provide an overview of the University's commitment to inclusive & accessible education.
- Outline the aim of the framework.
- Detail the scope & groups covered within the framework.



About the Framework

This page will:

- Provide a background to the framework – draws from and builds upon existing guidance, resources & support.
- Outline new process for Schools.
- Cover reasonable adjustments.
- Link the framework to the University's commitment to inclusion & accessibility.



The screenshot shows the University of Aberdeen's Teaching and Learning website. At the top is the University of Aberdeen logo. Below it is a purple header bar with the text "Teaching and Learning". Underneath is a yellow banner with the text "Inclusivity & Accessibility Framework". To the left of the main content area is a vertical navigation menu with the following items: "Inclusivity & Accessibility Framework" (highlighted with a grey background), "About the Framework" (highlighted with a yellow background), "Tools and Resources", "Support & Guidance", "Good Practice", "Events", and "Feedback". The main content area is titled "About the Framework" and contains a bulleted list of four points: "Provide a background to the framework.", "Outline new process for Schools.", "Cover reasonable adjustments.", and "University's commitment to inclusion & accessibility."

1495 UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

Teaching and Learning

Inclusivity & Accessibility Framework

Inclusivity & Accessibility Framework

About the Framework

Tools and Resources

Support & Guidance

Good Practice

Events

Feedback

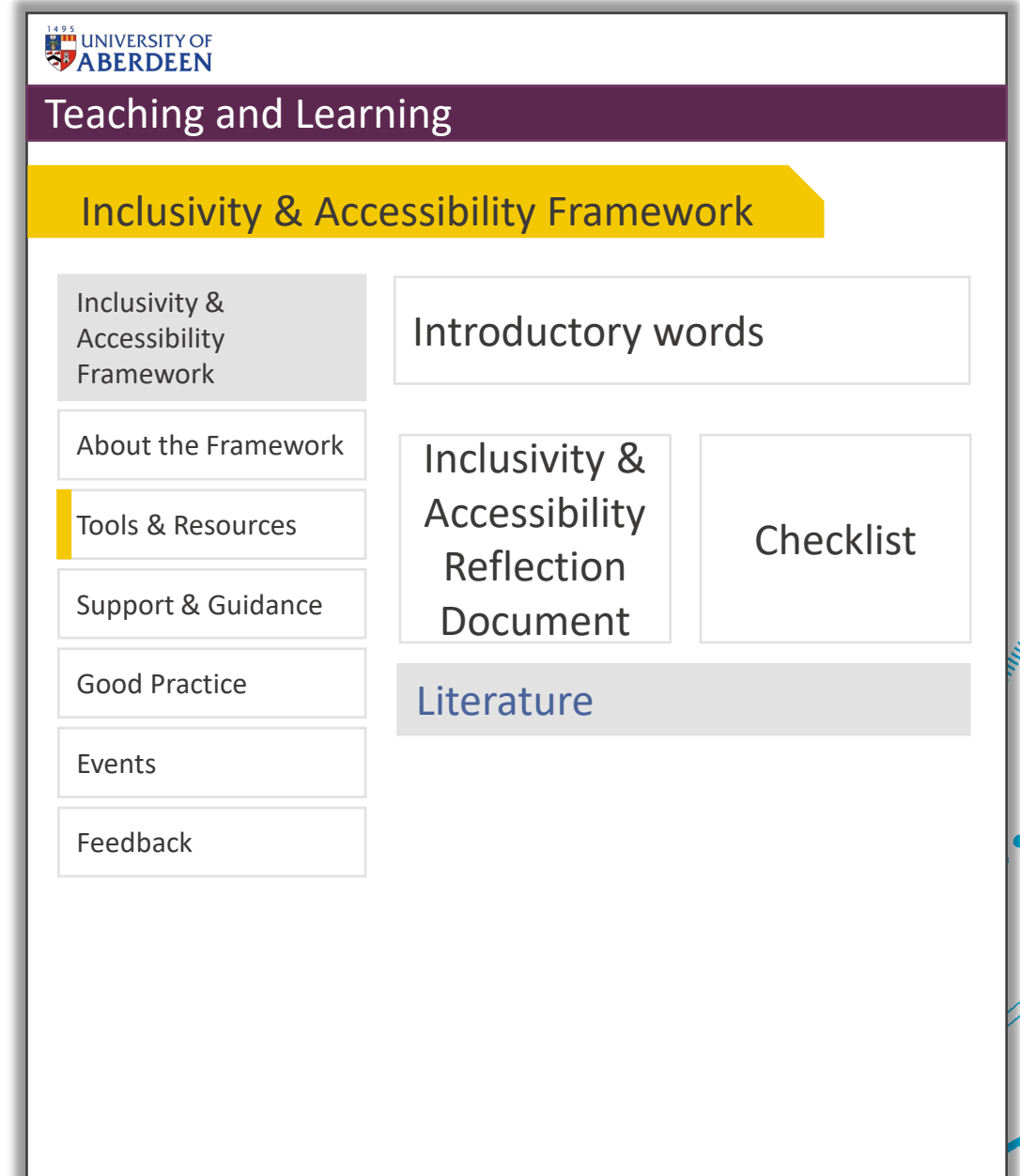
About the Framework

- Provide a background to the framework.
- Outline new process for Schools.
- Cover reasonable adjustments.
- University's commitment to inclusion & accessibility.

Tools & Resources

This page will:

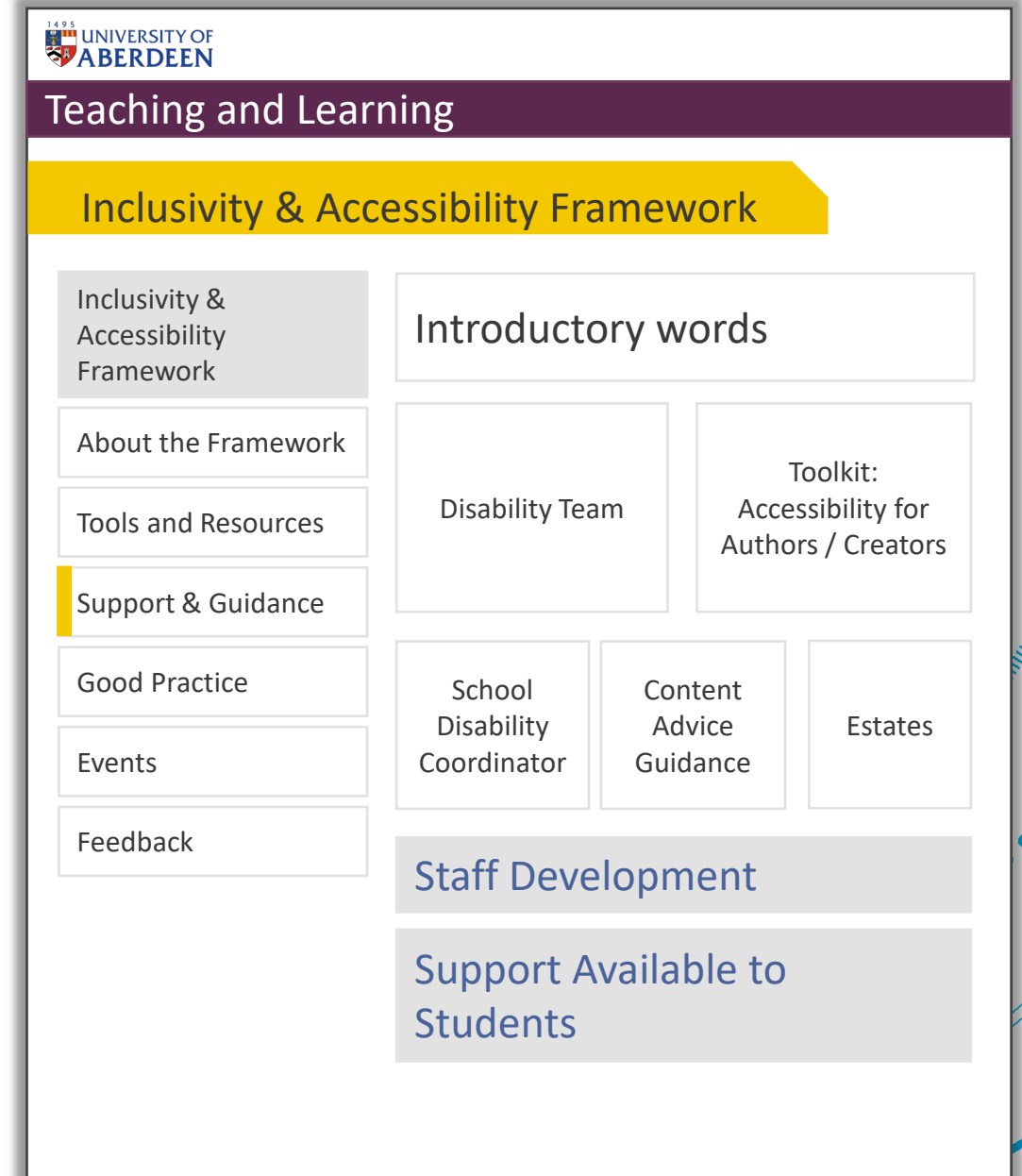
- Include the Inclusivity & Accessibility Reflection Document.
- Link to current checklists.
- Link to literature.



