

THE UNIVERSITY *of York*

Disability Equality Scheme
2006-2009

December 2006

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Disability Equality Scheme 2006-2009

1 The University of York Disability Equality Scheme

The purpose of this Disability Equality Scheme is to make sure that the needs of people with impairments are taken into account as the University changes and grows, so that we create “an intellectual, social and physical environment in which all students and staff achieve their potential.”¹ This Scheme is the University’s first attempt to review its current provision for people with impairments and to identify what needs to be done to eliminate barriers to their achievement, in the light of its overall institutional strategy. The Action Plan sets out detailed objectives to be achieved over the next three years.

In developing this Scheme we have adopted a social model of disability. This focuses attention on the ways in which the ‘problem’ of disability is produced not by the impairments of individuals but by the way in which society organizes itself. This in turn rests on attitudes and assumptions that create self-perpetuating barriers by preventing people with impairments from fully participating in social living.

It is important that impairments are not viewed as homogeneous, because this may in itself be disabling. The impairments that we need to accommodate are various, even conflicting, and must be addressed in different ways. The needs of people with dyspraxia are not the same as those of people with hearing disorders, while kerb cuts for wheelchair users may be a hindrance to blind or partially-sighted people who use walking-sticks. Moreover, being able-bodied is a temporary state. Many people have some impairment and almost all will acquire more serious impairments during their life-times, from ill health or old age. There is not a clear dividing line between the impaired and the unimpaired, but a spectrum along which everyone moves in the course of time.

¹ See University of York Corporate Plan 2005-9 at <http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/po/corplan05/welcome.htm>

2 Developing the Disability Equality Scheme

The development of the Scheme has been led by a Disability Equality Scheme Group chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The Group includes staff and students, and brings together expertise from Disability Services, Equal Opportunities Office, Estates Services, Personnel Office, Student Support Services, academic departments, York University Students' Union and the Graduate Students' Association. The work has been done in the context of an established organizational committee structure relating to equal opportunities and disability. We began by holding a meeting of interested parties at which we reviewed the University's current provision for students and staff with impairments. Since then, there have been two directions to the work: the first has been to consult people with impairments about the strengths and weaknesses of that provision and the second to engage senior managers in order to ensure that disability equality is embedded in the University's forward thinking.

2.1 Consulting people with impairments

Fundamental to change is the principle that people with impairments are in the best position to know what needs to be done. We began by commissioning two web-based questionnaires, one for staff and one for students. The staff questionnaire was addressed to all staff, and 69% of the 196 respondents identified themselves as having impairments. This is a much higher number than are officially recorded by the University, as section 4.2 shows. The questionnaire aimed to find out what employees thought about the University's impairment-related policies and practices, and to identify possible priority actions for the Disability Equality Scheme.² The student questionnaire was responded to by 72 students with impairments who were willing to take part in the consultation. It asked them for their views on the application process, learning and teaching, and student life.³ These two questionnaires have proved extremely informative. We have also engaged with people with impairments by inviting members of University committees involved in formulating the Scheme to

2 Shehzad Ali and Marilyn Crawshaw, University of York Disability Equality Survey: Analysis and Results. Department of Social Policy and Social Work, University of York, July 2006.

3 Disability Equality Scheme – Student Questionnaire. YUSU, Disability Services, Student Support Services, July 2006.

self-identify as having impairments and to speak as such. We did this on the assumption, which proved correct, that people with impairments are likely to be already involved in all aspects of the University's work but are rarely asked to speak directly from their experience. We also sent the draft Scheme to people with impairments for their comment. As the Action Plan shows, the Disability Equality Scheme Group will continue to consult people with impairments as part of the ongoing process of impact assessment.

2.2 Engaging senior managers

In order to ensure that the Disability Equality Scheme is embedded in the University's vision for the future and supported at the highest levels, we have worked through the structure of the Corporate Plan 2005-9. This central planning document is divided into key themes, each of which is the responsibility of a member or members of the University's senior management team. These are:

- Academic development and student numbers growth
- Enhancing research performance
- The student experience -
 - Teaching and learning
 - Student support
- The University and the community
- Governance and management -
 - Governance
 - Human resources
- Enhancing the environment:
- Income generation

The Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Teaching and Learning, Research, Students, Estates, and External Relations, as well as the Registrar, the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Communications, have each consulted within their areas of strategic responsibility in order to identify actions for the Disability Equality Scheme over the next three years. Appendix 1 lists actions that have been identified as feasible at the present time. These will be reviewed annually in the light of the University's overall financial position, and some actions may have to be modified or deferred if they cannot be funded within the specified academic year. The Disability Equality Scheme has not yet been approved by the University Council, because of the timing of the committee cycle. It will be presented at the next meeting of Council in March.

3 Context

3.1 The University of York

The University takes pride in its pursuit of excellence in research, teaching and the application of knowledge. It currently has around 11,530 students and around 3,000 staff. It is campus-based, with a high proportion (currently over 40%), in comparison to the national average, of its students resident in University accommodation, which is organized into eight Colleges. The University has ambitious plans for expansion within the next few years, which will double the size of the estate and increase student and staff numbers by around 50% by 2015/16. At the same time the University plans to increase the percentage of overseas students from the current 14% to 20%, and of postgraduates from the current 23% to 30%.

The University's physical estate presents challenges in relation to access, which we are trying to address. Much of the 60s main campus was designed before disability awareness was expected of public bodies. The multiple levels of the landscape are exploited in ways that are not easy for the mobility and sight-impaired. The very old listed buildings – Heslington Hall and King's Manor – are difficult but not impossible to modify. In the newer buildings we have addressed the needs of people with impairments, and we expect our expansion development to be an exemplar of inclusivity.

