

Admissions

Course development

Preparing documents

Lectures, seminars

Tutorials

Fieldwork

Laboratories

Workshops

Placement learning

Assessment

Professional bodies

SENDA

Compliance

in Higher Education

An audit and guidance tool for accessible practice within the framework of teaching and learning

South West Academic Network for Disability Support (SWANDS)

HIGHER EDUCATION *hefce* FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND

Improving Provision for Disabled Students 1999-2002



The South West Academic Network for Disability Support (SWANDS)

The South West Academic Network for Disability Support (SWANDS) is a HEFCE funded Project of 9 HEIs in the South West, co-ordinated and managed by the Disability Assist Services at the University of Plymouth. A full list of the institutions and the participating membership can be found on the inside rear cover of this document.

The group of senior academics, lecturers and disability service managers who formed the network considered that there was an urgent need to make a comprehensive response to supporting SENDA compliance in key areas in the sector. Through the issues raised by the discussion and debate at the SWANDS Network meetings it was decided to produce a guidance resource for faculty staff in the form of a self-auditing tool for individuals and departments. The consensus was that for systemic change to take place, current practice in the broad areas of admissions, accessible learning, teaching and assessment for disabled students would have to be targeted at all levels.

In order to inform the development of this guidance and audit tool a series of student interviews were undertaken and staff views were invited across a broad range of discipline areas. To maintain confidentiality of sources, staff comments are not attributed and individual student names have been changed. To protect respondents, only broad curriculum areas have been defined, rather than individual specific subjects.

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SENDA

Compliance in accessible practice within the framework of **Higher Education**

**South West Academic Network for
Disability Support (SWANDS)**

**A HEFCE funded Project
Improving Provision for Disabled Students
1999-2002**

Co-ordinated by the University of Plymouth

**Edited and written
by Judith Waterfield and Bob West**





Acknowledgements

This guidance and audit tool is the outcome of a 9 partner network located in the South West of England, working under the acronym of SWANDS - the South West Academic Network for Disability Support. It is a co-funded project supported from funds for Improving Provision for Disabled Students (1999-2002) from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), and matched funding from the Project partnership.

The Project partners gave generously of their time and ideas at SWANDS Network meetings, which helped formulate the need for a guidance and audit tool of this kind to support SENDA compliance. As an additional commitment senior managers in the Co-ordinating and partner institutions waived a considerable amount of the costs incurred for the staff "buy out" time, which was a key facet of the proposed project funding. As a consequence it was possible to produce a more exhaustive document with sector-wide availability in both printed and electronic formats.

The strength of this document is in many ways a consequence of the disabled students who participated in SWANDS. Being prepared to talk constructively, critically and at length about one's experiences of Higher Education, is a serious commitment and time consuming in a busy schedule. The disabled student contribution was especially valued for bringing a personal and pragmatic sense of realism to the necessarily more abstract aspects of auditing.



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I. Introduction

I. Introduction

This guidance and audit tool has been compiled to make a contribution to support institutions in creating an inclusive teaching, learning and assessment environment for students with disabilities. It focuses upon the responsibilities of the individual and the institution to meet the requirements of the post-16 sections of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Act 2001 (SENDA). This legislation comes into being on 1st September 2002 and it will affect all aspects of Higher Education provision, although the focus of this document is:

- Admissions
- Course development, programme planning, approval and review
- Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination
- Lectures, seminars and tutorials
- Fieldwork
- Laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments
- Placement learning
- Assessment
- Professional Bodies
- Positive communication.

The principle behind this legislation is that disabled students should receive full access to education and other related provision, and should have the same opportunities as non-disabled people to benefit from whatever provision is available. However, the Act stipulates that HEIs as "responsible bodies" have an "anticipatory duty" towards the requirements of all disabled people and to make "reasonable adjustments" for those who might otherwise be substantially disadvantaged.

The legislative force of the Act "means that strategic planners will necessarily be making explicit what might formerly have been implicit or merely understood". (HEFCE Circular 01/37) There will inevitably be a desire to seek sound structures for change, to apply consistency to systems and seek models of good practice. There are many disability handbooks in circulation, which support disability awareness generally and learning support needs in post-16 education in particular. However, this document is designed more specifically to meet the challenges of the SENDA legislation and as such consists of an action audit to guide colleagues responsible for admissions, teaching, learning and assessment through the process of embedding their practice to make it inclusive. In essence it is a tool for systemic departmental and faculty change with a focus on both institutional and individual action to promote mainstream disability equality. The responsibilities placed on the individual by the Act are likely to reiterate the need in institutions to develop rolling programmes of staff development. This document is also designed with that purpose in mind.

