



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEESSIDE
DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

2006 – 2009

احتفالات متنوعة
CELEBRATING DIVERSITY
असमानता का समारोह
ਅਸਮਾਨਤਾ ਦਾ ਸਮਾਰੋਹ
جشن كثير الثقافتى

'The Disability Equality Duty is not about ticking the right boxes quickly - it's about a whole organisational approach to disability equality, achieved over a period of time. The duty gives the public sector a real opportunity to improve the life chances of disabled people, and help shape world-class institutions.'

(Bert Massie - Chairman of the Disability Rights Commission)

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Foreword by the Vice-Chancellor

As a University committed to “Providing Opportunities - Pursuing Excellence”, Teesside’s aim is to be a truly inclusive organisation where individual differences are respected, and where students and staff are treated solely on their merits, and have every opportunity to fulfil their potential. This is reflected in the University’s longstanding recognition as an institution committed to Equal Opportunities as evidenced by a number of national awards in the field

The development of the University’s Disability Equality Scheme clearly reflects this aim, and is closely aligned to both the University’s Equal Opportunities policy and its strategic priorities.

In shaping this scheme the University has sought to consult both disabled students and staff, and I am extremely grateful to all of those who have taken the time to participate in discussions, which have had a significant role in helping to shape and inform the priorities within our action plan.

I believe that our Disability Equality Scheme will provide an important framework for promoting disability equality across the University, and will have a positive impact in terms of further enhancing the experiences of our disabled students and staff.

I commend the scheme to you and thank those colleagues who have worked so hard on its formulation.

Signed:



Professor Graham Henderson
Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive

Date: 4 December 2006

Section 1: Introduction

About the Disability Equality Scheme (DES)

The Disability Equality Duty is an important new duty aimed at promoting disability equality across the public sector. It sets out what public authorities must have due regard to in order to promote equality of opportunity.

The Duty applies to all the functions of the University.

The General Duty requires that the University has due regard to the need to:

- **Eliminate** unlawful disability discrimination and harassment;
- **Promote** equality of opportunity and positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- **Take account of** people's disabilities (even if this means treating them more favourably);
- **Encourage** participation by disabled people in public life.

This Disability Equality Scheme assists the University in planning; delivering, and evaluating, objectives that will help meet the general duty (the Disability Equality Duty).

It includes:

- a statement of how disabled people have been involved in developing the Scheme
- arrangements for gathering information on:
 - the recruitment, development and retention of disabled employees
 - the educational opportunities available to and achievements of disabled students
- details of how information gathered will be used, in particular to review the effectiveness of Action Plans and prepare subsequent Schemes
- a method for assessing the impact of policies and practices on disability equality and where improvements can be made
- an Action Plan detailing the steps that are going to be taken to meet the general duty.
- The process for monitoring and reviewing the scheme and more specifically the progress on its action plan.

Commitment to Involving Disabled People

The University recognises the importance of actively involving disabled staff, students and associates in all aspects of the development and implementation of its Disability Equality Scheme.

The University is committed to the continued involvement of disabled people in the monitoring and review of the action plan process and in the development of future schemes. To achieve this it will ensure the provision of appropriate and adequate resources to enable disabled people to participate in, and contribute to, this process.

The University recognises that, through this involvement, the Disability Equality Scheme will enable it to identify any barriers that may unlawfully discriminate against disabled people, including barriers within policy and the design of services or initiatives which may have a negative impact on their lives.

Section 2: Context

The Legislative Framework

The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities)(Statutory Duties) Regulations 2005

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 so that it now places a duty on all public authorities to deliver better disability equality outcomes.

From 5 December 2006, the new duty will mark a move away from minimum compliance, towards a more proactive approach to making a positive change to the lives of disabled people, by promoting disability equality in all University practices, policies and procedures.

The new legislation places both general and specific duties on the University, central to which is the requirement to produce a Disability Equality Scheme (DES).

The Social Model of Disability

In developing this Disability Equality Scheme the University has adopted the Social Model of Disability.

The University takes the approach that disabled people are not disadvantaged because of their disability, but rather by the ignorance, prejudice, barriers and discrimination presented by society. Therefore, it is society that disables a person, not their disability or impairment.

The Teesside Commitment

The University of Teesside is a dynamic modern university dedicated to delivering quality programmes of study; demonstrating a commitment to social inclusion and widening participation; and contributing to the success of the community it serves.

The University's headline statements and policies reflect the ethos of the 'Social Model' of disability. In pursuing its mission of

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES – PURSUING EXCELLENCE'
'Enabling individuals and organisations to achieve their potential through high quality learning'.

the University has made a strong commitment to providing a working and learning environment that is accessible to all.

The University's Vision Statement reinforces this belief, providing a set of statements that lay down ideals and aspirations. Social inclusion and widening participation are evident in this vision.

The University's Vision Statement:

'To achieve wide recognition regionally, nationally and internationally as being among the top UK institutions for higher education for:

- a real and ongoing commitment to social inclusion and widening access to higher education;
- pursuing excellence and seeking to enhance academic standards and the quality of the student learning experience;
- contributing to the economic, social and cultural success of the Tees Valley and to the wider regional, national and international communities we serve'.

Underpinning the University's Mission and Vision Statements, the Corporate Objectives for 2006-09 include:

- **Objective 2: To Maintain a Dynamic, Relevant, Accessible and Properly Resourced Academic Portfolio**
To plan academic curricula and the availability and deployment of resources in a manner that will ensure that the University maintains a dynamic, and effectively resourced, portfolio of academic opportunities appropriate to changing student and employer demand;
- **Objective 4: Widening Participation**
To continue to *both* increase *and* widen participation in HE through the provision of accessible progression pathways which will enable all those who are able to benefit from HE to reach their full potential.

The University aims to reflect the equality and diversity **values** of the **University's Equal Opportunities Policy** in the development of all policies and procedures.

Statement of Values:

The University believes that individuals should be enabled to achieve their full potential in their role and career progression. Within the University this means by the provision of appropriate development opportunities and the removal of barriers to enable the achievement of optimum performance. The University community values the following:

- mutual respect and sensitivity;
- equality of access to the organisation, with equality of esteem and equality of opportunity within the organisation;
- continuous improvement of individuals stemming from a culture of ongoing review, development and enhancement;

- satisfaction of individual needs via supportive and flexible working/ learning environments;
- encouragement of diversity of views, perspectives, values and issues, but opposition to and eradication of prejudice, unfair barriers and discrimination;
- transparency, equity, responsiveness and accuracy of procedure and process.

The Equal Opportunities Policy includes a statement of commitment to the equality and diversity values of the University, both as a higher education provider and as an employer.

Equal Opportunities Statement

‘The University of Teesside is committed to equality of opportunity within a diverse learning and working environment. In accordance with the Mission Statement, the University will introduce policies and practices that support a working and learning environment free from unfair or unlawful discrimination, for all staff, students and associates’.

As a Higher Education provider

Higher Education is available to all sections of society and the University believes it has a duty to ensure that its full range of educational provision is accessible to all members of the community. Applications will be actively encouraged and welcomed from all those seeking to undertake a University course of study and applications will be considered on the basis of the applicants capacity to benefit from the course.

As an Employer

The University is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity within a diverse environment for all its employees, and will ensure that its policies and procedures are equally applied to all staff. Appropriate monitoring of activities is undertaken, ensuring the development of related policies and practices, and the equal and fair treatment of such individuals. The University's Appointments Policy will apply to all those seeking employment with the University.

These principles and beliefs are reflected in the development of the Disability Equality Scheme and will continue to be employed in its ongoing development and review.

Section 3: Developing the Scheme

Planning and Organisation

It has been the role of the University's Equal Opportunities Committee (EOC) to recommend how best to progress and implement equality and diversity policy and practice within the University. If the University was to progress and embed its equality and diversity values in line with those of emerging good practice and recommendations, there was a need to establish a dynamic mechanism for ensuring that this was achieved.

Therefore, at the beginning of 2006, the University formed an executive group of the EOC to secure top level commitment and guidance to the equality and diversity agenda within the University. The Executive Committee comprises the:

University Secretary (Chair);
Director of Human Resources;
Director of Student Services;
Assistant Director of CLQE (Staff Development); and
Equality & Diversity Officer.

The Committee is representative of the EOC but reports directly to the Vice Chancellor and to the University's Corporate Management Committee.

In considering how best to progress, develop and embed the Disability Equality Duty, the Executive Committee, with the support of the EOC, recommended and established the setting up of a working group comprising the:

Director of Student Services;
Assistant Director of CLQE (Staff Development);
Assessment Centre & Disability Services Manager;
Legal Services Manager; and
the Equality & Diversity Officer.

The Working Group made the following recommendations:

- to draw up a timetabled action plan to ensure the progression and implementation of the scheme;
- to re-affirm top level commitment in line with the University's Mission Statement, its objectives and equality and diversity values, and of the widening participation agenda;
- to ensure that University staff, students and associates are able to participate in, and contribute to the continued development of the University's DES;

- to facilitate this initial participation by employing an external consultant to facilitate focus groups, questionnaires and one to one interviews with staff and students;
- to promote existing good practice within the University;
- to highlight areas of concern or those in need of improvement or development;
- to ensure that the DES is seen as a part of the equality and diversity values of the University and not as a 'token' to fulfil legislative requirements;
- to underpin the existing equality and diversity values of the University; and
- to make recommendations as to the most appropriate mechanisms for raising awareness of the scheme in the community.

The Working Group also gathered information and data on the University's actions over many years that had been intended to support the participation of disabled people, and reviewed previous work in developing policy and ensuring previous compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

As Chair of the EOC/EOC Executive, and as a member of the Vice Chancellor's Executive Committee, the University's Secretary provides top level support and commitment to the development and implementation of the Scheme.

The Disability Equality Scheme has been jointly developed by the Personnel and Student Services Departments. However, in the spirit of the University's team working ethos, the scheme has been developed with extensive involvement of staff from departments across the University who are responsible for delivering a full range of services and support.

Staff and Student Involvement

As a University we are committed to ensuring that everyone has access to our courses, employment opportunities and social environment.

The University has always recognised the need to involve disabled people in the development of its provision. In 1992 the University was awarded funding under a Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) initiative to develop initial support for disabled students and applicants. The Project was based upon the principle that disabled people had the expertise that was needed to identify the measures that the University needed to take to remove barriers to their participation. The Project created a specialist team to support disabled people – particularly students – and this person centred approach has remained at the heart of the University's practice.