3.2 The legislative framework

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 amends and extends the provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, which had already been amended by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001, specifically in relation to education. The 2005 Act extends the definition of 'disability' and imposes a sixfold General Duty on public bodies to undertake the following:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Eliminate discrimination
- Eliminate impairment-related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards people with impairments
- Encourage the participation in public life of people with impairments
- Take steps to meet the needs of people with impairments, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Universities are specifically required to gather information on:

- the effect of their policies and practices on the recruitment, development and retention of employees with impairments
- the effect of their policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to, and achievements of, students with impairments.

In addition, universities have a Specific Duty to produce a Disability Equality Scheme with a three-year Action Plan, showing how they will achieve the General Duty. They must report on progress annually and review and revise the Scheme every three years.

The Act defines a 'disabled person' as someone who has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. A physical or mental impairment includes: sensory impairments; impairments relating to mental functioning, including learning

difficulties/impairments; long-term health conditions such as diabetes, epilepsy, HIV, cancer or multiple sclerosis.

3.3 The national context: students with impairments

The national figures show a relation between age and impairment. 2001 labour market data suggest we might expect 10-11% of all students aged below 24 to have long-term impairments.⁴

In 2004/5, the latest year for which national data are available, there were 1,430,470 home undergraduates in the UK whose impairment status was known. Of these, 7.7% were recorded as having impairments. In the same year there were 339,325 home postgraduates in the UK whose impairment status was known. Of these, 5.2% were recorded as having impairments.⁵

There are no national data available on international students with impairments.

The most frequently disclosed impairment among both undergraduate and postgraduate students nationally was dyslexia, followed by unseen impairments (e.g., diabetes, asthma or epilepsy).

3.4 The national context: employees with impairments:

Nationally, around one in five of all people of working age (16 to retirement) have long-term impairments.⁶ In September 2006 around half of people of working age with long-term impairments were in employment, compared with around three-

⁴ In 2001 around 9.3% of 16-19 year olds and around 10.5% of 20-24 year olds in the labour market had an impairment, compared with around 50% of adults of between 50 and retirement age. See Allen Smith and Bred Twomey, Labour market experiences of people with disabilities. Labour market division, Office of National Statistics.

⁵ Figures in this paragraph derive from University of York Planning Office analysis of HESA data. The impairment categories are those used by the Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA) for students and staff: dyslexia; blind/partially sighted; deaf/hearing impairment; wheelchair user/mobility difficulties; personal care support; mental health difficulties; autistic spectrum disorder; unseen impairments, including diabetes, epilepsy and asthma; multiple disabilities. See n. 9 for the categories used by the Labour Force Survey.

⁶ Source: Disability Rights Commission.

quarters of the working-age population as a whole.⁷ The proportions for Yorkshire and the Humber are in line with this.

In 2004, around one in eight of working-age men and women with long-term impairments were employed in the public sector, compared with one in five of non-impaired. 6.6% of public sector employees with impairments were in Universities, polytechnics, or other grantfunded educational establishments.

Of the 270,000 people employed in the HE sector in 2003/04, 2.3 per cent declared an impairment.⁸

Among public sector employees generally, the most frequently recorded impairments in 2004 were hearing difficulties, diabetes, skin conditions, allergies, chest and heart problems.⁹

4 Where we are now

4.1 Students with impairments: University of York figures

The percentage of home undergraduates with impairments at the University of York is roughly in line with the national figures. The percentage of postgraduates with impairments is, however, higher at York than nationally.

In 2004/5 there were 7,155 home undergraduates at the University of York whose impairment status was known. Of these 8.5% were recorded as having impairments. In the same year there were 1,454 home postgraduates at the University of York. Of these 8.3% were recorded as having impairments.

7 Source: Office for National Statistics, Labour Market.

8 Source: HESA Staff Record 2003-04.

9 Source: Michael Hurst and Patricia Thornton, 'Disabled People in Public Sector Employment 1998-2004', Labour Market Trends, vol. 113, no 5, pp 189 - 199. The Labour Force Survey asks people to define their impairments in 17 DDA-based categories: problems with arms or hands; problems with legs or feet; problems with back or neck; difficulty seeing; difficulty hearing; speech impediment; severe disfigurement, skin conditions and allergies; chest and breathing problems; heart, blood pressure and circulation; stomach, liver, kidney and digestion; diabetes; depression, bad nerves and anxiety; epilepsy; learning difficulties; mental health problems; progressive illness (not included elsewhere); other health problems. See Office for National Statistics, Labour Force Survey User Guide, vol. 3. See n. 5 for the categories used by HESA.

In 2005/6 there were 7,594 home undergraduates at the University of York whose impairment status known. Of these 7.5% were recorded as having impairments. In the same year there were 1,485 postgraduates whose impairment status was known. Of these 10.1% were recorded as having impairments.¹⁰

At York, among undergraduates the commonest impairment was dyslexia, followed by unseen impairments, while among postgraduates the commonest impairment was categorized as unseen impairments, followed by dyslexia.

¹⁰ Source: University of York Planning Office website.