I. Introduction

In the past decade the Higher Education sector has witnessed a huge increase in the numbers of disabled students applying for and studying on a wide range of courses, including more recently part-time and post-graduate students. Approximately 5% of the student population have declared disabilities, although the statistics conceal the true measure of the population.

Many disabled students are currently in receipt of the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) but many do not pursue, or have not been eligible for funding, e.g., nurses on diploma courses, international students and students on some part-time courses. There is often an assumption that these allowances and the support provided by disability services offer parity of provision between disabled students and their non-disabled peers. There is an inference that there is no requirement, therefore, to examine current teaching practice and the concomitant learning experience. Student feedback belies this notion.

Not choosing to declare a disability is the right of the individual and has many ramifications for the student and the host institution. However, in addressing institutional practice to meet the anticipatory requirements of SENDA, disabled students who do declare, or who have a disability undiagnosed or who prefer not to seek special arrangements, as well as those who do not declare, will be better served. Given the anticipatory nature of the legislation, it is incumbent upon teaching departments to provide accessible teaching and learning, and a range of assessment methods that enable disabled students to realise their potential. Having a more inclusive approach should lead to improved retention rates and grades. It may also reduce the need for the growing number and complexities of extenuating circumstances and appeals received by assessment boards, etc.

Whilst the single largest category of disability remains dyslexia, and HEIs have developed some expertise in supporting these students, there is a growth in the number of applications from students with different needs that is challenging the sector. The very invisibility of some of these disabilities often conceals the degree of severity, (for example, students with mental health problems, Asperger's Syndrome and the profoundly deaf) challenging selection procedures, traditional teaching and assessment methods and the administrative framework for all of these.

We need to reflect upon whether the current teaching styles, course materials and assessment tasks allow disabled students the necessary opportunities to demonstrate their acquisition of the learning outcomes, in a way that is perceived as "a level playing field". Reflecting on the key areas of admissions, teaching, learning and assessment practice, the emphasis needs to be upon parity of experience through embedded, consistent practice rather than "bolt

I. Introduction

on" or ad hoc provision. In the future, while the flexibility to make an individual response to an individual need should not be lost, the emphasis will be upon being anticipatory. SENDA therefore provides the sector with an opportunity as well as a requirement to address current practice for the maintenance of academic standards and validity of approach. This planned provision is also fundamental to meeting the requirements for quality assurance recently exemplified in the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities (section 2).

Despite HEFCE encouragement for base level provision for disabled students there still remains inconsistency across the sector. Some institutions have policies in place for disabled students and teaching and learning strategies that have considered this group of students. However, HEFCE circular 01/36 identified little cross-referencing between initial Widening Participation Strategic Statements, teaching and learning policy, disability statements and financial planning. Even where individual institutions have policies in place, procedure and practice are often inconsistent when considered within and between departments and faculties/schools. This is evident in the feedback we received from disabled students. It indicated that individual teaching methods, course delivery practices and course administration, which are varied and often exemplify good practice, can also be less than accessible.

It is these discrepant areas that represent vulnerable points of current practice, in the drive for SENDA compliance. Many of the students interviewed for this document reiterated the fact that their success in learning was often in part influenced by the positive input of key members of the academic and support staff, prior to their arrival and on course. To date the Special Initiative Funding has placed the emphasis upon the development of specialist support services for disabled students, to ameliorate the discrepancies between the requirements of individual students and the traditional delivery of services. This may have provided the opportunity for good developmental practice but it has not necessarily created on-going consistency.

The advent of Premium Funding and the legislative imperative of SENDA firmly locates the emphasis upon an orientation towards mainstreaming inclusive practice. In future the priority will be upon conjoining the expertise of disability services with the distinctive characteristics of specialist academic fields, to engender and embed a climate of innovative and flexible practice. SENDA obligations will require that such awareness and action is planned, embedded and monitored throughout the faculties/schools and not centred on an individual student. Provision should be flexible enough to meet the needs of an individual, whilst maintaining academic and prescribed standards, which SENDA does not undermine.