The University has developed practices which capture the experience and perspectives of disabled people in the continued enhancement and development of services and support provisions. These include the use of detailed discussions with individuals, focus groups, informal and formal feedback and evaluation, and contact and liaison with external organisations and networks.

The Disability Equality Scheme is informed by these practices and the Aims in the summary and the Action Plan are, in significant part, the result of reflections on the outcomes of this way of working. They distil the information from, and perspectives of, disabled service users as evidenced through working practices which recognises their expertise and the need constantly to review and evaluate the effectiveness of the University's measures to fulfil their legitimate expectations.

In the development of this Disability Equality Scheme this information was supplemented by using the services of a specialist consultancy, Pertemps Mouzer. The provision of an external facilitator encouraged openness and sharing whilst providing complete confidentiality. One to one sessions and/or questionnaires were also offered to those who did not wish to take part in a focus group. (A synopsis of Pertemps recommendation is in Appendix A).

Pertemps Mouzer sought commentary and feedback on current provision, facilities and support, including recommendations for development and change, via focus groups with our staff and students. There were separate groups for staff and students.

The University's Disability Equality Scheme is thus informed by the approach of the University over many years to meeting the needs of disabled people and the outcomes of a specific consultation in its development.

The University will ensure the ongoing involvement of disabled people in the implementation and development of the scheme over its three year cycle by continuing with its existing practices of consulting and listening to disabled people, and by extending and refining this practice through further consultation exercises with disability and other organisations and institutions which may reflect the needs of potential staff and students based locally in the community.

The information and perspectives gained in these processes will inform the further development and review of future schemes and the wider impact assessment of all policies, procedures and practice across the University.

In addition to the above, we will seek to implement a review process that will prioritise those aspects of the University's activities which have most relevance to equality of opportunity.

Section 4: Where we are now

Current Data, Provision and Support

Students

Student Data

Drawing together the Disability Equality scheme has given the University an opportunity to reflect upon its current position in respect of support for disabled students and potential disabled students. Information has been drawn together from across the University and the experience of disabled people has been a key component in terms of informing the evaluation of the current position and in identifying the action for the next three years.

Progress towards promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating disability discrimination and taking account of people's disabilities is evident but a number of areas have been identified for further exploration and development which will further enhance provision and practice.

Data on students is collected through application forms and as part of the enrolment process. Performance and progression of students can be determined from the Student Records system.

The percentage of disabled students is a Key Performance Indicator used by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). This uses a narrow definition of the percentage of undergraduate students receiving disabled students allowances (DSAs) to support additional costs that they incur in their studying. This will give only a partial picture as it excludes some levels of study and some disabled students will not be captured in this data.

The University also monitors the data using the wider definition of disabled students and applicants as they define themselves on application and enrolment forms. Students are very much encouraged to identify themselves as disabled through various media.

Tables in appendix B provide a summary of student data collected as relevant to the key areas of student application, enrolment and progression. It is recognised that the data shown is for a limited timeframe and therefore monitoring over a wider period of time would perhaps show a clearer trend.

The University will continue to collect the data and will closely scrutinise it, giving consideration to any statistically significant variations between disabled students and non-disabled students. And will consider the differences across modes of study, years of study and programmes of study. Following analysis of the variations, measures to reduce gaps will be identified.

Data can currently be compared to national data on recruitment and this shows that the University's recruitment of disabled students is slightly below the national figures in some categories. These figures mask differences between programmes of study and between institutions.

The University will seek to define a benchmark by ascertaining the performance of other similar institutions. It will also seek explanations for the differences between these figures – examining matters such as reporting mechanisms and recruitment practices. Involvement and consultation with disabled people will be an important part of this process.

The University recognises that it needs to further enhance its formal mechanisms to monitor data in respect of disabled applicants and students and this will be a component of its action plan. This will include a formal reporting mechanism through the Equal Opportunities Committee and the Board of Governors, as well as a more frequent consideration of the data at existing regular meetings of the School Coordinators group. The University will also consider whether to incorporate consideration of this data into the University's Annual Review and Monitoring process for academic provision.

Data is also collected about the use by students of central services. This enables patterns to be identified of users of the support services by any characteristic that is recorded on the student's record. The use of Disability Services can be compared against the profile for areas of the University so that discrepancies can be identified and action taken. Equally the use of, for example, Counselling or Sport and Recreation facilities by disabled students can also be monitored. This management information is considered by the Student Services management team on a monthly basis.

Provision and Support

There are two interrelated aspects to the current provision of support for disabled students:

- the support given to individual disabled applicants and students; and,
- the use of information and understanding gained in supporting individuals to refine the University's provision in order to remove barriers to disabled student participation and assist students in achieving their full potential.

The support offered to students is founded on two principles;

- All students should be enabled to realise their full potential, and
- Disabled people have the true expertise about the nature and effects of their condition on their lives and an insight into the ways in which barriers to their full participation are constructed.

The support that is offered to students seeks to involve them in defining how the University needs to adapt and change and mixes this understanding with the experience and expertise of skilled, trained and knowledgeable staff.

The intention is that the University can grow and develop its provision and practice based on the experience that disabled people have of studying. This approach consciously seeks to avoid placing the additional burden of acting as a spokesperson for all disabled students on the shoulders of a few who are already managing the complex process of engaging in study at University as a person disadvantaged by the barriers that institutions unwittingly or otherwise construct. However, the success of this model depends upon the continual involvement and consultation of disabled people and the capacity of staff to recognise the limitations of their own expertise and willingly to accept the knowledge that disabled people have to offer. In this model, listening and understanding is vital.

This support is available to all students regardless of level, mode or location of study.

Support for individual student applicants and students

Provision of information:

- The University can provide all its information in a variety of accessible formats. The University's prospectuses, website and other promotional materials also contain reference to the University's Policy on the Admission of Disabled Students and references to the support mechanisms and information on how to access them. The Policy states that students should be admitted on the basis of their academic merit and the ability to benefit from such study.

- Visitors to Open Days and other University events aimed at potential students are also encouraged to make any particular needs that they have known so that appropriate reasonable arrangements can be made to enable them to access the event.
- Staff from the Disability Services Team work with staff from schools and colleges where potential applicants are studying to raise awareness of the support available from the University and how to access it, and with admissions staff within the University. They also work with the Information, Advice and Guidance regional network and funding bodies such as local authorities.

Support for applicants:

- Potential disabled applicants are encouraged to make contact with the staff in the Disability Services team in Student Services. This message is in promotional literature, on the website and in material sent out about the general services available to students at the University.
- All applicants who declare a disability on their application form are also written to individually and invited to make contact with a member of the team. It is made clear that the applicant can exercise their own choices in this and that contact with the team is bound by strict confidentiality arrangements. Information is sent about
 - the services and support that is available (this will include specific information for applicants who declare a mental health condition.)
 - funding available for support needs
 - options that they have for obtaining a formal needs assessment if they have not already done so. One of these options is through the University's Assessment Centre on Teesside (ACT).
- If an applicant opts for a formal needs assessment to be undertaken by ACT, a meeting will be arranged. At this the applicant will work through their needs when studying. This will include
 - a review of their existing study strategies
 - consideration of any enabling or adaptive technology and software which they might wish to use
 - determination of any reasonable changes that the University needs to make to the way in which their programme is delivered or assessed
 - consideration of any other arrangements which might enhance the applicants capacity to experience the full student experience.

There are currently two full-time assessors working in ACT.

- If an applicant chooses to make contact with one of the Disability team they will arrange a discussion around how the University will meet their needs. One aim of this is also to establish a supporting relationship and to ensure that a disabled applicant is clear about who they can turn to for support in the University.

- If the applicant has had a needs assessment from ACT, or from another assessment centre, the adviser is responsible for ensuring that the appropriate arrangements are put in place. If an applicant has not undertaken a needs assessment they will be advised of the potential consequences of this. Some support arrangements may still be put in place but they may be more limited by the lack of an assessment. An applicant has the choice.
- The adviser will also, subject to the applicant's consent, ensure that the School Co-ordinator is aware of the applicant's particular requirements. Each School has a School Co-ordinator who is responsible for ensuring that necessary arrangements are effected in Schools. This could be
 - ensuring that staff are aware of the nature and effects of a student's condition (again subject to the student's consent),
 - ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made for assessments or for additional learning support – such as alternative methods of assessment, extra time, specific conditions for examinations, the provision of lecture notes etc.

The Co-ordinator is also intended to act as a point of contact for the student where issues of concern can be raised.

- The adviser will ensure, if appropriate, that the Department of Library and Information Services (LIS) is aware of the particular needs of the student. Support available from LIS includes
 - specialist dedicated staff;
 - specific equipment and software available to support disabled students extended borrowing rights
 - personal induction tours
 - support in accessing the collection
- LIS services have always been informed by a wide range of communication and evaluation with students and staff.
- The adviser will work with other departments – for example to arrange car parking or specific adaptations to accommodation. The University has specially built accommodation available for mobility impaired students and can make other adaptations as required – such as the provision of vibrating fire alarms etc.
- The adviser may also arrange the assistance of an Educational Personal Assistant (EPA) or communication support. EPAs are recruited, employed and trained by the University and are available to support students by the provision of services such as note taking, personal assistance, reading etc. Advisers may also arrange for the loan of equipment to the student to support them.
- An adviser may also set up the provision of specialist dyslexia tuition for a student. The University currently employs 4 dyslexia tutors and a dyslexia co-ordinator.
- There are currently 2 full-time advisers and one part-time specialist in mental well-being.

- Applicants are also offered the opportunity to visit the University on specific Applicant Information Days for disabled applicants.

Pertemps Disability Consultancy's focus group activity found that *“On the whole the application process was relatively barrier free with adaptable forms.”*

Support for students:

- The intention of the Disability Services team is to create a relationship with applicants and students which serves to encourage them to raise issues, concerns or problems at any point so that they can be resolved. There is in addition a more formal review point each year of a student's study when the student is invited to reflect on how effective the arrangements to support their study have been.
- It is also recognised that students may choose not to disclose, or in some cases may not be aware of, a disability before they have enrolled. The same basic process outlined in the section above can be put into effect at any stage of a student's course.
- This is particularly common with dyslexic thinkers and the University has developed a mechanism to undertake diagnostic assessments using a qualified educational psychologist. Approximately 200 of these are done each year. The Disability team also undertake awareness raising activities around dyslexia intended to help students consider whether they might be a dyslexic thinker.
- The Students' Union has an elected part-time officer who has special responsibility for supporting disabled students and representing the interests of disabled students in the development of the Students' Union and the University. This Officer will also undertake to support students in raising individual issues with the University.
- The University also supports disabled students in other ways. These include
 - The development of a series of Dyslexia Holistic workshops designed by students themselves and facilitated by staff to address the broader concerns and issues that dyslexic students have raised and to support their wider needs.
 - The Well Being Centre providing support for students across a range of activities and including workshops on relaxation and a programme called 'Mindfulness' which can help to reduce stress through awareness. Other workshops are also run in conjunction with MIND on Managing Stress, Confidence and Self-esteem Building and Assertiveness.
 - The DiversiTeas programme which aims to link disabled students (amongst other targeted groups) with a mentor in employment with the aim of developing a student's confidence and understanding of working life.
 - The development of an Inclusive Fitness Initiative Centre in the University's sporting facilities in conjunction with the English

Federation for Disabled Sport. The aim of this is to encourage and enable the participation of disabled people and students.