Home students with impairments: national and University of York comparisons

Year	Total UK home undergraduates*	1,430,470
2004/5**	No with impairment	110,580
	% with impairment	7.7%
Year	Total UK home postgraduates*	339,325
2004/5**	No with impairment	17,610
	% with impairment	5.2%
Year	Total York home undergraduates*	7,155
2004/5	No with impairment	611
	% with impairment	8.5%
Year	Total York home postgraduates*	1,454
2004/5	No with impairment	121
	% with impairment	8.3%
Year	Total York home undergraduates*	7,594
2005/6	No with impairment	570
	% with impairment	7.5%
Year	Total York home postgraduates*	1,485
2005/6	No with impairment	151
	% with impairment	10.1%

*Excludes students whose impairment status is unknown.

** 2004/5 is the latest year for which national figures are available

In 2004/5, 2.7% of all University of York home undergraduates were in receipt of a Disabled Students' Allowance, compared with a national undergraduate percentage of 3.6%. The benchmark used by the Higher Education Funding Council for England as a performance indicator for the University of York was 2.6% in receipt of a Disabled Students' Allowance.¹¹ Receipt of a Disabled Students' Allowance is regarded by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) as the most robust figure for national comparative purposes because others are based (in line with disability legislation) on self-disclosure. It is, however, clearly an under-estimate that includes only those kinds of impairments which can be helped by a grant to the individual. Disabled Students' Allowances are paid by local authorities. Overseas students are not entitled to Disabled Students' Allowances, and the University at present makes its own provision for them.

We are successful in capturing data relating to the impairment status of home students. In 2005/6, 97% of home undergraduates and 95.3% of home postgraduates at York disclosed their impairment status. The national percentages for 2004/5 were 89.3% of home undergraduates and 92.5% of home postgraduates.¹²

We hold but do not analyse data on international students with impairments as a separate group.

4.2 Staff with impairments: University of York figures

At the University of York in 2005/6 there were 3,022 employees. In comparison with students, our data on employees are incomplete, though we are improving in this area. The proportion of employees whose impairment status is known has gone up from 59% in December 2003 to 72.2% in December 2005. Currently impairment data are held on around 2,200 employees of whom 78 (3.4 %) have disclosed an impairment.

¹¹ Source: HESA data. The benchmark is an adjusted figure.

¹² Source: University of York Planning Office website.

There are three areas that need further work. The first is that we must continue to improve our data collection on the impairment status – whether impaired or non-impaired – of all our staff. The second is that within the current 72.2% non-impaired there are likely to be significant numbers of staff with impairments who choose not to disclose them.¹³ The University needs to ensure that its employees know their rights under the disability legislation and that it is meeting its obligations to them. In order to do this, it needs to know how many employees with disabilities it has. It is therefore important that we ensure that staff understand why we need the data and, importantly, feel confident that data-collection will be used to support them. The issue is not unique to York. The average percentage of staff disclosing impairments in the other HEIs against whom we benchmark was 2.6% in 2005/6. The third area of work is to record the different impairments disclosed by staff, so that we understand the different kinds of actions that need to be taken.

4.3 University-wide services and facilities

The University has made extensive provision across the institution in almost all of its activities to support staff and students with impairments of many different kinds. Below are the relevant sections and offices, with the policies, procedures, regulations or guidelines relating to disability for which they are responsible:

- Catering Services
 - Students with dietary allergies
- Communications Office
 - Reaching more readers
 - Web accessibility at York
 - Making your web pages more accessible

¹³ The staff disability questionnaire commissioned in preparation for this Scheme was responded to by 136 employees who identified themselves as having an impairment. Only 40 people out of these 136 responded to the question whether or not they had disclosed their impairment to the University. Of those 40, only 27 had done so. The commonest reason given was the belief that their impairment did not affect their job.

- Disability services and Dyslexia support centre
 - Disability Statement
 - Guidelines for tutors
 - Disabled Students' Allowance
- Equal Opportunities Office
 - Code of practice on harassment (includes disability)
 - Harassment advisers network
 - Equality and diversity checklist for teachers 2006
 - Equality and diversity policy for students 2006
 - Equal opportunities strategy
 - Equal opportunities employment strategy
- Estates Services
 - Accessible study bedrooms schedule (includes modifications for mobility, sight and hearing impairments)
 - Accommodation standard
 - Audit database
 - Audit tool
 - Access statement guidelines
 - Access handbook guidelines
 - Construction sites and disabled people
 - Corporate level access statement (prepared but not yet approved)
 - Standards for access provision

- Security Services
 - Car parking regulations: Drivers with disabilities and special needs and Disability permits
- Sports and Recreation Services
 - Equal opportunities and disability statement

4.4 Academic departments and services

- Almost all academic departments have Disability Officers whose role is to liaise with Disability Services
- All undergraduates have personal supervisors within their departments who are responsible for advising them on academic and personal matters
- Academic Registrar's department
 - Timetabling
 - Individual arrangements for staff and students with impairments
 - Room bookings services
 - On-line Buildings list includes disability adjustments (e.g., hearing loops, wheelchair access) in all teaching rooms
 - Examinations
 - Individual arrangements for students with impairments, including dyslexia
- Computing Service
 - Computer classrooms and networked software: Accessibility issues
 - Web development: Accessibility
- Library and Archives

- Library disability services relating to:
 - buildings; fetching, carrying and borrowing books; key texts; renewals and requests; photocopying; equipment; emergency procedures; who to contact.

4.5 Services for students

- Accommodation Office
 - Accommodation allocation policy (priority to students with certain impairments)
- Admissions and Schools Liaison
 - Widening participation strategy (includes disability)
 - Applicants using disability codes: Good practice for selectors
- Colleges
 - Links to Student support services
- Counselling Service for Students
 - Helping Students with Mental Health Difficulties
- Graduate Schools Office
 - Information for Students with disabilities
- International Student Support
 - International student handbook includes Disability services

In addition, all these sections are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that the services they provide are accessible and non-discriminatory.