I. Introduction

As parity in the provision of services to the disabled individual is paramount, academic standards for courses and entry into the professions cannot be used to justify barring whole groups of disabled people from courses. Under the Act, for example, it would not be lawful to debar all deaf students from workshop settings. Any justification "has to be relevant to the academic standards of a particular course and to the abilities of an individual person". (section 4.27) Within the Act there are grounds for recognising that "entry to some courses may be regulated by a professional body and many examinations are the responsibility of external examining bodies". (section 3.8) Research undertaken for SWANDS indicates that many of the professional bodies have an accessibility policy, or are in the process of developing one, or are expecting HEIs to fulfil responsibilities under SENDA .

SENDA recognises that "it might be reasonable to allow a student to validate the attainment of academic standards by using means different from those used by other students". (section 6.5) Key graduate skills and course learning outcomes may be demonstrated by disabled students undertaking a viva voce examination instead of a written assignment, a signed video instead of a presentation, the achievement of a practice-based skill instead of a computer based assessment. The current arrangements of thousands of special examination provisions per academic year stretch resources, physical facilities and administration within the sector. There is as yet little research to support the validity of the range of special examination arrangements currently deployed in this way.

It is the exploration of broader-based assessment modes, and the need for subject specialists to consider assessment methods from outside of their normal field, which is perhaps the most pressing challenge. In developing this guidance and audit tool we have started the process of mapping the breadth and range of assessment methods used by different academic disciplines, to progress the debate.

The inception of SENDA gives the sector the opportunity to address its core practices and to seek creative and valid solutions that will improve and rationalise arrangements for disabled students. In addition this good practice should benefit students from the other areas of widening participation and the student population in general.

2. Some key points for SENDA compliance

2. Some key points for SENDA compliance

Flexible curricula give diversity for disabled students to participate and achieve.

Disability issues should be a regular focus for staff meetings, faculty/school committees and senior management bodies for resource allocation cascading good practice, monitoring and review.

Inclusive practice and anticipatory "reasonable adjustments" should be based on formal procedures rather than on personal interest and experience.

The nomination of a staff member is vital in each faculty/school to act as a conduit to the disability service and as a point of reference for colleagues and students.

Familiarisation with guidelines for positive communication and disability language etiquette is important.

Early information and course materials need to be available in an accessible format, to allow time for modification into alternative formats, familiarisation by students or personal support workers, and early application for the DSA.

Students should be given as many opportunities to declare disability as possible. Staff should know procedures for confidentiality and dissemination.

Establish mechanisms for the exchange of information in a confidential and timely way within and between departments to support "reasonable adjustments" for students who have declared disability at any stage.

The support needs of disabled students should be identified and assessed during information interviews or prior to entry where possible.

Discuss the impact of the disability on student participation. Many disabilities are invisible, newly acquired, newly diagnosed or progressive. The individual is often an expert on the consequences of their disability.

Students should not encounter additional processes not applied to their non-disabled peers.

Provide guidance and support prior to, during and after discrete curricula activities such as fieldwork and placement learning. Early assessment of student need for DSA or Access to Work funding is crucial.

Alternative assessment strategies should accommodate the student's disability related functional differences. Without this opportunity student performance will reflect the impact of the disability rather than student ability.

Keep adjustments under review and seek student feedback to inform practice.

3. Admissions

▶ **Who might find this checklist useful?**

Publicity and Marketing Departments, Media and Reprographics, Registry, departmental admissions tutors, widening participation departments, International Offices, staff involved in open days and all outreach recruitment activities, estates, and new staff on induction.

3. Admissions

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

3.9 It is unlawful for a responsible body to discriminate against a disabled person:

- **in the arrangements it makes for determining admissions or enrolments to the institution:**

Example 3.9B

A university requires selected applicants to attend an interview. One applicant has a speech difficulty which gets worse when he is nervous. This means he needs more time to express himself. The university refuses to allow him any extra time at interview. This is likely to be unlawful.

- **by refusing or deliberately omitting to accept an application for admissions or enrolment.**

Example 3.9D

A university has many applications for a popular course. In order to cut down the numbers that the admissions tutor has to look through, the administrator sets to one side all applications from disabled students. These applicants are considered only if places remain after all other applicants have been considered. This is likely to be unlawful.

3. Admissions

● What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends

Precept 4

The institution's publicity, programme details and general information should be accessible to people with disabilities and describe the opportunities for them to participate.

Precept 5

In selecting students institutions should ensure equitable consideration of all applicants.

Precept 6

Disabled applicants' support needs should be identified and assessed in an effective and timely way, taking into account the applicant's views.

Precept 7

The arrangements for enrolment, registration and induction of new entrants should accommodate the needs of disabled students.

Precept 20

Institutions should have a clearly defined policy on the confidentiality and disclosure of information relating to a person's disability that is communicated to applicants, students and staff.

