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## Program welcomes disabled Indonesian students

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**An Indonesian university is pioneering a rare effort in East Java to help people with disabilities gain access to higher education.**

The University of Brawijaya is developing custom learning materials and services for students with disabilities, with the guidance of Australia's Macquarie University and the support of the Indonesian government.

The university is now preparing to enrol its first cohort of 20 students later this year, and is in the midst of establishing a Centre for Disabled Studies and Services.

Macquarie University Accessibility Services Manager Sharon Kerr told Radio Australia's [Connect Asia](#) program that traditionally in Indonesia, entering into university is seen to be the realm of people who are good both academically and on the sporting field.

Ms Kerr says even students with colour blindness struggle to gain entry to Indonesia's universities, and for students with high-level disabilities it is "absolutely non-existent".

The program has been opened up to students in all fields, with at least nine deaf students and four wheelchair users.

"They're saying it's like snow in the Sahara that these students are actually going to be given the opportunity for university studies," Ms Kerr said.

"There's been a lot of excitement about this."

**AUDIO:** [Macquarie University's Sharon Kerr speaks to Connect Asia about the program.](#) (ABC News)

**Topics:** [disabilities](#), [access-to-education](#), [university-and-further-education](#)

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