Support & Guidance

This page will detail where staff & students can go for further guidance & support, including:

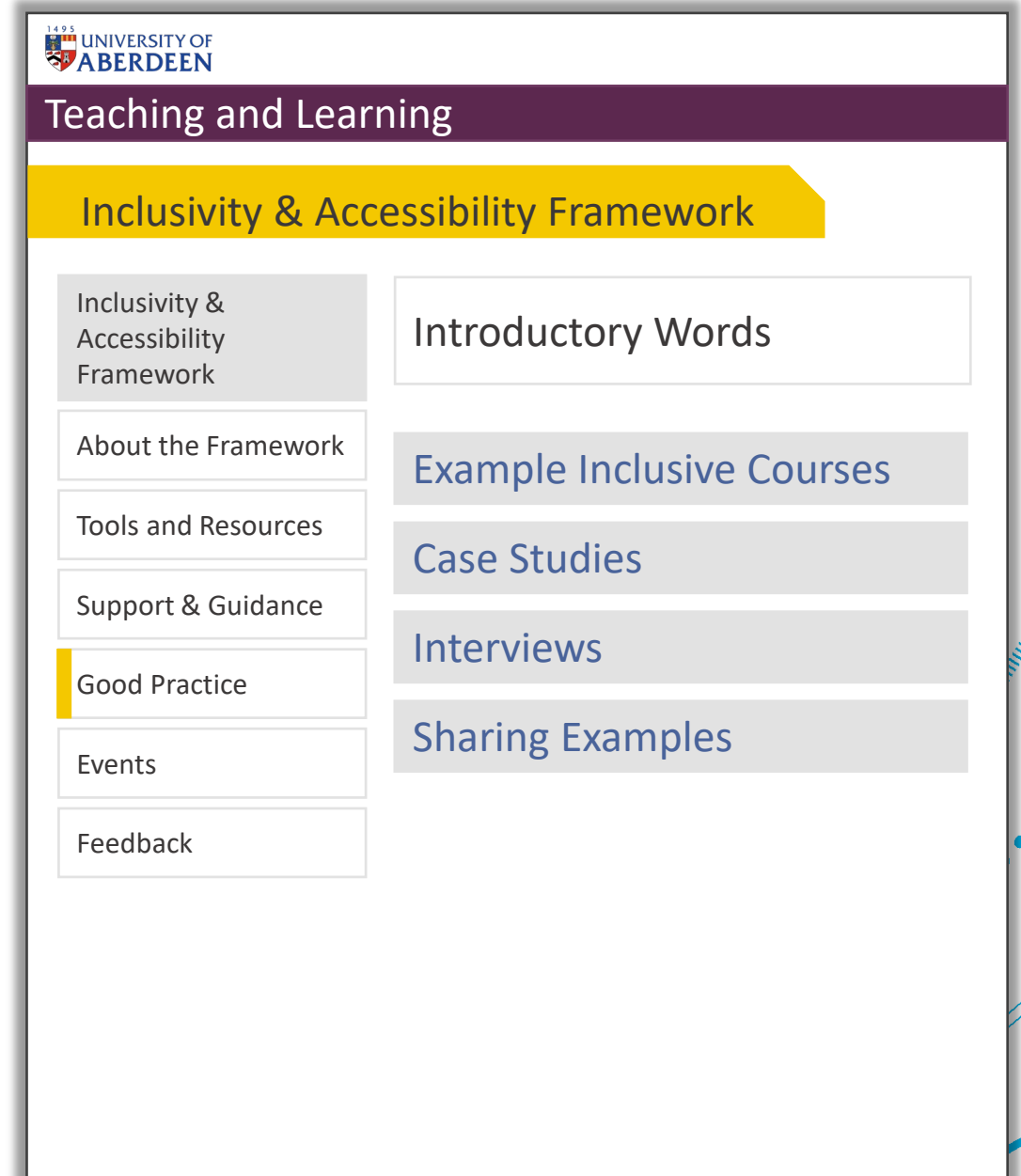
- Training available from CAD/others.
- The Disability Team can advise on reasonable adjustments.
- The University Estates, IT & Room Bookings Teams will continue to enhance the physical & digital accessibility of teaching spaces.
- The School Disability Coordinator should be contacted if a member of staff finds a room is not accessible.
- Content Advice Guidance.
- Support available to students.