3. Admissions

What students say about current practice

Rajinder - Education - visual impairment

The prospectus was good and I liked the way the university mission statement was set out. The font size and layout of headings made it easy to find the relevant information that I wanted to read on my CCTV.

Lucy - Arts and Humanities - mental health problem

I came to an open day but that didn't help me gather the information that I needed as someone with a mental health issue. It was about selling the university really.

Garry - Technology - Asperger's Syndrome

Before I started my course I met the disability officer, the accommodation officer and the course tutor and we talked about things like the course and my disability. I felt that this helped me know more about the university and the way the year would be organised.

Steve - Technology - epilepsy

I told the university before the start of term that I have epilepsy but I don't think that this got passed on to the staff. They know I have epilepsy now because I had a fit in the computer suite. They only found out after the event and it came as a bit of a shock to everyone.

Delroy - Science - deaf

At the information interview I asked the staff from the department if there was an induction loop. They didn't seem to have much idea about what was and what wasn't available. That left me a bit worried about what to expect.

Sam - Art and Humanities - multiple sclerosis

At induction the campus visit was organised as a walking tour and I couldn't navigate it in my wheelchair. I had to go "all around the houses" in the end and find my own way, so inevitably I got lost. Being late back I didn't hear any of the presentations to do with the modules which was meant to be an important part of course choice. I was told that once I had chosen my modules I could not change them.

George - Science - visual impairment

On registration day I realised how difficult it was going to be to read the visual information available around the campus. The notice boards in the department and the students' union were full of out of date notices, papers were pinned on top of each other and many used text too small to read. Old notices should be taken down and discarded. I can't scan read so I have to read everything, which is daunting.

3. Admissions

* What staff say about current practice

- We have dedicated a lot of resource to organising accessible publicity materials. The website has a text only version, applicants can request alternative format versions of sections of the prospectus and we find that using the broadcast media has been quite successful in attracting disabled applicants.
- We need a short guidance sheet for academic staff to use at interviews or open days, which outlines the delivery issues for the course that students' have chosen and the support provision available. This would help all students.
- Making absolutely sure that the course is suitable for a disabled applicant sometimes requires a sensitive negotiation for which staff might need dedicated training.
- We have adopted a procedure, for all academic and technical support staff, that provides early notification of the presence of a student on their course. This arrangement is made to ensure that all the venues are accessible, and that the necessary equipment and support are available at the start of term.
- As a department we are starting to take more responsibility for establishing flexible frameworks for disabled students. At one time it would have been a case of bouncing issues back to the disability support service, but now we feel more experienced and able to make judgements about how to proceed with an application and what the ramifications will be for our resources.
- Just remember that when students come through the Clearing procedure there is an added urgency to establish a support package to coincide with the start of term. We have identified a staff member to follow this up.

3. Admissions

◆ Checklist

Admissions policy and practice

What is the overall procedure for ensuring that recruitment and admissions policies and practices are SENDA compliant? Have clear and explicit criteria been set down for each programme for the selection of students, ensuring that they do not discriminate against disabled applicants?

**Action
Comments**

Where a professional body accredits a course and its assessment regime, has clarification been sought regarding recruitment of disabled people and the "reasonable adjustments" that can be made?

➔ **Go to Professional Bodies.**

Should a situation occur where a disabled applicant is requesting to see records, have transparent arrangements been made for keeping records of selection decisions, e.g., the outcome of interviews?

Publicity & marketing

Are the recruitment opportunities for disabled students explained in a transparent way?

Does the information explain about the flexibility and choice within the programme, the teaching and learning methods, the availability of alternative course assessments, and the guidance and support available?

Have the advantages of disability disclosure and the procedures regarding confidentiality been explained?

Does the information make clear the student's own obligations and responsibilities in regard to their disability?

Are the institutional and departmental promotional materials accessible to a range of disabled people, e.g., the website, prospectus, course details, other university information, etc.?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Is the information available in alternative formats? Are open days held in accessible venues with accessible toilets and access to disabled parking close-by? Are staff attending these events briefed on positive communication?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive Communication.**

Are signers and/or student mentors and/or note takers available?