4.6 Services for staff

- Human Resources Department

- Personnel Department
 - Handbook on recruitment and selection of staff
 - Disability employment policy
 - Code of practice on disability (staff)
 - Equal opportunities statement
 - Equal opportunities employment policy
- Professional and Organisational Development
 - Equal opportunities, diversity and disability
- Health, Safety and Environment Advice Services
 - Occupational Health Service

4.7 Student organizations

Student organizations play a crucial role in student support. There are two bodies, both of which have sabbatical officers with responsibilities for welfare and disability issues:

- York University Students' Union
 - Academic and Welfare Officer
 - Disability Officer
- Graduate Students' Association
 - Welfare Officer

4.8 Teaching and learning

A HEFCE-funded project on Equality and Diversity in the Curriculum was undertaken in 2004/5 and 2005/6. The proposed actions in section 6.2 include recommendations in the project report relating to people with impairments.

As part of its Online Learning Strategy, the University is developing a centrally supported Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) that will enable the delivery of teaching and training online, in support of the traditional teaching methods already used by academic departments. Key accessibility guidelines are being developed and a VLE pilot aimed at helping content creators to provide accessible teaching content is under way.

4.9 Research

The University has considerable research expertise in several areas of study relating to disability, including visual impairment, disability and e-learning, website accessibility (Computer Science); reading and language difficulties, dyslexia (Psychology); assistive technologies (Computer Science and Psychology); children and young people with impairments, impaired adults, carers (Social Policy and Social Work). The York branch of Dyslexia Action is housed alongside Psychology. Some of this research already informs institutional practices. In addition, there is a potentially fruitful interface between research on disability and e-learning, and our development of the VLE.

4.10 Gaps in provision

Although we have well-developed provision relating to many different kinds of impairments for staff and students, it is clear from what people with impairments are saying that it tends to be compartmentalised. Moreover, information about what is available is scattered and not all of it is on the web. A priority action must be to create a web portal that provides a single point of access for information relating to all the services we offer for people with impairments.

Students tell us that once their impairment is recorded in the University information system, they want their departments and Colleges to be informed officially. Within departments, they do not want to have to tell each tutor individually that they have impairments, and do not see it as their responsibility to inform their tutors about the nature of common impairments or how to treat students with such impairments.

Staff tell us that provision for those arriving with impairments or becoming impaired in the course of their employment is too fragmented, and it is unclear what employees are expected to do for themselves and what the University can provide.

A primary concern of people with mobility, sight and other impairments is for improved physical access to all parts of the estate. A good many small-scale but crucial improvements have been made to the buildings and the landscape, based on the advice of specialist consultants and users with impairments of different kinds. This work, which includes management decisions about the relocation of activities where necessary, is ongoing.

We also have to ensure as a priority that different parts of the University communicate with one another to offer a seamless service. Furthermore, we need to address those areas in which there is currently no explicit provision for people with impairments. Up to now our focus has been largely on people with impairments inside the University, though good practices have been established in relation to building contractors. We must now pay attention to the needs of visitors, including conference clients; student exchanges and placements; procurement.

5 Data collection and monitoring

5.1 Data relating to students

Information relating to applicants with impairments is recorded on UCAS application forms when they apply, and is flagged by the Admissions Office for the attention of admissions tutors. Once accepted, students supply details relating to impairments when they first register with the University, and annually on registration thereafter. These are recorded on the SITS student record system. Data relating to students who disclose impairments to Disability Services in the course of their degrees are also entered into the SITS system, as are data relating to students in receipt of the Disabled Student's Allowance. The SITS information is the source of the data provided annually to the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and published on the Planning Office website.

5.2 Data relating to staff

Information relating to impairments is collected by the Personnel Office on applicants for posts, interviewees, and successful applicants, and recorded on the ResourceLink human resources system. The Personnel Office has circulated staff in post in the past asking them to update information on impairments, but this is not done regularly. As noted above, it holds data relating to impairment on 72.2% of around 3,000 employees. Work is ongoing with ResourceLink to enable staff to access and update their own data, including information relating to impairments.

5.3 Data relating to the built environment

A University Access Statement has been prepared and will go to Council for approval. It covers the University's policy and approach to access, with reference to the inclusion of people with impairments.

Information relating to accessible study bedrooms in each College is maintained by Estates Services in the Accessible Student Accommodation Schedule. All such rooms are rated in line with 3 national criteria for residential accommodation for the impaired.

Information relating to teaching rooms, including facilities such as hearing loops and wheelchair access, is maintained by Room Bookings in the online Buildings List at <http://www.york.ac.uk/admin/estates/roombookings/>.

Access handbooks have been developed by Estates Services for all existing buildings, highlighting the provisions needed or made for aiding access and service delivery including training, procedures and, where applicable, policies.

5.4 Monitoring of data

The following data are currently monitored in relation to students:

- Numbers of students with disclosed impairments, by impairment types, as defined by HESA. Monitored by Equal Opportunities Committee and reported to Council.
- Numbers of students with impairments coming to Special Cases Committee. Monitored by Special Cases Committee and reported to Senate.
- Numbers of students with impairments in receipt of Access to Learning funds. Monitored by Student Support Committee and reported to Senate.

The following data are monitored in relation to staff:

- Job applicants with impairments. Monitored by Equal Opportunities Committee and Staff Committee and reported to Council.
- Interviewees with impairments. As above.
- Success rates for job applicants with impairments. As above.
- Proportions of staff with impairments in senior posts. As above.

