Inclusively managing reading-related expectations for all students

The transition to university study represents a big increase in reading demand, with students required to read and critically appraise a range of literature, possibly for the first time. Learning to read this literature is an important process but for some students, including our students with dyslexia, dyspraxia, ADHD, mental health issues and non-native English speakers the challenge created by unclear expectations around reading should not be underestimated.   The following suggestions will enable you to keep the challenge high, whilst removing unnecessary barriers and creating a manageable experience that students can genuinely learn from and not feel overwhelmed by.

- **Clearly identify your recommended reading** in advance, being critical and realistic about the amount/type expected. Do you know how long it takes students to read a paper? Ask them as the term goes along to get a feel for the range in time spent. On the basis of this can some students be advised they are taking too long or not enough time? Could videos sometimes be offered as an alternative or to supplement reading?

- Use Leganto Reading lists to create **prioritised reading lists** that distinguish between Core (essential), Supplementary or Background Reading and/or topics, weeks. This helps students prioritise and avoids them being overwhelmed or focussing on less useful reading. Leganto Reading Lists can also include video and webpages. The Subject Liaison Librarians offer excellent support for setting up Leganto Reading Lists, including digitising book chapters etc. to meet copyright requirements and optimising digital versions for screen readers.

- Consider giving students **specific reading sources** to focus on for their critical review, rather than requiring them to do an extensive literature search first. This means their energy and effort goes into learning to read critically and structure a good written critical appraisal. Several of these sources could be required pre-reading that you use to discuss the process of critical reading in your discipline in class.

- Give students opportunity to **share their experiences** of the reading process in face to face sessions. What are they finding interesting/difficult? The aim is not to make it easier but to help them realise this reading is challenging for others too, and to share successful strategies and supplementary sources e.g. video.

- Provide materials and any reading at least **48 hours in advance** so that students can prepare themselves e.g. by looking up definitions of unfamiliar words. This can also enable students to optimise their materials by printing in a larger font, printing onto a more easily readable colour of paper, converting into another format e.g. MP3, text to speech. Make students aware of the **Inclusive Technology webpages** to help make their study more effective through use of mind-mapping software, text to speech software, audio note-taking etc.

- Help students to **learn your disciplinary and specialty-specific language**. This is no-one's first language. Can you direct students to a glossary of technical terms and a list of standardised notation?

- Give written guidance on **how to use reading/learning materials** to make study time effective. For example, "Please read pages 3 – 25 before lecture 3. As you are reading, think about X…. We will be looking at applications of this approach/concept in lecture 3."

- If you provide students with materials before a session, make it clear whether there is a requirement to read them in advance (e.g. in a flipped classroom style [pdf]) because during the session they will be discussing/answering questions on this material, or whether reading is optional as all will be in the lecture.

- Talk to students about whether and how you expect them to use Panopto lecture capture footage to supplement their reading. See Imperial College's advice to students on learning from lecture capture.