3. Admissions

◆ Checklist

	Action Comments
What procedure is being used to make participating staff disability aware?	
Are maps available in Braille or large print?	
Disability declaration & confidentiality	
Is it clear to the applicant what information will be held, where it will be held, to whom it will be accessible and in what circumstances it might be released?	
Is there a mechanism for obtaining medical records and a transparent procedure for the use and storage of this information?	
Does a system exist for the confidential exchange of information between the disability service and the central support services, e.g., libraries, and the faculty/school/department? Who needs to know? ➔ Go to Fieldwork; Laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments; Placement Learning.	
When students declare disability after the start of term how is support, DSA and staff liaison for the above issues triggered? Is there a mechanism to inform the HEI of students who have declared a disability on HE courses in partner colleges?	
Progression routes	
Is there a procedure for ensuring that 6th form staff, careers advisors and staff in FEIs are aware of the support provisions and arrangements for the admission of disabled students?	
Are there discrete procedures to trigger the offer of information interviews, support assessments and provision for students applying on courses delivered in partner institutions, on automatic progression courses, Access courses, through UCAS, Clearing, for part-time and post-graduate courses, and from overseas, etc.?	
When students are making an automatic progression to an HEI, or upgrading to degree level, what are the procedures to arrange a DSA top up assessment to meet the new study requirements?	
Offering a place	
Where required, is there a process to initiate an information interview, once a place has been offered?	

3. Admissions

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Are potential students sent an advice pack specific to their disability, their course and the DSA application?	
Who co-ordinates the information interview? Who attends the information interview, e.g., a key tutor, a disability officer, the accommodation officer, the student (and student helper if required)?	
Is there an aide-mémoire for addressing issues at the information interview and for disseminating information to relevant individuals?	
Is there a procedure for giving early notification to accommodation officers, especially in situations where personal care support is required?	
Are staff responsible for admissions aware of the accessibility of all campus and departmental facilities, and is this knowledge supported by an on-going access audit?	
Is the information interview a forum for staff and students to explore issues surrounding placements, laboratory, workshop and other practice-based environments, fieldwork, etc.? Do they inform students about the accessibility of all facilities, health and safety issues, course programme structure and the timing and type of assessments? ➔ Go to Assessments; Fieldwork; Laboratories, Workshops and other practice-based environments; Placement Learning.	
Are prospective students informed of changes to a programme made after the offer, e.g., assessment arrangements, alterations to venues, teaching and learning methods?	
Is there an automatic procedure for triggering the DSA assessment and the identification of support resources required from the institution?	
Where courses are delivered in partner colleges, do students receive early notification of the DSA process if applicable?	
Staff development Is there a rolling programme of staff development for new and existing admissions tutors, administrators, disability advisors and central services such as registry and staff involved in orientation and induction activities, etc. Will staff development include familiarisation with positive communication strategies? ➔ Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.	

3. Admissions

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Is a briefing sheet on disability awareness available for staff involved in open days, academic and information interviews?

Professional bodies and prescribed standards

Are staff given guidance on the grounds under which applicants can be rejected in relation to courses with standards prescribed by professional bodies?

➔ **Go to Professional Bodies.**

Student orientation and induction activities

Are activities held in accessible environments and is the range of activities offered designed to meet diverse needs?

Monitoring

What are the procedures to monitor and review the admissions policy for compliance with disability legislation, to record differences in procedures between subjects, departments, faculties/schools, and progression, retention and withdrawal?

Student evaluation

What are the procedures for acquiring feedback from disabled students about recruitment and admissions and how is it applied to future policy and practice?

3. Admissions

+ Additional sources of information

Admissions into Higher Education (2001), Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, London.

Available from:
Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
Chapter House
18-20 Crucifix Lane
London
SE1 3JW

Telephone	0800 328 5050
Textphone	0800 068 2422
Email	info@skill.org.uk
Website	www.skill.org.uk

The Disability Discrimination Act Part 4. Admissions and Marketing Guide, (2002), Disability Rights Commission, London
Available at: www.drc-gb.org

Finding out about people's disabilities. A good practice guide for further and higher education institutions, (2002), DfES, London

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

► **Who might find this checklist useful?**

Academic Boards, Faculty Boards, Teaching & Learning Policy Committees, Deans and Heads of Departments/Schools, Approval and Validation Offices, Approval Panels, Undergraduate and Post-graduate Programme Committees, Programme Teams, Subject Group Heads, Subject Assessment Panels, Award Assessment Boards, Partnership Management Committees, Faculty Partnership Liaison Monitoring Committees, Faculty Partnership Managers, Faculty liaison staff, Quality and Standards Committees, Information and Learning Services, and new staff on induction.