The monitoring of numbers of students with impairments has led to the appointment of a specialist dyslexia support worker. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are gaps in the uses to which we put our student data. We do not analyse them in relation to success rates for student applicants at UG and PG levels, or qualifications on entry. Although we monitor overall student performance (in terms of degree results), we do not monitor the progress and performance of students with impairments, nor do we monitor harassment in relation to impairment. We monitor appeals (under special cases) but do not monitor complaints in relation to impairment.

With respect to staff, although we monitor the recruitment process for applicants to posts with impairments, we do not monitor regradings and promotions, harassment, grievances, or reasons for leaving. At present our numbers are so small that these figures would be meaningless, so our first task must be to improve the data.

6 Doing the duty

6.1 Priorities

In order to carry out the Disability Equality Duty (DED) we shall prioritize the following areas:

- Teaching and learning
- Student support
- Employment and training of staff
- The physical estate
- The University and the community
- Governance
- Communications

These areas map on to the Corporate Planning themes listed in section 2.1.

In the light of what we have identified so far about gaps or weaknesses in our current provision, the Disability Equality Duty will be addressed in the following ways:

6.2 Teaching, learning and research

- We shall ensure that clear protocols are established for communicating information about students with impairments between central services and departments, and within and between departments, in order to ensure that all the relevant academic and administrative staff are aware of the needs of particular individuals.
- We shall ensure that all staff involved in teaching have access to, and are aware of, resources and training to enable them to teach and interact with students with impairments.

- In addition to the monitoring already noted in section 5.4, we shall monitor the academic performance of all undergraduate and postgraduate students with impairments, including
 - Success rates of applicants
 - Entry qualifications
 - Degree results
 - Non-completions

We shall report these annually to Senate and Equal Opportunities Committee.

- We shall consult staff and students with impairments in order to establish the principles that should underpin the treatment of students with impairments, including doctoral students, in relation to learning and teaching, with particular reference to assessment.
- We shall work to improve the availability of appropriate facilities in teaching accommodation for students and staff with impairments.
- We shall ensure that our policies and processes in relation to international student exchanges and placements do not disadvantage students with impairments.
- We shall ensure that impairment is one of the criteria used in the equality audit relating to our RAE submission, and that auditors are trained to be aware of the DED.
- Student Support Committee will review the recommendations of the Counselling Service review currently taking place to ensure that we are providing effective and accessible services to students with mental health difficulties. Student Support services will develop a University Mental Health Policy for students.

6.3 Student support

- We shall undertake a review of Disability Services in order to ensure that they are appropriately staffed and resourced. Consideration will be given to the most efficient ways of providing support.
- The Colleges will consult their members with impairments and produce action plans for (a) promoting positive attitudes towards students with impairments within their communities and (b) encouraging students with impairments to take leadership roles in College life. Their advice will form the basis of agreed new practices.
- We shall adopt a policy relating to the identification of international students with impairments and the support they need. We shall cost this support, and identify funding sources.
- We shall include the DED in training provision for undergraduate supervisors, who offer personal as well as academic advice to all undergraduates.
- We shall include the DED in developing a University code of good practice for the pastoral care of masters students.
- We shall require all the student support services to assess the impact of their policies and procedures on people with impairments. They will update their websites in line with best practice advice from the Communications Office.
- We shall set up focus groups of first-year students with impairments in the current academic year, in order to collect their views on attitudinal and environmental barriers to their full participation in teaching, learning and student life. These will be fed into the annual updating of the Teaching and Learning strategy and the Student Support strategy. The same groups will be reconvened in their third year in order to assess the effects of institutional changes over that period.

6.4 Employment and training of staff

- We shall review our recruitment process to ensure that there are no obstacles to the attraction of potential employees with impairments.
- We shall develop transparent processes to support new members of staff with impairments, co-ordinating different aspects of the 'new starter' process.
- We shall develop a process for supporting members of staff who develop impairments whilst employed, and adopt new guidelines on how the support provided should operate between different departments. The aim will be to provide clear guidance on what employees should expect from the University.
- We shall ensure that Heads of Department and others in senior roles in the University receive awareness and practical training in relation to the DED and the University's disability-related policies and processes.
- We shall review and develop the training provision needed to support the actions proposed in this and other sections of the Scheme, and incorporate the results into the Training and Development Operational Plan.
- We shall set up processes for (a) increasing the numbers of employees on whom we hold impairment data, and (b) regular updating of this information.
- In addition to the monitoring already noted in 5.4, we shall monitor:
 - Different impairments, using HESA categories
 - Percentages of staff with impairments promoted/regraded
 - Percentages of staff with impairments disciplined
 - Percentages of staff with impairments taking out a formal grievance/harassment claim
 - Percentages of staff with impairments who leave the University, including reasons (e.g. redundancy, dismissal, ill-health, retirement)

- Percentages of applications for staff development and employees undertaking staff development, by impairment.

If we identify significant differences in these areas between staff with and without impairments we shall investigate the reasons and take remedial action.

- See review of Disability services under Student support.