The support given to applicants and students is evaluated. This is through individual questionnaires on the service provided; through the review of arrangements for individual students and through a series of focus groups through the year.

Refining the University's provision

The University has developed mechanisms which allow the experiences of disabled applicants and students, and the developing understanding of staff working with them, to inform the further development of the University's broad provision for disabled people.

It is a key component of the University's approach that the experience and understanding of disabled people must be captured and used to inform institutional development.

- There are regular meetings of staff from the Disability team, School Coordinators and staff from LIS. The purpose of these meetings is
 - to share good practice
 - to identify themes and issues emerging in the experience of disabled students, and
 - to discuss and develop new initiatives.

- An extensive programme to raise the awareness of staff has also been developed. This is informed by the experiences of disabled students and highlights the issues that they have raised. This includes general disability awareness as well as sessions that focus on specific issues such as dyslexia, mental well-being, and deaf awareness.

The experience of disabled students is also used to inform

- the development work of the University's Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategy. This is particularly through participation in working groups on inclusivity and assessment.
- The development of the University's estate through adaptation and enhancement to support overall accessibility.

All of the above demonstrates a robust provision to disabled students and this was reflected in two quotes made by Pertemps Mouzer following their meetings with disabled students:

"The University has made excellent strides towards disability inclusion, and the Student Support Services....reflects excellent practice which can, and should be, publicised".

The consultants felt that continuous improvement is 'aptly reflected', *"..with quality of delivery being maintained and involvement of disabled people to address issues and concerns"*.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Strategic Approach

Inclusivity is a key theme of the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (ULTAS). Inclusivity refers to the ways in which the curriculum can be made more open and accessible to all. In simple terms, it means designing programmes so that they do not present barriers which are not essential if a student is to demonstrate the learning and acquisition of skills that are required components of the course.

The concept of inclusivity permeates all six priority areas of the ULTAS, each of which has significant relevance for disabled students

- Retention and Progression – e.g. progression and completion rates of disabled students
- Skills Development – e.g. design of progress files and work-based learning to meet the needs of disabled students
- Assessment – e.g. availability of alternative forms of assessment for disabled students
- Flexible Learning – e.g. accessibility of learning resources
- Staff Development, Scholarship and Research in Learning and Teaching – e.g. research into accessibility issues
- Learning Environment – e.g. access to learning resources

The Strategy has clear intended outcomes and associated activities which refer specifically to the needs of disabled students and there is a cross-institutional Working Group for each priority area to guide and monitor relevant activities.

Each of the six academic Schools also has a School Implementation Plan for the ULTAS. These have specific reference to disability issues to ensure that those relevant to learning and teaching are addressed at School level.

Learning and Teaching Enhancement

The University addresses aspects of the accessible curriculum in the following ways:

- The Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in HE is compulsory for all new staff with no teaching qualification or less than three years' HE teaching experience. The programme specifically addresses the implications of student diversity and the identification and addressing of disability issues.

- Provision of specific guidance, for example:
 - Rough Guide on Inclusive Assessment (one of a series of guides for staff on key learning and teaching issues). Other guides, for example 'Retention in the Curriculum' and 'Formative Work and Feedback' make specific reference to disability considerations in those aspects of curriculum design and delivery.
 - Dissemination of and signposting to examples of good practice and guidance materials, both internal and external, and
- Programme approval and review guidelines (for use by programme teams) and checklists (for use by approval panels) which make specific reference to disability issues which must be taken into account in programme design and delivery. These encompass the requirements of the QAA Code of Practice and SENDA.
- The e-Learning Team in CLQE has specialist skills in relation to accessibility issues in e-Learning and liaises closely with the Disability Adviser of the Higher Education Academy.

Staff

Staff Data

The Personnel Department has a supportive and pro-active approach to the collection of equality and diversity data.

Initially, staff data is collected via the application form.

To encourage the provision of up to date staff data, which includes equality and diversity information, the Planning Section of the Personnel Department conducts regular comprehensive data surveys of all staff. More recently, the University has encouraged an interactive approach to data collection via the 'University Portal', an online self service facility where staff can amend their own records as their circumstances change.

As a result, the Personnel Department now produces Management Information on a quarterly basis for both the Employment Policy Committee and for all University Deans and Directors. This provides information that will assist with both planning at school/department level and an awareness of equality profiling for all areas.

The University has also developed Key Performance Indicators for both staff and students which focus on the current population (sourced via the HESA return for staff). These indicators are recorded on an annual basis, benchmarked (where possible) internally/externally, and linked with other key sources of information within the University (e.g. student/finance/estates) to provide a meaningful analysis of the University's key areas.

(Tables provided in Appendix C provide a summary of data provided on a quarterly basis as it relates to disability).

Given that there is an expectation that all public sector bodies should employ 3.5% disabled staff, there is clearly still more work to be done in this area. The data contained in Appendix C indicates that whilst the University's policy for ensuring that all disabled applicants who have the essential appointment criteria are short-listed, this is not translating into an equivalent proportion of disabled staff being appointed. It is therefore essential to investigate two questions:

- Why disabled staff are not more successful at interview?
- What actions can be taken to increase the number of disabled applicants which will in turn increase the percentage progressing through to appointment?

The production and dissemination of the University's Disability Equality Scheme will clearly assist in publicising the support that is available for

disabled people who wish to work at Teesside. Information provided on specific disabilities also enables the consideration of appropriate support. Dyslexia is the predominant disability amongst staff and students and the University is investigating ways in which support can be further enhanced and disclosure encouraged.

It should also be noted that the figures only represent those people who have informed the University that they are disabled.

Provision and Support

All staff are fully supported throughout their working time and career progression with the University, regardless of whether they have a disability upon recruitment or if they develop a disability during their time with the University.

Recruitment and Selection – The University encourages equality of opportunity and support as indicated by its accreditation under the Two Ticks symbol scheme:

The Two Ticks Symbol means:

- recognition by Jobcentre Plus that we are committed to providing support and encouragement in the recruitment, employment, retention, and career development of disabled people;
- support for our commitment to interview any applicant with a disability, providing that they meet the minimum criteria for selection;
- enabling applicants with a disability to know that we will be positive about their abilities.

Use of the symbol is subject to regular review by Jobcentre Plus and is subject to the University's ongoing commitment to the monitoring and review of our support and provision for disabled people.

In addition to the above the University also provides positive support for all disabled applicants and new appointees as follows:

- Providing an explanatory sheet in every application pack which presents a summary of the University's commitment to equality and diversity
- Providing a confidential 'tear off' equality and diversity section on the application form which includes questions on disability to enable us to identify any potential support that may be needed both at the selection process and subsequently in employment
- Retaining this form in Personnel during short-listing to ensure that selection is made solely on the individual's ability to meet the criteria

for the job. (The online application process also reflects this approach)

- Providing contact details in all interview invitations for anyone who may require assistance to enable them to attend or take part in the selection process
- Including comprehensive supportive questions on disability on the University's Medical Health Declaration Form now includes comprehensive supportive questions on disability following recognition that some applicants viewed the requirement to complete the Equality and Diversity section as a possible deterrent to achieving an interview

Findings from the focus groups suggest that staff are generally comfortable in declaring their disability and confirm that support is given as soon as a need is identified.

The focus groups also confirmed that overall the recruitment process for disabled applicants is good and that the University recognises and acts upon any special needs or adjustments identified and this is positively received.

Training and Awareness Raising – The University's general commitment to developing its staff is echoed in the provision of comprehensive equality and diversity training. Key points to note are as follows:

All staff are invited to attend the following training sessions:

Induction:

At first day induction, all new staff are made aware of the University's values and our commitment to Equality and Diversity.

Disabled staff say the University's induction is good and adjustments are made to enable them to access the induction process effectively.

Equality and Diversity Awareness:

Staff are then invited to attend an Equality and Diversity Awareness workshop to raise awareness of a wide range of equality and diversity issues. This is also available in an on-line learning programme for those staff who may not attend the workshop due to the nature of their work or contract (e.g. special lecturers, part-time lecturers, temporary staff). The workshop includes information and discussion around disability issues (including the TALK video by the DRC). The workshop recommends Staff Development workshops which include disability.

Other training sessions relating to equality and diversity, including disability issues are provided regularly as follows:

Recruitment & Selection and Training for Chairs of Interview Panels is mandatory for all those who sit on interview panels and includes comprehensive guidance on all aspects of equality and diversity relating to recruitment and selection of staff.

Awareness raising sessions on new equality and diversity University policies and their link with current and anticipated legislation are provided to the University's Corporate Management Committee and the Board of Governors on an annual basis. These sessions ensure that the University Governors and senior managers are fully aware of their obligations and responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity.

Equality and diversity sessions are included in the University's Leadership Courses that are provided to all levels of University management and these sessions assist managers in identifying their specific equality and diversity responsibilities in relation to their staff.

Staff in the focus groups also commented on the fact that the Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) give disabled staff the opportunity to discuss their special ongoing needs and that managers are flexible in supporting these including any time off needed for attending outside appointments.