Good Practice

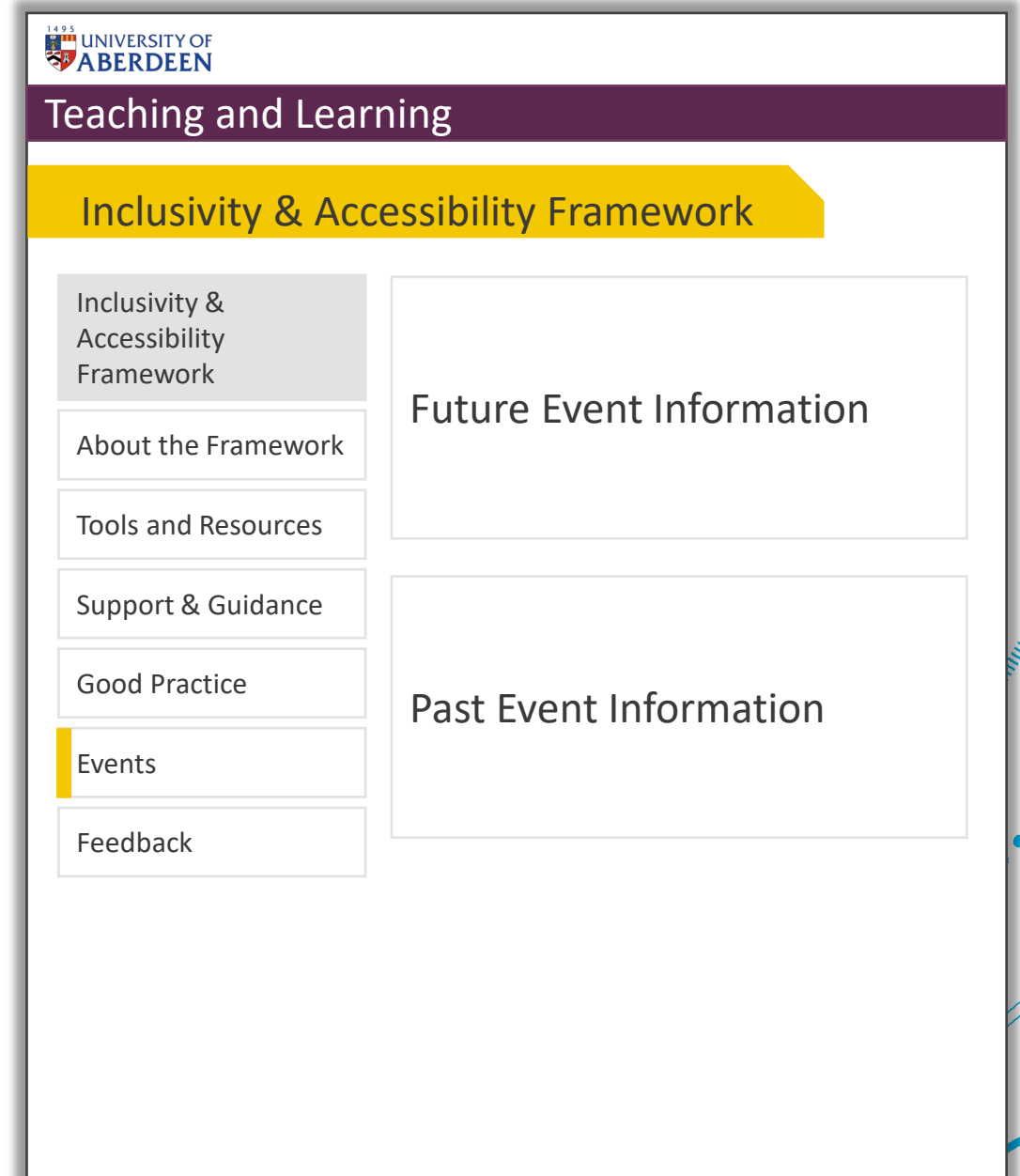
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- Examples of inclusive courses.
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- Interviews.
- Sharing examples.



Events

- Information on upcoming events.
- This page will highlight previous '[Celebrating Diversity](#)' events the University has held.



Feedback

- Ongoing feedback.