6.5 The physical estate

- We shall bring the Corporate Level Access Statement covering the University's policy towards disabled access and inclusivity, and outlining standards for the provision of buildings and services, to Council for approval.
- A detailed Access Audit of the campus by external consultants was undertaken in 2002, and revised in 2005. This information formed the basis for the prioritization of a £1m programme of access improvements, using HEFCE funding, undertaken between 2002 and 2006. The University will continue with this programme. Priorities will be identified by a stakeholders' group including people with impairments.
- The Project Commitment Records for all new projects will include DDA consultants. Contractors will be required to adopt the Standards for Access Provision and Construction Sites and Disabled People guidelines prepared by Estates Services. Each project will be overseen by a Steering Group of stakeholders who will monitor in respect of the DED.
- A database is maintained by Estates Services listing access-related complaints and actions taken. We shall ensure that staff and students with impairments know whom to contact in Estates Services in order to report minor defects and impediments, and that these will be quickly remedied.

6.5.1 The University and the community

- We shall ensure that the development of the subject matter and customer base of continuous professional development programmes, and their

delivery, is undertaken with the needs of people with impairments in mind, whether as customers, programme deliverers or participants, and that where appropriate, feedback is sought regarding their experiences.

- We shall ensure that there is active promotion of campus events and activities to all members of the local community, including people with impairments, and that where appropriate, feedback is sought from people with impairments regarding their experiences on campus.
- We shall ensure that staff and student activity in the city and region is accessible to people with impairments, both from the University and wider communities, and that where appropriate, feedback is sought from people with impairments regarding their experiences.
- We shall ensure that our conference and letting services develop policies and processes that support the DED.
- We shall ensure that our procurement policies and processes support the DED.

6.6 Governance

- We shall ensure that the University's Council and its committees understand their obligations in relation to staff and students with impairments under the relevant legislation
- We shall ensure that there are no barriers to membership of the University's governance bodies as a consequence of impairment and actively promote participation in University governance by people with impairments.

6.7 Communications

- The Communications Office has already issued guidelines on web accessibility. We shall publish a set of standards for printed publications, so that all University and departmental publications take into account the needs of readers with visual impairments.

- We shall provide general guidance to the University community on publishing information relating to impairment on websites and in brochures, to ensure that there is a common standard that enshrines best practice.
- We shall create a web portal that provides a single point of access to the multiplicity of services, guidance and support available for students, staff and visitors with impairments.

6.8 York University Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association

- York University Students' Union will formulate and publish its own Disability Equality Strategy.
- The Graduate Students' Association will develop new structures and processes to improve its support for postgraduate students with impairments.

7 Impact assessment of existing policies and procedures

We shall, in addition to these new actions, undertake a review of the impact on people with impairments of our current policies and processes.

7.1 Mapping

We shall start by undertaking a mapping exercise. The senior management team will be responsible for working with committees and senior staff in their areas of responsibility, as listed in 2.1 above, and consulting people with impairments in order to identify which policies and processes are relevant to the DED, and prioritize these. They will use a screening proforma prepared by the Disability Equality Scheme group, which will include an indication of any new data required. This work is expected to be complete by September 2007.

7.2 Impact assessment

During the next two academic years the policies and processes which have been identified will be reviewed in the light of their impact on people with impairments, in order of priority, and modified where appropriate. People with impairments will be involved through a variety of means, including focus groups, surveys and requests

for feedback. Guidance on undertaking impact assessments will be provided by Professional and Organizational Development.

If adverse impacts are found, steps will be taken to eliminate these.

8 Arrangements for assessing the scheme and the action plan

8.1 On ongoing process

We regard this Scheme not as finite but as an ongoing process. We shall review progress annually and modify the Scheme in the light of our experience. We have identified some areas in which we know actions are required but until we have done more work, including consultation with people with impairments, we cannot say what those actions will be.

The forecast cost of actions for each year will be reviewed as part of the budgetary process in relation to the University's overall financial position.

8.2 Monitoring

The Action Plan in Appendix 1 identifies the senior managers who have overall responsibility for ensuring that change happens. The Disability Equality Scheme group will work to facilitate the adoption of the Scheme and support the senior managers, staff and committees in its implementation. It will also monitor progress, including:

- Continued involvement of people with impairments
- Progress with agreed actions
- Progress with impact assessments
- Information gathered relating to people with impairments and what it indicates
- Need for new or revised objectives
- Barriers which are outside the University's control

8.3 Reporting

The chair of the Disability Equality Scheme group, currently the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, will present an annual progress report to the Vice-Chancellors' Advisory Group, which is the University's senior management team, and to the Equal Opportunities Committee. The report will be included in the annual Equal Opportunities report to the University Council and will be published on the University website. Our aims are to ensure that the DED is embedded in the University's highest-level planning, and that our actions to support it are transparent.

8.4 Review

The Disability Equality Scheme will be reviewed in the autumn of 2009. Our intention is that by thereafter the DED will be integrated as one strand within an overarching Equalities scheme that will also address age, gender, harassment, race, sexual orientation, and religion and belief.

Appendix 1- Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan : Jan 2007-Dec 2009

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
1	Teaching, learning and research				
1a	Establish protocols for communicating information about students with impairments between central services and departments, and within and between departments	By October 2008	PVC Students, PVC Teaching and Learning, Registrar and Secretary	Web-based procedures, to be incorporated	Improved awareness of impairments and better provision for students with impairments
1b	Ensure that staff involved in teaching have access to, and are aware of, resources and training to enable them to teach and interact with students with impairments	Ongoing from January 2007	PVC Teaching and Learning	Revised information on impairments; training	Improved learning and research experience for students with impairments
1c	In addition to monitoring currently	Annually from	PVC Teaching, PVC	Data relating to	Identification of