Specialist support – It is essential that anyone wishing to apply for a role at the University and current staff are aware of the support available for disabled employees. This support is provided as follows:

- an Equality and Diversity Officer and/or Personnel Managers provide a support service for disabled applicants and staff
- access to external expertise includes an Occupational Health Advisor and effective links to the external Access to Work team
- provision of free and confidential counselling sessions
- pro-active sickness monitoring and support
- a team of trained Harassment Advisers with members of the team based in each School and department

Accessibility of Information

- the Staff Handbook and Induction Pack provide details of support and guidance available to disabled staff
- the Personnel website provides access to all policies and guidelines
- the University website provides accessibility functions available to all
- an internal communications review has provided recommendations on accessibility
- Primary Contacts for the dissemination of equality and diversity information have been established within every School/Department
- A University Equality and Diversity Handbook is being developed and will be issued to all Schools/Departments shortly
- All university documents are made available in alternative format provided it is practicable and reasonable to do so

Other areas:

- we actively support disability organisations (e.g. the Shaw Trust – by securing placements for clients)
- staff support extends to Leavers Interviews which encourage review and re-assessment of current practice

- temporary agency staff and those not required to attend induction (special lecturers, part time lecturers, etc) are afforded the same opportunities to take part in equality and diversity sessions and/or the online training
- the Disability Committee has been subsumed by the Equal Opportunities Committee to create an all inclusive forum

Overall staff in the focus groups *“recommended the University as an employer with a resounding and affirmative yes!”*

Staff Training and Development

Data

The Centre for Learning and Quality Enhancement (CLQE) keep a record of all staff development activities which they organise or deliver within the Oracle Training Administration – a staff development database which extracts data from the Oracle HR Database.

Records show how many staff booked onto an activity and:

- the number who attended
- the number who did not attend
- the number who cancelled
- the number who cancelled and re-booked on an alternative date

Records also show:

- the number of individuals affected if CLQE cancel a course
- the number of staff who have decided they no longer have a need for the training course they were due to attend if a course is cancelled

Staff have electronic access to their individual staff development record from the University portal, Unity.

(Tables showing Staff Development Data are provided in Appendix C).

Provision and Support

All activities provided by CLQE are available to all staff at the University of Teesside and to staff involved in the delivery of our programmes at Partnership institutions.

Workshops:

When booking a place on a workshop, staff are asked by the trainer if they have any additional requirements which the trainer should be aware of, such as access to the workshop venue, seating arrangements and/or use of specialist equipment and materials.

Staff Development:

In addition to the training courses mentioned above, the Staff Development Programme offers a wide range of workshops to support the University's values and Equal Opportunities priorities and consider how these can be taken into account when examining approaches to teaching, student assessment and pastoral care. Specifically, there is a programme of workshops to support staff in understanding disability legislation, the social model of disability, issues in delivering programmes to disabled people, positive communication and disability etiquette, and good practice in their particular area.

These include:

- Understanding Dyslexia in the University Community
- Making your teaching Inclusive
- Understanding Disability
- Understanding Mental Health

Student Services also offer tailored staff development to assist staff in supporting disabled students.

The University Estate

The University of Teesside's campus has the advantage of being a single site that is compact and flat on the edge of a town centre location. Indeed Pertemps found from their discussions with students *that "they have been known to deliberately choose University of Teesside because of its accessibility and because the city is flat"*.

Most buildings are relatively modern developments and refurbishments and have incorporated considerations of best practice for access at the time.

In recent years the University has undertaken considerable hard and soft landscaping works and external environmental improvements with a prime consideration to enable physically disabled people to move freely around the Campus and be able to enter each building at ground floor level.

The issue of access for disabled people has been a matter of consideration since 1988 when the first access guide was produced. The nature of the campus has meant that this work has concentrated on enhancing access rather than creating it.

The approach of the University has been

- to listen to the experience of disabled people who use the campus
- to develop the expertise of staff so that they can foresee the needs of disabled people in the development and refurbishment of the campus, and
- to incorporate the needs of disabled people into the planning of new developments and external environment projects

The Estates section, as a matter of course, incorporate work to enhance disabled access into new schemes. In addition particular attention is taken in the case with refurbishment schemes to ensure all forms of disabilities are addressed wherever possible within the budget allocation and prioritisation.

There are some constraints to this work – for example if a scheme had been agreed for improving the seating in a lecture theatre only access enhancements associated with seating would be incorporated, i.e. adjustable height seating, retractable writing tablets, colour contrasting flooring identifying seating levels.

In new build work, consideration of the accessibility of the buildings is a clear component in the design and commissioning stages. The University has invested approaching £100 million over the last decade on new buildings and major refurbishment projects. All of these projects have been completed with the needs of disabled users within the core objectives of the project.

The University conducted an audit in 2002 as part of a full campus building condition survey. This audit was carried out by an external disabilities access

consultant. The audit identified the works that needed to be undertaken to make the campus and the buildings more accessible to disabled people.

The consultants produced a report which identified measures which needed to be addressed to bring the University's buildings in line with the then current (2002) regulations. Each element of work was rated from 1 - 4: 1 being the highest priority and 4 being the lowest.

This audit was used to support a bid to HEFCE for money to improve the accessibility of the campus. HEFCE granted funding of £1.5m. The bid was submitted after Student Services and Estates had assessed the audit and the reported experiences of disabled people using the campus and identified the priorities for action. The outcome of this was a series of generic projects around the following themes.

- **induction loops** The induction loop works involved the installation of fixed loop and Sennheiser systems and the provision of a number of portable loop systems in numerous buildings around the Campus.
- **sanitary works** The sanitary works consisted of three new assisted wc's, new grab rail furniture and new toilet furniture where necessary. The three new assisted wc's were created on the 2nd and 6th floors of Middlesbrough Tower and on the 1st floor of the Orion building and involved creating brand new facilities from space in classrooms and break out areas. New grab rail furniture was installed in areas where they had become problematic or had poor visibility against the background walls. The new furniture installed provides a strong visual contrast to the general wall finishes and is manufactured with an anti-slip finish. New toilet furniture was installed where previous furniture had become dated and did not conform to current (2002) regulations.
- **furniture and fixtures** This work consisted of new external seating and the adaptation of some reception desks in some buildings. The seating has been placed at strategic positions around the Campus to reduce the walking distances without resting points on the main Campus routes.
- **lifts** The lift works consisted of providing new display panels and colour contrasting to lift controls.
- **ramps and stairs** Works in this category included the provision of handrails to a number of flights of stairs, the infilling of open stair risers in the LRC and Student Union buildings and the installation of colour contrasting nosings to stairs where this wasn't apparent.
- **lighting** Lighting levels were improved in the Brittan and Waterhouse buildings.
- **fire and safety** The fire and safety works involved the installation of a Campus wide deaf alerter system which enables staff, students and visitors who are registered deaf to carry a pager with them whilst on Campus which will alert them to a fire alarm activation in the building they occupy. Works will also begin on providing a fire refuge intercom system to a number of buildings on Campus soon.

- **external works** This element of work involved the provision of new ramps/steps to Middlesbrough Tower, Centre House, the Orion and SETC buildings. Works also involved providing automatic doors to Middlesbrough Tower, the Clarendon/Student Centre link, the Innovation Centre and the LRC.
- **decoration and finishing** Works carried out under this category included new floor coverings, and colour contrasting to door frames
- **signage** New improved wayfinding signage has been installed to 5 buildings allowing people with visual impairments to find their way around the buildings more easily. The signage has been designed to provide a strong colour contrast with clear easy to read fonts and Braille.

All the above improvements led to comments from disabled staff and students that “On the whole access around the campus is generally good with good signage”.

The amount of funding appeared to meet the initial cost estimates identified within the audit including an additional amount for inflation and construction cost increases etc.

The HEFCE money was also used to conduct thorough improvement programmes in particular 2 older Grade II listed buildings that are used for general purpose teaching. This also included the Sport and Recreation Facilities where the enhancements to accessibility enabled the facilities to achieve the status of an **Inclusive Fitness Initiative Centre**.

As well as work being carried out as part of larger schemes, numerous smaller works have been carried out in stand alone contracts. These included new automatic doors, renewal of door furniture to provide a visual contrast as well as being soft to the touch, the installation of contrasting tactile signage, some street furniture and the creation of a number of assisted toilets with local and remote alarm facilities. Some external signage around the Campus has been updated recently with the most significant buildings having benefited from complete re-numbering and renewal of compliant signage

The standards and scope of DDA compliance works has expanded as well as user expectations and legislative interpretation of the increased requirements. The University recognise that there are now further requirements to bring the Campus up to these increased standards and will attempt to do so by incorporating these additional measures into future projects where possible and to pro-actively identify any outstanding items in general to be prioritised and allow a bid for further funding to be made.

Practical experience gained since the last audit and increased awareness of the changing standards through working closely with other consultants, has meant the University have recognised that the previous audit had some omissions and inconsistencies as a result of a difference of viewpoint associated with the individual access auditors who conducted the original audit in 2002.

The University will continue to use and enhance its processes to improve the accessibility of the University's Estate for disabled people. It will seek further ways to incorporate the experience of those who use the campus on a daily basis – as students, staff or visitors – and reflect this in the refurbishment and new build projects which It undertakes.

The University will also continue to ensure that it responds to adaptations that will enhance the access of individuals by responding to concerns and needs that they express where it is reasonable to do so.

The University recognises that expertise and standards about the way in which the built environment can disable people continue to develop, as do solutions and understandings of the way that design can resolve issues. It recognises the need to continue to assess the accessibility of the Estate against emerging standards and to build the organisation's capacity to integrate such standards into its daily work.

Access to Information

The Corporate Communications Unit's priority is to publicise the University's many strengths and achievements with the aim of improving and developing Teesside's profile and reputation amongst key groups and supporting the recruitment of students.

A range of formal and informal communication mechanisms are used within the University and the Unit to ensure that these are appropriate and accessible. Key actions include the following:

The University Website has been developed in accordance with W3C accessibility guidelines.

The University is working to ensure that the site is also compliant with new guidelines produced by the DRC and BSI – PAS 78 Guide to Good Practice in Commissioning Accessible Websites.

The University is conducting usability and accessibility testing of the site with assistance from the research centre in the University's School of Computing.

Initial test findings confirm that the site is largely compliant with guidelines. The University is in the process of implementing as number of enhancements designed to improve the experience for disabled users.

The main users of the site are potential students, however, the University is currently looking at the needs of other users/potential users, particularly current students and staff, with a view to developing appropriate content.

University Services

The University has a policy of having an open campus with members of the public free to move around the University's grounds and buildings. The University is in the centre of Middlesbrough and encourages people from the local community to participate in the life of the University. It also runs public events such as seminars and lectures.

Schools and colleges liaison

All visitors (school age students and visitors for Open Day events) are asked prior to any event if they have any special requirements and support arrangements are made. This could include

- Checking buildings and lecture theatres and choosing appropriate rooms
- Informing academics/delivery staff
- Ensuring material and visual display is appropriate
- Engaging Sign Language Interpreters
- Ensuring Mentors are assigned to the individual as a guide if required
- Ensuring all brochures/leaflets and handouts for events are available in alternative formats

In all cases arrangements are made by staff from the Centre for Lifelong Learning.

Conferences and Public Events

The support available for external conferences and events is solely reliant at present on the relevant event organiser. Whilst this works reasonably well, a more comprehensive support system is required to provide a more effective service to our disabled visitors.

Findings and recommendations

The areas for inclusion in the Action Plan are informed by

- consideration of the available data
- the outcome of consultation with disabled people as an integral part of the University's working practices
- the intended development of service provision after evaluation by and feedback from disabled people and reflection by experienced staff
- the outcomes of the consultation undertaken on the University's behalf by Pertemps

Following analysis of all the above, the University has identified a series of related aims which encompass all the areas for action and which have informed the objectives in the Action Plan.

All of these aims are designed to build on the current strength of provision to both disabled staff and students and further enhance the University's commitment to ongoing developments in this area.

A. Management and Organisation

Aim 1: To ensure clarity about the management of and responsibility for matters concerning disabled peoples' access to the University as employees, students, or members of the community using its services

This reflects the need to strengthen existing good practice and to ensure that the DES is appropriately managed.

Aim 2: To further enhance the understanding of disability issues of those from whom the University commissions goods and services

This was identified as an area that requires further development as part of the scrutiny of existing practice by the Working Group

Aim 3: To further embed consideration of disability issues into the University's planning and review processes.

The University has recently undertaken a review of its business planning processes – this aim is intended to ensure that disability issues continue to be significant in the emerging new processes.

Aim 4: To undertake impact assessments on a rolling cycle of all policies and procedures that affect disabled people.

This has been identified as a mechanism to ensure that University processes work to support the University's policy commitment.

B. Students

i) Understanding and use of Data

Aim 5: To improve our understanding of the available data on disabled applicants and students

Initial consideration of the data for the development of the DES highlighted a need to establish clearer mechanisms to scrutinise and report on this data as part of the revised planning process.

Aim 6: To enhance our capture and use of qualitative data on the experience of disabled applicants and students

The University already uses qualitative data but has identified that enhancing this by a focussed research project would support the further development of support.

Aim 7: To further enhance the mechanisms by which we use this data to inform the development of support services

This aim is intended to link the enhanced data and understanding of it with the emerging planning processes in order to identify further developments.

ii) Applications and Transition

Aim 8: To increase the number of applications from disabled people for courses at the University

This aim arises from initial consideration of the data and the informing principal of the DES – increasing the participation of disabled people.

Aim 9: To further enhance the support for disabled students in transition into Higher Education

This arises from consultation with staff working in feeder institutions; from discussions with disabled applicants and students; and from the observations of staff within the disability team. It was reinforced by the report from Pertemps which also identified this as an issue.

Aim 10: To ensure that information for potential applicants is accessible and appropriate

This results from feedback from students and applicants about the complexity of the process as they experience it as expressed in the needs assessment process. It is reinforced by comments made to Pertemps. It will build on existing extensive work identified above.

iii). Support Services and the Student Experience

Aim 11: To further enhance disabled students' access to support services

This is a statement of commitment to the continuous improvement that has always been a component of the support services. The specific intentions to examine the broader elements of the student experience were highlighted in focus groups with students; in the work of the self-help group for dyslexic thinkers; in feedback from individual students and in the Pertemps report.

Aim 12: To continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of those services

This results from feedback from service users about their perceptions of the length of time that processes can take; from the observations of staff; and was identified in the Pertemps report.

Aim 13: To further extend and develop those services in line with feedback from disabled students

This is a statement of commitment that feedback and the views of service users will continue to be one of the principal determinants of further service development.

v) Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Aim 14: To further enhance the skills and understandings of academic staff in course construction, delivery and assessment in meeting the needs of disabled students

This arises because of feedback from students that the most challenging barriers are sometimes those that are connected with the way in which the curriculum is constructed, and from the perceptions of academic staff

that they would like further development opportunities in this area. This is not a new commitment arising from the DES – it is already a component of the University's Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.

Aim 15: To develop the provision of specific guidance materials to support staff in course design and delivery

This has the same derivation as Aim 14.

C. Human Resources

i) Staff Recruitment

Aim 16: To Review Recruitment processes and guidance
(link HR Strategy 2.1 Review Recruitment Processes and Guidance)

This commitment is already part of the University's existing HR Strategy. This will ensure that the needs of disabled people are considered in this development. This reflects feedback from applicants and staff, professional staffs' perceptions of the processes and was identified in the Pertemps report.

ii. Staff Induction

Aim 17: To review Staff Induction processes
(link HR Strategy 4.6 Preparation for new IIP standard).

This commitment is already part of the University's existing HR Strategy. This reflects feedback from applicants and staff, professional staffs' perceptions of the Induction process and was identified in the Pertemps report.

iii. Sickness Absence Management

Aim 18: To review the Sickness Absence Management Policy in relation to Disabled Staff
(link HR Strategy 6 Review best practice on sickness management)

This commitment is already part of the University's existing HR Strategy. The specific need to consider this in the light of the experience of disabled staff arises from the feedback

from disabled staff and was identified in the Pertemps Report

iv. Staff Support

Aim 19: To further enhance disabled staff's access to support services

This is a statement of commitment to the continuous improvement that has always been a component of the support for disabled staff.

v. Staff Profile

Aim 20: To continually review staffing profile in relation to disability of current workforce, applicants and leavers
(link HR Strategy 3.1 Develop the use of workforce information through KPIs).

This commitment is already part of the University's existing HR Strategy. This commitment is to develop specific disability related KPIs to inform the further development of provision and to monitor the overall effectiveness of existing processes and procedures.

D. Estate and Facilities

Aim 21: To ensure that all new and existing University buildings are accessible

This reflects the University's longstanding commitment. The needs of disabled people have been considered in the whole process of the investment of £100million in the University's campus and will continue to be.

Aim 22: To ensure that the experience of users of the University's facilities are captured and fed into future development

There are already mechanisms to respond to the needs of disabled people. This aim identifies the need to refine further these mechanisms and to ensure that works are undertaken as a consequence.

Aim 23: To ensure that the expertise of University staff continues to develop in line with developments in understandings of accessible environments.

This recognises the need, identified by professional staff, to continue to develop the capacity of staff to predict and

incorporate the needs of disabled people as standards and technologies change.

E. Staff Development and Awareness

Aim 24: To further extend staff development activities to support the extension of disability awareness and good practice.

This is a common theme emerging from all sources: from staff directly reflecting their concerns to have development opportunities which enhance their capacity to deliver; from disabled people in feedback on their experiences of the University; and in the report from Pertemps. The University has already undertaken extensive work in raising the awareness and capacity of staff and the intention is to further enhance the depth and range of such activity.

F. Involvement of disabled people

Aim 25: To further enhance the involvement of disabled people in considering the way in which the University develops and extends its services

This aim is a statement of clear principle – that the University will continue to ensure that it has mechanisms which capture the experiences and perspectives of disabled people and uses them to inform the development and delivery of services.

Section 5: Impact Assessment (IA)

Pilot Scheme

The University is developing its Impact Assessment Scheme in line with the recommendations and requirements of equality and diversity legislation whilst taking account of those that indicate best practice with achievable, realistic and meaningful outcomes.

The University intends to use an electronic assessment programme specifically designed to assist the user in providing an accurate, systematic and robust approach to the process.

This will enable the University to adopt a uniform approach to the assessment of its policies and practices throughout the University. It will also enable those who have been trained in the process, and who are familiar with the package, to pass on that knowledge.

In line with the Disability Equality Scheme, the University recognises that the review of policies, processes and procedures should involve disabled people in establishing the priorities and the University will therefore consult on the way in which impact assessment is undertaken. It is the University's intention that the programme of review and reform of policies and processes will normally follow a 3 year cycle.

Implementation

The implementation of the Impact Assessment Process is paramount in the development of the University's Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2006 - 2009. Training sessions occurred in November 2006 for key personnel across the University. These involved staff with particular responsibility for the initial development of University policy and procedure, including the Director of Human Resources, the Assistant Director of Staff Development and the Director of Student Services and their management staff.

Following the initial training programme, two key policies from each area (6 in total) will be subject to the Impact Assessment process as part of a pilot scheme.

Staff Recruitment & Selection and Age Equality

Personnel Development Review Process and Central Staff
Development Application Process

Accommodation Allocation Policy and Bursary Policy

Each assessment will include the involvement of disabled staff and students, and other relevant people and organisations.

The pilot scheme will provide the basis of a report to the University's Senior Management Team to recommend a course of action for the roll out of the Impact Assessment Process throughout the University commencing in early 2007.

Section 6: Implementation

Overview of the DES Action Plan

The University's Disability Equality Action Plan reflects the key categories identified in Section 4 of this Scheme.

- A. Management and Organisation
- B. Students
 - i. Understanding and use of data
 - ii. Student Applications and transition
 - iii. Support Services and the Student Experience
 - iv. Learning, Teaching and Assessment
- C. Staff
 - i. Staff recruitment
 - ii. Staff Induction
 - iii. Sickness absence Management
 - iv. Staff Support
 - v. Staff Profile
- D. Estates and Facilities
- E. Staff Development
- F. Involvement of disabled people.

For each action identified, the following details are provided:

- a member of University staff who will lead the task
- those who will assist the lead person in achieving this goal
- the time scale anticipated for each task
- success indicators

The Disability Equality Scheme and the Action Plan are subject to a process of continual review and development. As a result of this priorities may change, particularly in the light of consultation with disabled people, throughout the three year period covered by the Scheme.

The University intends to assign resources where necessary to the key actions in the plan as a first priority. However, further analysis is required to determine where aspects of the plan are already funded by standard departmental funding and to determine where additional resources may be required.

Ownership and Responsibilities

The overall ownership of the University's Disability Equality Scheme lies with the University's Board of Governors.

It is the responsibility of the Vice Chancellor of the University, and of its Corporate Management Committee, to ensure the implementation of the Scheme and the associated Action Plan.

As Chair of the EOC/EOC Executive, and as a member of the Vice Chancellor's Executive Committee, the University's Secretary will ensure top level support and commitment to the development and implementation of the Action Plan.

At an operational level The Director of Human Resources (for staff) and the Director of Student Services (for students) will assume joint responsibility for the implementation, development and review of the Scheme and of the Action Plan on behalf of the University Secretary. The forum for monitoring progress on the plan will be the University's Equal Opportunities Committee.