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	undertaken, annually monitor the academic performance of all undergraduate and postgraduate students with impairments, including Success rates of applicants Entry qualifications Degree results Non-completions	2006/7	Research, Registrar and Secretary	applications, success rates and performance of students with impairments, to inform decisions on remedial actions	unmet learning needs of students with impairments
1d	Establish the principles that should underpin the treatment of students with impairments, including doctoral students, in relation to learning and teaching, with particular reference to assessment.	2007/8	PVC Teaching and PVC Research	Review the rules relating to doctoral degrees	Improved research experience for students with impairments
1e	Improve the availability of appropriate facilities in teaching accommodation for	By October	Director of Facilities	Additional hearing loops,	Improved learning experience for

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	students and staff with impairments.	2009	Management	etc.	students with impairments
1f	Ensure that policies and processes in relation to international student exchanges do not disadvantage students with impairments.	By October 2009	Registrar and Secretary and Director of International Office	Revised policies relating to student exchanges	Non-discriminatory treatment of all students
1g	Ensure that disability is one of the criteria used in the equality audit relating to our RAE submission, and that auditors are aware of the DED.	2006/7	PVC Research	Revised equality audit process	Non-discriminatory treatment of researchers
2	Student support				
2a	Undertake a review of Disability Services in order to ensure that they are appropriately staffed and resourced.	2007/8	Registrar and Secretary, and PVC Students	Report and recommendations	Improved Disability Services

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
2b	Colleges to produce action plans for promoting positive attitudes towards students with impairments within their communities and encouraging students with impairments to take leadership roles in college life.	2007/8	PVC Students and Colleges Co-ordinator	College action plans embodying new practices	Improved awareness and understanding of, and opportunities for, students with impairments
2c	Adopt a policy relating to the identification of international students with impairments and the support they need; cost this support; and identify funding sources.	2006/7	Registrar and Secretary and PVC Students	Policy with action plan; costs; funding sources.	Improved service for overseas students with impairments
2d	Include the DED in training provision for undergraduate supervisors.	By 2007/8	PVC Students and Director of HR	Training programme	Meet the needs of students with impairments
2e	Include the DED in developing a University code of good practice for the	By 2007/8	PVC Students and PVC Teaching and	Code of good practice for pastoral care of	Meet the needs of students with

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	pastoral care of masters students.		Learning	masters students	impairments
2f	All the student support services to assess the impact of their policies and procedures on people with impairments, and update their websites in line with best practice.	Ongoing	Registrar and Secretary and PVC Students	Reports to Student Support Committee to include impact assessments	
2g	Set up focus groups of first-year students with impairments in order to collect their views on attitudinal and environmental barriers to their full participation in teaching, learning and student life. The same groups to be reconvened in their third year in order to assess the effects of institutional changes over that period	2006/7 and 2008/9	PVC Students and PVC Teaching and Learning	Information about the views of people with impairments	Improved understanding of the needs of students with impairments. Revision of actions to better meet their needs.
2h	Take account of the recommendations of the current Counselling Service review to	2007/8	PVC Students	Mental Health Policy for	Consistent and informed approach

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	ensure that we are providing effective and accessible services to students with mental health difficulties. Student Support Services will develop a University Mental Health Policy for students.			students	to students with mental health difficulties
3	Employment and training				
3a	Review recruitment process to ensure that there are no obstacles to the attraction of potential employees with impairments.	December 2007	Director of HR	Revised recruitment procedures guidelines and training	Increased proportion of employees with impairments
3b	Develop transparent processes to support new members of staff with impairments, co-ordinating different aspects of the 'new starter' process	December 2007	Director of HR	Process document with responsibilities	Improved support for new members of staff with impairments

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
3c	Develop a process for supporting members of staff who develop impairments whilst employed and adopt new guidelines on how the support provided should operate between different departments.	September 2008	Director of HR	Process document with responsibilities and guidelines for support	Improved support for current members of staff with impairments
3d	Ensure that Heads of Department and others in senior roles in the University receive awareness and practical training in relation to the DED and the University's disability-related policies and processes.	From Spring 2007	Director of HR and Director of POD	Training materials and timetabled element in induction of new HoDs.	Better informed senior managers; appropriate and confident action to address issues locally
3e	Review and develop training provision needed to support the actions proposed in the Scheme, and incorporate the	During 2008/9	Director of HR and Director of POD	Training programmes for various kinds of disability awareness and provision	Improved awareness, understanding and

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	results into the Training and Development Operational Plan.				where necessary changed behaviour
3f	Set up processes for (a) increasing the numbers of staff on whom data relating to impairments is held, and (b) regular updating of this information	2007/8	Director of HR	Process for increasing numbers of staff disclosing and updating information re impairments	Better understanding of needs of employees with impairments
3g	<p>In addition to current monitoring of job applicants, interviewees and successful applicants, all with impairments, monitor:</p> <p>Different impairments, using HESA categories</p> <p>Percentages of staff with impairments promoted/regraded</p> <p>Percentages of staff with impairments</p>	After completion of 3f	Director of HR	Data on numbers of staff with impairments, types of impairments, and performance of staff with impairments, to add to data already collected on recruitment and inform decisions on remedial actions	Policy development based on information about recruitment and performance of employees with impairments; increased employment of people with

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	<p>disciplined</p> <p>Percentages of staff with impairments taking out a formal grievance/harassment claim</p> <p>Percentages of staff with impairments who leave the University including reasons (e.g. redundancy, dismissal, ill-health, retirement)</p> <p>Percentages of applications for staff development and employees undertaking staff development, by impairment and take remedial action if necessary.</p>				impairments.
4	The physical estate				
4a	Bring the Corporate Level Access	2006	Director of Facilities	Approved Corporate	High-level institutional