Section 7: Promotion, Monitoring & Review, Looking Ahead

Promotion

The Disability Equality Scheme and accompanying Action Plan will be made available to all staff, students and associates of the University. It will be promoted via the University Internet and Intranet and will form part of the Equality and Diversity Handbook. Paper copies and copies in an alternative format will be made available upon request.

Monitoring & Review

All University Policies and Procedures, in line with the requirement to carry out equality and diversity impact assessments, will be subject to a programme of monitoring and review on a three yearly basis. The University will endeavour to ensure that those policies and practices identified as having particular relevance or impact on equality and diversity issues will assume priority in its review and impact assessment process.

Looking Ahead

The principles of the Mission and Vision statements, and of the Equal Opportunities Policy and Values, will continue to inform the development of all policies, procedures and processes.

The University will ensure that the actions identified within the Disability Equality Scheme are addressed and the Scheme itself will be subject to review every three years.

University of Teesside

Action Plan for Disability Equality Scheme 2006 –2009

AD	Assistant Director
CCU	Corporate Communications Unit
CIA	Corporate Information Analysis
CLL	Centre for Lifelong Learning
CLQE	Centre for Learning and Quality Enhancement
CMC	Corporate Management Committee
EOC	Equal Opportunities Committee
FE	Further Education
H&S	Health and Safety
HE	Higher Education
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LTC	Learning and Teaching Committee
SD	Staff Development
SS	Student Services
SU	Students' Union
VLE	Virtual Learning Environment

A.Management and Organisation

Aim 1: To ensure clarity about the management of and responsibility for matters concerning disabled peoples' access to the University as employees, students, or members of the community using its services

Aim 2: To further enhance the understanding of disability issues of those from whom the University commissions goods and services.

Aim 3: To further embed consideration of disability issues into the University's planning and review processes.

Aim 4: To undertake impact assessments on a rolling cycle of all policies and procedures that affect disabled people.

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
1	To extend the role of the Equal Opportunities Committee as a mechanism to monitor and review activity in support of the DES	University Secretary	Director, SS Director, HR Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 1	Regular reports to EOC. Clearer established relationships to other University committees
2	To produce Annual Reports on the progress against the DES	University Secretary	Director, HR Director, SS Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 1	Annual report published on website
3	To enhance consideration of Disability issues into University Planning and Review mechanisms	University Secretary	Director, HR Director, SS Deputy Secretary	Year 1	Report and recommendations to EOC and CMC

			Equality and Diversity Officer		
4	To review the DES on at least an annual basis and to update progress against objectives accordingly. The University may update the DES more frequently as the outcome of disabled people.	University Secretary	Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 1	Reviews published on website identifying changes and explanations for changes
5	To review the University's Communications practices with regard to the need of disabled people. This will include: Consideration of the representation of disabled people in communications and the use of positive images and stories, and Measures to enhance the accessibility of information provision	University Secretary	Director, HR Director, SS Director, CCU Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 2	Feedback from staff and student potential applicants, feedback from current staff and students
6	To develop mechanisms to enhance the understandings and compliance of external contractors, agents, consultants, suppliers and other associates of the University's commitment to disability equality	Director, HR	Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 3	Clear published criteria for procurement of all services and detailed measures to support compliance.
7	To implement a pilot of impact assessments To establish a programme for impact assessments over the period of this DES and to implement them	Directors, HR, SS	Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 1 Year 1 -3	Pilot completed Annual report to EOC

B. Students

i) Understanding and use of Data

Aim 5: To improve our understanding of the available data on disabled applicants and students

Aim 6: To enhance our capture and use of qualitative data on the experience of disabled applicants and students

Aim 7: To further enhance the mechanisms by which we use this data to inform the development of support services

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
8	To establish Key Performance indicators for measuring the participation and achievement of disabled people as students. Initially at an institutional level by comparison with similar types of institution.	Director, SS	Academic Registry (CIA)	Year 1	Clear KPIs established and monitored
9	Subsequently to reflect on the advisability and practicality of developing these at a School Level	Director, SS	Academic Registry (CIA)	Year 3	Report with recommendations to EOC and CMC
10	To use existing data to identify particular patterns of application, engagement progression and achievement by disabled people as students – either in the nature of disability, subject area, mode or level of study.	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager Academic Registry (CIA)	Year 1	Report with recommendations to EOC and CMC and also to LTC
11	To identify from this transferable good	Director, SS	Disability	Year 2	Report with recommendations to

	practice and additional needs for staff development		Services Manager Assistant Director (Learning and Teaching), CLQE CLQE (SD)		EOC and Retention Steering Group Identifiable additional staff development provision
12	To undertake research on the retention and progression of students with disabilities to inform policy and practice.	Assistant Director (Learning and Teaching), CLQE	Head of Retention Team, CLQE	Year 1- 3	Improved completion rates for students with disabilities Surveys indicate increased satisfaction of disabled students with accessibility of programmes

B. Students

ii) Applications and Transition

Aim 8: To increase the number of applications from disabled people for courses at the University

Aim 9: To further enhance the support for disabled students in transition into Higher Education

Aim 10: To ensure that information for potential applicants is accessible and appropriate

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
13	To work with feeder institutions to enhance aspirations and understanding of support available for disabled people.	Director, SS	Deputy Director CLL, Disability Services Manager	Year 2	Increased applications
14	To work with feeder organisations to enhance the experience of disabled students in transition into higher education.	Director, SS	Deputy Director CLL, Disability Services Manager	Year 2	Feedback from students on the process of transition from FE to HE
15	To review website information and enhance accessibility and content for disabled people	Director, SS	Director CCU, Disability Team	Year 1	Report and recommendations to Student Information Coordination Committee
16	To develop additional activities as a component of the Passport programme to support disabled students in process of applying to Higher Education	Director, SS	CLL	Year 2	Successful programme of activities as a component of Passport programme with average attendance of at least 20 students per year

B. Student

iii). Support Services and the Student Experience

Aim 11: To further enhance disabled students' access to support services

Aim 12: To continue to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of those services

Aim 13: To further extend and develop those services in line with feedback from disabled students

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
17	To continue work to streamline the needs assessment process to reduce the length of time it takes whilst maintaining the necessary quality standards required for registration as an Assessment Centre	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager	Ongoing	Increased satisfaction from students evidenced in feedback and in reductions in complaints and observations about delays.
18	To continue work to enhance available information on the processes to better inform disabled applicants' and students' expectations	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager	Ongoing	Increased satisfaction from students evidenced in feedback and in reductions in complaints and observations about delays.
19	To improve understanding of the mechanisms by which disabled students learn about and/or are referred to the central support services so that information provision and communication can be enhanced	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager	Year 1	Greater uniformity in referral rates from different parts of the University
20	To develop further existing focus group activity and ensure that the outcomes of these are regularly fed into the further	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager	Ongoing	Annual reports to Student Experience Committee

	development of provision and to refine mechanisms to give feedback to participants on actions taken				
21	To review the protocols for sharing information on the needs of individual disabled applicants and students and to develop a institution-wide confidentiality policy	Director, SS	Student Services Management Team	Year 3	To have an agreed policy accepted and understood.
22	To examine how well the social and recreational activities of the University meet the needs of disabled students and to develop a clear plan to enhance this	Director, SS	SU Head of Sport and Recreation	Year 2	Report and recommendations to Student Experience Committee
23	To review specific provision of Careers Information for disabled students and to deliver workshops on issues of disclosure	Director, SS	Senior Career Adviser	Year 2	Delivery of targeted workshops. Report to Student Experience Committee
24	To continue with the development of enhanced guidance and support for students on work placements and for the providers of work placements on the needs of disabled students	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager	Ongoing	Provision of clear guidance in accessible forms
25	To consider the specific needs of deaf students and to develop support provision for them.	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager	Year 2	Report and recommendations to EOC.
26	To monitor the University's complaints and harassment processes to determine the extent of harassment of disabled students.	Director, SS	Ombuds Office	Ongoing	Initial findings reported to Academic Board as part of annual reporting on complaints
27	To continue and extend work at student induction to explain commitment to equality, diversity and consequently support for disabled people's participation	Director, SS	Management Team Student Services	Ongoing	Student feedback and level of complaints.

B. Students

iv) Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Aim 14: To further enhance the skills and understandings of academic staff in course construction, delivery and assessment in meeting the needs of disabled students.

Aim 15: To develop the provision of specific guidance materials to support staff in course design and delivery.

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
28	To make increasingly effective use of the VLE to support disabled students. Continue to liaise with the Higher Education Academy Disability Adviser and the national Disability Partnership	Assistant Director (Learning and Teaching), CLQE	VLE Systems Manager, CLQE	Year 1 – 3	Student feedback surveys indicate satisfaction of disabled students with the resources and support available in the VLE
29	To enhance the range of in-School staff development activities to enable staff to better meet the needs of disabled students within the context of their specific disciplines, programmes and modules e.g. alternative formats for learning resources, alternative assessment mechanisms.	Assistant Director (Learning and Teaching), CLQE	School Learning and Teaching Co-ordinators	Year 1 Year 1 -2 Year 1 -2	Programme and module design/approval guidelines and checklists require staff to demonstrate how they meet the needs of disabled students Guidance materials for staff on different aspects of designing and supporting an accessible curriculum Improved accessibility of learning resources

C. Human Resources

i) Staff Recruitment

Aim 16: To Review Recruitment processes and guidance
(link HR Strategy 2.1 Review Recruitment Processes and Guidance).

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
30	To review recruitment processes and formulate proposals for improvements including accessibility for disabled applicants	Director of HR	Recruitment Manager, E&D Officer, Personnel Managers	Year 1,2	Improved applicant/appointment data from disabled candidates.
31	To review on line application process and develop new on line application form, process and alternative application formats for disabled applicants, including provision for screen reader and voice activated application methods.	Director of HR	Recruitment Manager, E&D Officer, ICT Systems staff	Year, 1,2	Replacement on line application process in place. Selection of alternative application format available
32	To review and revise Recruitment and Selection Training package to provide more emphasis on disability awareness, communication issues and questioning adjustments to assist disabled applicants	Director of HR	Recruitment Manager, E&D Officer, Personnel Manager	Year 2	New Recruitment and Selection Training package in place and improved disability awareness of all staff involved in selection activities.
33	To consider a dedicated disability support colleague in place to assist disabled applicants through recruitment process	Director of HR	Director of HR	Year 2	A more personal support service available to disabled applicants who request assistance or adjustments.
34	To review use of Medical Screening Questionnaire as method of obtaining data on disability and special needs assistance	Director of HR	Director of HR	Year 2	A revised method of obtaining data related to disability and adjustment requirements in place.

C. Human Resources

ii. Staff Induction

Aim 17: To review Staff Induction processes
(link HR Strategy 4.6 Preparation for new IIP standard).

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
35	To review induction process for new starters with identified disabilities or special needs.	Director of HR, AD Staff Development	Director of HR, AD Staff Development, E&D Officer, Personnel Managers	Year 2,3	Tailored Induction Blue Print in place for disabled new staff, including flexibility to accommodate special needs and/or adjustments.
36	To improve disability awareness raising content in Induction materials and guidance.	Director of HR, AD Staff Development	Director of HR, AD Staff Development, E&D Officer, Personnel Managers	Year 2, 3	Revised Induction in place including enhanced disability awareness content.

C. Human Resources

iii. Sickness Absence Management

Aim 18: To review the Sickness Absence Management Policy in relation to Disabled Staff
(link HR Strategy 6 Review best practice on sickness management)

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
37	To review best practice on sickness absence management in relation to disability related absences and their management	Director of HR	Director of HR, E&D Officer, Senior H&S Adviser, Personnel Managers	Year 2,3	Revised Policy and Procedure in place including actions relating to disability related absence.
38	To develop a sickness absence management training programme including disability absence awareness	Director of HR, AD Staff Development	Director of HR, E&D Officer, Senior H&S Adviser, Personnel Managers	Year 2, 3	New Training Programme in place

C. Human Resources

iv. Staff Support

Aim 19: To further enhance disabled staff’s access to support services.

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
39	To review and enhance the support services available to disabled staff of the University	Director of HR	Director of HR, Personnel Managers	Year 1,2	Positive staff feedback on support services

C. Human Resources

v. Staff Profile

Aim 20: To continually review the staffing profile in relation to disability of current workforce, applicants and leavers
(*link HR Strategy 3.1 Develop the use of workforce information through KPIs*).

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
40	To develop further use of and analysis from HR Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) related to disability.	Director of HR	Director of HR, Planning Manager, E&D Officer	Year 2,3	Analysis of trends in Disability KPIs identified within University available to inform future planning processes.
41	To develop and benchmark Disability KPIs against data from “family” of Universities,.	Director of HR,	Director of HR, Planning Manager	Year 2, 3	Analysis of trends in Disability KPIs identified across University family available to inform future planning processes.
42	To consider the feasibility to develop and benchmark Disability KPIs across other sectors and against national statistics.	Director of HR	Director of HR, Planning Manager	Year 3	Feasibility study complete and recommendations in place for future development.

D. Estate and Facilities

Aim 21: To ensure that all new and existing University buildings are accessible

Aim 22: To ensure that the experience of users of the University’s facilities are captured and fed into future development

Aim 23: To ensure that the expertise of University staff continues to develop in line with developments in understandings of accessible environments

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
43	To ensure that all improvement and minor works alterations incorporate the relevant measures to support access for the disabled.	Head of Estates	Project Manager	Ongoing	Fully accessible areas of the buildings associated with the improvements.
44	To ensure that appropriate measures are incorporated at a design stage in all major capital building works.	Head of Estates	Project Manager	Ongoing	Fully accessible new buildings.
45	To ensure that the views of disabled users of the facilities are considered and fed into refurbishment and developments.	Head of Estates	Director, SS Director, HR E&D Officer	Ongoing	Positive feedback from facilities users
46	To enhance the expertise of staff within the Estates division about the needs of disabled people in accessing buildings and facilities, and, if appropriate, to engage external consultants to support this development if funding is approved.	Head of Estates	Project Manager	Year 2	Clear specifications for adaptations and new build projects
47	To develop clear protocols for consideration of disabled people’s needs in accessing public events and conferences	Director, HR	E&D Officer	Year 2	A clear agreed protocol and a training programme associated with it.

E. Staff Development and Awareness

Aim 24: To further extend staff development activities to support the extension of disability awareness and good practice

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
48	To extend the existing disability awareness component of the Management Development Processes.	Director, HR	AD Staff Development, SD Officers	Year 2,3	Range of disability awareness workshops incorporated into Management Development Programmes.
49	To continue the delivery of staff development programmes which raise awareness and understanding of specific disabilities.	Director, HR	Director, SS Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 3	A clear programme of staff development activities and a commitment to delivery in the second DES.

F. Involvement of disabled people

Aim 25: **To extend the involvement of disabled people in considering the way in which the University develops and extends its services**

	Action	Overall Responsibility	Action by	Target Date	Success Indicators
49	To establish clearer mechanisms to involve disabled staff in the delivery of services to staff in the University	Director, HR	Equality and Diversity Officer	Year 1	Report to EOC on arrangements and outcomes of consultation
50	To refine existing mechanisms for involving disabled students in the development of service provision	Director, SS	Disability Services Manager	Year 1	Report to EOC on arrangements and outcomes of consultation
51	To establish relationships with external organisations of disabled people to provide information about the perceptions of the University	Director, HR	Equality and Diversity Manager	Year 1	Report to EOC on arrangements and outcomes of consultation

Appendix A: Recommendations from the Focus Groups

Appendix B: Student Data

Appendix C: Staff Data

Appendix A

Recommendations from the Focus Groups

Reference has been in the earlier parts of this document to the comments made by both disabled staff and students which reflect the good practice exhibited by the University. However, there were also a number of recommendations identified by Pertemps Mouzer which have assisted the University in moving forward and providing a more effective service to staff and students. The recommendations have been reproduced verbatim from the consultants report.

The recommendations have been grouped for ease of reference and under each recommendation is the response from the University which indicates how it intends to take the recommendation forward.

Students

1. To speed up the response time between identifying adjustment needs to them being put in place.

This is addressed in Action Plan point 17.

Staff Recruitment and Selection

2. For a template application form to be supplied electronically in a format which does not require complex IT skills, which can also be saved, to enable potential candidates to adjust to their needs. The format needs also to be acceptable to voice-activated and screen reader softwares.

The University is currently undertaking a project to redesign the on-line application form for staff and the above considerations will be taken into account in the final design. This is addressed in Action Plan point 31.

3. For pre-consultation on interview questions so that every member of the panel is able to access and deliver the process with ease.

A review of the University's appointments policy and guidance for panels is planned for early 2007. This will enable panel members to be much more aware of the questions they are asking and ensure that they are appropriate. This is addressed in Action Plan point 30.

4. For staff who are involved in interviews to have training in disability awareness, communication, being flexible with interview techniques and building in adjustments throughout the process.

All recruitment panel members have already received training. This will be reinforced following revisions to the appointments and guidance policy. This is addressed in Action Plan point 32.

5. That a check is made on access to the venue for any interviews, particularly if there is evidence of mobility difficulty (use ground floor rooms only for ease of access)

This has now been established as an integral part of the pre-interview checks.

6. Forms in general were particularly difficult for dyslexic staff to understand. It would be useful to encourage full consultation with staff and students to make forms more accessible.

Having now established a focus group of disabled staff, the University will now check that key University documentation is in a form that suits all staff with disabilities. This is addressed in Action Plan points 31 and 49.

Staff Support

7. That consideration be given to having a dedicated person who staff can approach for any issues regarding disabilities – whether their own or a colleague's. That person works in close liaison with the Student Support Services to ensure cross-communication and a pooling of resources.

There is a range of staff available within the Personnel Department to provide support and advice to disabled staff. However, there is a need to make the communication and support routes much clearer to staff. This is addressed in Action Plan point 39.

8. To set up a process that ensures needs analysis, support and monitoring is put into place and that line managers/relevant staff are all made aware of this.

The University will take steps to formalise what are currently informal practices. This is addressed in Action Plan points 33, 39 and 48.

9. For staff to be reassured that their work performance will not go against them whilst awaiting support.

This will included in the documentation provided to disabled staff on entry and provided to those staff who become disabled at the point at which their disability is identified. This is addressed in Action Plan point 39.

10. For all line managers to receive basic awareness training on specific disabilities within their workteams, including the psychological impact disabilities can have in managing everyday duties.

This support needs to be developed and will help to inform new procedures in this area. This is addressed in Action Plan points 48 and 49.

11. For a member of staff to be appointed who would represent staff who have disabilities, especially where support at reviews/appraisals is needed and who can also act as 'expert advice' for line managers. This person would need to hold enough responsibility to be able to make changes where needed.

This recommendation needs further consideration under the general heading of support for disabled staff. This is addressed in Action Plan point 39.

Training and Development

12. For a re-assessment of the option for disability awareness/equality training, whether this is in-house or external, to ensure basic knowledge of processes of discrimination and the etiquettes surrounding disability.

This is addressed in Action Plan points 48 and 49.

13. For catering and other similar staff to undergo disability training

This is addressed in Action Plan points 48 and 49.

14. Training for staff to further enhance their confidence in meeting varying disability needs.

This is addressed in Action Plan points 48 and 49.

15. To provide a link for disability information direct from the front page of the website.

This is addressed in Action Plan points 5, 15 and 18.

16. Disability-specific training for lecturers to enhance their understanding of the needs relating to specific disabilities.

This is addressed in Action Plan points 29 and 49.

17. If staff dealing with students cannot all receive Disability Equality training, then it is recommended staff at management level receive the training in order to promote inclusion of disabled people. They will then feel confident to support students who are disabled.

This is addressed in Action Plan point 48.

18. Perhaps some training linked to the discrimination policy and disability needs to be explored?

This is addressed in Action Plan points 48 and 49.

Estates

19. Each time the room numbers change it would be useful to have internal maps printed showing the new numbers.

The focus groups were conducted just after the University had undertaken a major exercise in re-signing the University. The principal motivation for this was to upgrade the quality and accessibility of the signage. It was also recognised that over time inconsistencies and peculiarities had arisen in the University's room numbering practices. It was decided that the upgrading of signage presented an opportunity to resolve some of these anomalies. This led to the re-numbering of rooms on an unprecedented – and probably unique – scale. This undoubtedly caused some confusion – and in the unlikely event that this level of re-organisation occurs – the University will endeavour to communicate such changes more effectively.

20. The computer room in Clarendon has information on the glass door panel stating what classes are going on which is in a too small font size. Be useful to have this notice on the side of the door and in larger font size.

This recommendation may be too specific to include in an Action Plan – but the University will nevertheless work to ensure that staff are generally aware of the need to post notices and information in a way that is accessible. It will do so through the programme of disability awareness.

Access to Information

21. To ensure prospective disabled students know that the prospectus can be obtained in more accessible formats.

This is clearly indicated in the prospectus already but the University will examine ways to ensure that this is made clearer. This is addressed in Action Plan points 15 and 18.