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	Statement to Council for approval		Management	Level Access statement	commitment to access and inclusivity
4b	Allocate £250,000 per annum to continue with disabled access improvement programme, identifying priorities through a stakeholders' group including people with impairments	Ongoing	PVC Estates and Director of Facilities Management	Prioritized list of access improvements; programme of works	Improved physical access to buildings
4c	Ensure that all new projects include DDA consultants; that contractors adopt the Standards for Access Provision and Construction Sites and Disabled People guidelines; and that each project is overseen by a stakeholders Steering Group charged with monitoring in respect of the DED.	Ongoing	PVC Estates and Director of Facilities Management	DDA consultants appointed; contractors issued with guidelines by project managers; stakeholders group established for each project; all reported to Estates Committee	Inclusive access to new buildings

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
4d	Ensure that that staff and students with impairments know whom to contact in Estates Services in order to report minor defects and impediments, and that these are quickly remedied.	From October 2007	Director of Facilities Management	Single communications point for reporting defects and impediments	Staff and students with impairments enabled to go about their daily lives unhampered
4e	Ensure that the development of the Sustainable Travel Plan considers the travel needs of people with impairments.	Ongoing	PVC Estates and Director of Facilities Management	Disabled parking; university travel plan	More favourable treatment in relation to parking; better accessibility
5	The University and the community				
5a	Ensure that the development of the subject matter and customer base of continuous professional development programmes, and their delivery, is undertaken with the needs of people with	From 2007	PVC External Relations	Consultation with people with impairments; feedback.	Non-discriminatory CPD

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	<p>impairments in mind, whether as customers, programme deliverers or participants, and that where appropriate, feedback is sought regarding their experiences.</p>				
5b	<p>Ensure that there is active promotion of campus events and activities to all members of the local community, including people with impairments, and that where appropriate, feedback is sought from people with impairments regarding their experiences on campus</p>	From 2007	PVC External Relations	Publicity; feedback	Greater participation in University activities by members of the community with impairments
5c	<p>Ensure that staff and student activity in the city and region is accessible to people with impairments, both from the University and wider communities, and that where appropriate, feedback is sought from</p>	From 2007	PVC External Relations	Consultation with people with impairments; feedback	Greater participation by people with impairments

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	people with impairments regarding their experiences.				
5d	Ensure that our conference and letting services develop policies and processes that support the DED.	By summer 2007	Director of Facilities Management	Impact assessment of policies and processes	Promotion of equality of opportunity
5e	Ensure that our procurement policies and processes support the DED	By summer 2007	Director of Facilities Management	Impact assessment of policies and processes	Promotion of equality of opportunity
6	Governance				
6a	Ensure that the University's Council and its committees understand their obligations under the relevant legislation by briefing at a Council	Annually from January 2007	Registrar and Secretary	Presentation and briefing notes	Informed governing bodies

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
	meeting and briefing note to all committee chairs				
6b	Seek declarations re impairments from Council and other committee members, collate any barriers identified and develop an action plan to address and eliminate them	2007 and ongoing	Registrar and Secretary	Data on impairment status of Council and committee members; evidence of barriers; action plan	Encourage the participation in public life of people with impairments
6c	Actively promote participation in University governance by people with impairments by emphasizing the open nature of the University in all relevant materials	2007 and ongoing	Registrar and Secretary	Review publications	Encourage participation in public life of people with impairments
7	Communications				

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
7a	Publish a set of standards for printed publications, so that all University and departmental publications take into account the needs of readers with visual impairments.	By September 2007	Director of Communications	Standards document in several forms	Meeting the needs of people with impairments
7b	Provide general guidance to the University community on publishing information relating to disability on websites and in brochures, to ensure that there is a common standard that enshrines best practice.	By December 2007	Director of Communications	Guidance document in several forms	Meeting the needs of people with impairments
7c	Create a web portal that provides a single point of access to the multiplicity of services, guidance and support available for students, staff and visitors with impairments.	By August 2007	Director of Communications	Web portal	Meeting the needs of people with impairments

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
8	York University Students' Union and Graduate Students' Association				
8a	York University Students' Union to publish its own Disability Equality Strategy	By July 2007	President, YUSU and Welfare Officer, YUSU	YUSU Disability Equality Strategy	Ensuring that the DED is embedded in student organizations
8b	The Graduate Students' Association will develop new structures and processes to improve its support for postgraduate students with impairments	Ongoing from January 2007	President, GSA, and dedicated elected officer	New duties for an elected officer; improved website; forum for postgraduates with impairments	Ensuring that DED is embedded in student organizations
9	Impact assessments on current policies and practices				
9a	Mapping exercise	By October 2007	Members of VCAG	Mapping document	Priorities for action

No	Actions from 1 January 2007	Timescale	Lead person or section	Output	Outcome
9b	Review relevant policies and processes in order of priority	By December 2009	Members of VCAG	Impact assessments	Meet the needs of people with impairments

Appendix 2 - Members of the Disability Equality Scheme group

Russell Bailey, CAD Technician, Estates Services

Amy Foxton, Academic Welfare Office, YUSU

Yvie Holder, Director of Equal Opportunities Office

Corrine Howie, Personnel Manager

Sarah Kendall, Press & Publicity Office, GSA

Steve Page, Manager of Student Support Services

Helen Petrie, Professor of Human Computer Interaction

Felicity Riddy, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (chair)

Sally Rymer, Disability Officer, YUSU

Penn Snowden, Manager of Disability Services