22. To include more comprehensive information on access for disabled students to university and the courses.

This is identified as an action in the plan. This is addressed in Action Plan points 15 and 18.

23. To set up direct easy-access links between the internet, intranet and Blackboard.

This is identified as an action in the plan. This is addressed in Action Plan point 28.

Other

24. For HR to review policies to ensure disability inclusion.
The University's plans for impact assessment will address this issue. This is addressed in Action Plan point 7.
25. To review guidance on the psychological and physical benefits of phased returns to work.
This will be covered by the review of the University's sickness absence policy planned for early 2007. This is addressed in Action Plan points 37 and 38.
26. To consider developing a strategy for liaising with 6th form and FE colleges to prepare for the new learning approach.
Although we recognise the need for continuing development of our relationship with the institutions that applicants are currently studying with, the needs assessment process operated through ACT ensures that the needs of potential students are supported thoroughly by the University. This is addressed in Action Plan points 13, 14 and 15.
27. For all cafes and refreshment places on the campus to have menus on tables and in a font style and size to suit.
28. Ensure stocks of appropriate food does not run out.
Although items 28 and 29 do not constitute a formal commitment in the Action Plan, this feedback will be passed to University Services.
29. For lecturers and tutors to be more proactive in checking with student support services if they have disabled students in their school/tutorial group. This would support the service who cater for over 800 disabled students on campus.
The agreed process is that information on the needs of disabled students is communicated by School Coordinators to members of academic staff. The responsibility does not lie with lecturers and tutors to be proactive in discovering the needs of their students – it lies with Student Services to inform Coordinators and with Coordinators to inform academic staff. This communication is all subject to consideration of confidentiality and explicit permission from the student to disclose. It also, necessarily, requires the student to disclose a disability in the first place. A review of the responsibilities for sharing information is already taking place.
The University will examine these issues and seek to get an agreed institutional confidentiality policy. This is addressed in Action Plan points 21 and 49.

30. Disability must have a separate budget in order for the implementation of the DES to be effective and meet the requirements set by the DRC and the Audit Commission.

Whilst a separate budget for disability has not been determined, an initial task in implementing the Action Plan will be to identify the resources required for each of the actions identified, given that many of them will be provided for as ongoing projects, already accounted for in departmental funds. This is addressed in Action Plan point 3.

31. When using outside contractors they must be checked for having a Disability Equality policy in place or at least have disability included within the Equal Opportunity policy to ensure they are working to the same standards as the University.

The University's regulations for tendering for external services provide very clear guidance to those submitting tenders about the equality and diversity standards required of all our contractors. This is addressed in Action Plan point 6

32. Consideration to use the term 'disabled and deaf students' or 'disabled and deaf staff' to encourage more deaf people to be apply.

This is addressed in Action Plan point 25.

33. Use success stories for disabled and deaf people in the university newsletter as a way to encourage further people to apply.

This will be taken on board, particularly in relation to the ongoing work around staff recruitment. This is addressed in Action Plan point 5.

Appendix B

Student Data

Student applicant data

The data in these tables refers to full-time applications only and is for two years – entry in 2006 and entry in 2005. The source of the data is the students' own indication on their application form. The data is subdivided into undergraduate degree, foundation degree and other undergraduate programmes (HNC, HND, university certificate and diploma).

<i>Full-time Applications in 2006</i>	<i>Total applications</i>	<i>Numbers of disabled applicants</i>	<i>% of disabled applicants</i>
Undergraduate Degree	11688	621	5.3
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	1000	68	6.8
Postgraduate	1917	89	4.6
Total	14605	778	5.3
% applicants offered place	76.1%	75.7%	
<i>Full-time Applications in 2005</i>	<i>Total applications</i>	<i>Numbers of disabled applicants</i>	<i>% of disabled applicants</i>
Undergraduate Degree	10847	553	5.1
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	1165	73	6.3
Postgraduate	1823	87	4.8
Total	13835	717	5.2
% applicants offered place	73.8%	74.1%	

Student enrolment data (all years of study)

These tables indicate the numbers of self-declared disabled students and expresses this as a percentage of the total number of students. The data here covers that last two years for which finalised data is available and is for all students.

<i>Students in 2004/05</i>	<i>Total numbers</i>	<i>Numbers of disabled students</i>	<i>% of disabled students</i>
<i>Full Time students</i>			
Undergraduate Degree	6603	399	6.0
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	1857	89	4.8
Postgraduate	706	46	6.5
<i>Part Time students</i>			
Undergraduate Degree	1171	68	5.8
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	7285	281	3.9
Postgraduate	1051	45	4.3

<i>Students in 2003/04</i>	<i>Total numbers</i>	<i>Numbers of disabled students</i>	<i>% of disabled students</i>
<i>Full Time students</i>			
Undergraduate Degree	6443	404	6.3
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	1943	99	5.1
Postgraduate	615	43	7.0
<i>Part Time students</i>			
Undergraduate Degree	1032	54	5.2
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	7384	271	3.7
Postgraduate	1036	34	3.3

Student Progression data (all years of study)

These tables give information about the progression of students – i.e. the numbers passing or progressing to the next stage of their course. The figures express the percentage of disabled students who progress and the percentage of non-disabled students who do so. The data is for the last two years for which data has been finalised.

<i>Students in 2004/05</i>	<i>% (No.)Non disabled student progression</i>	<i>% (No.)Disabled student progression</i>
<i>Full Time students</i>		
Undergraduate Degree	79.1 (6603)	76.9 (399)
Foundation Degree And Other Undergraduate	81.3 (1857)	77.1 (89)
Postgraduate	86.4 (706)	80.4 (46)
<i>Part Time students</i>		
Undergraduate Degree	76.6 (1171)	75.0 (68)
Foundation Degree And Other Undergraduate programmes	82.2 (7285)	83.2 (281)
Postgraduate	84.4 (1051)	77.8 (45)
<i>Total overall</i>	81.7 (18,673)	78.4 (928)

<i>Students in 2003/04</i>	<i>Non disabled student progression %</i>	<i>Disabled student progression %</i>
<i>Full Time students</i>		
Undergraduate Degree	79.3 (6443)	77.7 (404)
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	84.8 (1943)	79.9 (99)
Postgraduate	75.2 (615)	67.4 (43)
<i>Part Time students</i>		
Undergraduate Degree	82.3 (1032)	70.4 (54)
Foundation Degree and Other Undergraduate programmes	83.5 (7384)	65.7 (271)
Postgraduate	79.1 (1036)	76.5 (34)
<i>Total overall</i>	80.7 (18,453)	72.9 (905)

Comparison to National Student Data

The data in this table shows the percentage of disabled first year entrants to the University in the academic year 2004/05. The data from the University is drawn from the information given by applicants on application or at enrolment. The national data is drawn from the Higher Education Statistics Agency's analysis of data for all Higher Education Institutions.

% disabled first year entrants 2004/05			
	Undergraduate Degree %	Other Undergraduate %	Postgraduate %
Full-time			
Teesside	6.3	5.1	9.0
England	7.1	7.3	6.4
Part-time			
Teesside	5.5	4.0	3.4
England	5.5	4.3	3.8

Appendix C

Staff Data:

<i>Disabled Status (as at 30/9/06)</i>	
Yes	40
No	1708
Not Known	1
Total	1749

<i>Disability by Category (as at 30/9/06)</i>			
			%
Blind/Partially Sighted	2		4.3%
Mental Health Difficulty	1		2.1%
Deaf/Hearing Impairment	6		12.8%
Multiple Disabilities	4		8.5%
Wheelchair User/Mobility	7		14.9%
Dyslexia	10		21.3%
Unseen Disability	10		21.3%
Other Disability	5		10.6%
Not Known	2		4.3%
Total	47		100.0%

<i>Leavers (1/7/06 – 30/9/06)</i>	
Disabled	Total
No	92
Yes	4
Grand Total	96

Recruitment by Disabled Status (1/7/06 – 30/9/06)			
Disabled Status	Applied	Interviewed	Appointed
Disabled	1%	1%	
Not Disabled	98%	99%	100%
Not Known	1%	0%	
Information Refused	0%		
Total	100%	100%	100%
Total Numbers	1215	292	79

Recruitment by Disabled Status				
Disabled	Applied	Interviewed	Appointed	Total
Disabled	18	2		20
Not Disabled	1188	289	79	1556
Not Known	7	1		8
Information refused	2			2
Grand Total	1215	292	79	1586

Staff Development Data:

Table One below shows the number of workshop places which have been utilised by staff who have a disability compared with staff who do not have a disability from August 2005 to July 2006.

<i>Disabled</i>	<i>Attended</i>	<i>Did not Attend</i>	<i>Delegate Cancelled</i>	<i>Delegate Cancelled Re-Booked</i>	<i>CLQE Cancelled</i>	<i>Self-Tutor</i>	<i>Totals</i>
No	3048	404	384	73	179	25	4113
Yes	71	8	7	1	1	2	90
N/A	13	3	2		3		21
Information Refused	1	1					2
Totals	3133	416	393	74	183	27	4226
Percent	74.14	9.84	9.30	1.75	4.33	0.64	100.00

Table Two shows the breakdown of that data according to disability

<i>Disability</i>	<i>Attended</i>	<i>Did not Attend</i>	<i>Delegate Cancelled</i>	<i>Delegate Cancelled Re-Booked</i>	<i>CLQE Cancelled</i>	<i>Self-Tutor</i>	<i>Totals</i>
Deaf/Hearing Impairment	13	2	1	1			17
Dyslexia	20		4		1		25
Wheelchair User/Mobility Difficulty	9	1			1	1	12
Unseen Disability eg Diabetes, Epilepsy	8	4	2				14
Multiple Disabilities	11					1	12
Other Disability	11	2	3				16
No Disability	1206	175	173	35	70	3	1662
N/A	1839	231	210	37	111	22	2450
Not Known	15	1					16
Blind/Partially Sighted	1			1			2
Totals	3133	416	393	74	183	27	4226
Percent	74.14	9.84	9.30	1.75	4.33	0.64	100.00

Please note the data shows the number of workshop places which have been utilised rather than the number of different people who have attended. It could be therefore that the same person has attended more than one workshop.

Summary Analysis of Staff Development Data

The percentage of staff in the University who have declared they have disabled status is 2.6% and of the total number of workshop places that have been utilised during 2006 / 2007, 2.78% have been taken by staff with a disability or those who have refused or not provided the information.

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