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):

- teaching, including classes, lectures, seminars, practical sessions
- curriculum design
- examinations and assessments
- field trips and outdoor education
- arranging study abroad or work placements
- research degrees and research facilities
- distance learning
- independent learning opportunities such as e-learning
- learning facilities such as classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, studios, darkrooms, etc.
- learning equipment and materials such as laboratory equipment, computer facilities, class handouts, etc
- libraries, learning centres and information centres and their resources
- information and communication technology and resources. (3.14)

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

● **What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends**

Precept 8

Programme specifications should include no unnecessary barriers to access by disabled people. Institutions should consider establishing procedures which ensure that:

- The setting and/or amendment of academic and other programme requirements during approval or validation processes includes well-informed considerations of the requirements of disabled students;
 - Programme specifications and descriptions give sufficient information to enable students with disabilities and staff to make informed decisions about the ability to complete the programme.
-

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

■ What students say about current practice

Kirsten - Arts and Humanities - Myalgic Encephalomyelitis

I wish, when they are planning courses, that someone would think about the overall scheme from the point of view of the time tabling of assignments. On my modular course there were three lengthy pieces of work all due in the last fortnight of term and we simply didn't have the information to tackle them any earlier. Everyone was burning the midnight oil but I was completely exhausted and I had to make a special case for two late submissions. It was dreadful.

Parvinder - Arts and Humanities - mental health problem

I have had so much absence from the course this year because of my health problems that I haven't really felt that I was actually that involved. Quite honestly it would have been much better for me if I could have taken two terms to do the work and then I would have achieved something positive. As it is a lot of my very limited energy has gone on applying for extenuating circumstances, which I have had to do on numerous separate occasions.

Mark - Technology - visual impairment

Much of the time I feel like a square peg in a round hole. Doing a degree is something like an obstacle race. Sure, it has to be challenging for all of us, but the basic framework for my course just isn't friendly when you have a loss of sight. The course software isn't compatible with my enabling technology, the staff don't know how to operate the two systems together, the computer with the large monitor is never in the lab when I need it and I always feel like I'm complaining.

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

* What staff say about current practice

- I think there would be a real value in exploring the possibility of officially longer degree routes for students with some disabilities involving stamina problems, although I suppose that will create difficulties when for funding purposes degrees are regarded as "full-time".
- There are a lot of advantages to what is now being called "problem based learning". Developing a more student-centred approach to course programmes, encouraging dialogue and collaboration amongst the students, is a promising direction in my view. Many disabled students often have an interesting and non-standard approach which, if managed properly in the context of team working and peer assessment, can be very fruitful indeed.
- As a department we need to think long and hard about whether our current teaching styles, course materials and assessment tasks allow students with disabilities the necessary opportunities to demonstrate their acquisition of the learning outcomes, in a way that is perceived as a level playing field.

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

◆ Checklist

Policies and frameworks for curriculum development

What is the mechanism for ensuring that SENDA compliance is addressed in the relevant policy making committees of the institution?

What is the procedure for ensuring that anticipatory "reasonable adjustments" will be made to make the broad curriculum accessible, through the development, approval and review of courses/programmes?

What procedures have been adopted to ensure that all staff involved in course/programme development, approval, review and delivery are aware of their responsibilities under the SENDA?

How will responsibilities under SENDA be monitored and reviewed?

What mechanisms exist to ensure that inconsistencies in policies and practices between faculties, schools, departments and courses are identified and rectified as part of Quality Standards?

Development, approval and review of programmes and courses in HEIs

Approval Panels

Do approval panels include a disability specialist to address issues of SENDA compliance?

Do members of the approval panel have opportunities during the approval process to inspect programme-related facilities for disabled students?

Do reports from the approval panel identify the fact that satisfactory and/or unsatisfactory measures are in place for the access of students with disabilities? In what ways is approval contingent upon satisfying such criteria?

What are the SENDA compliance procedures for proposals that do not constitute new programmes but do involve some form of approval process?

Programme/Course Teams

Has the course team demonstrated that the learning, teaching and support elements of programmes/courses are accessible to students with disabilities?

Action
Comments

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

◆ Checklist

In particular has consideration been given to the accessibility of:

- Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination
- Lectures, seminars and tutorials
- Fieldwork
- Laboratory, workshops and other practice-based environments
- Placement learning
- Assessments

➔ **Go to the checklist for each of the above.**

Is it made clear in the resource base and specialist facilities underpinning the course/programme what is available to support the delivery to disabled students?

In the mapping of assessment to learning outcomes, is there clear evidence of the availability of alternative assessment tasks, to meet the needs of a range of students with disabilities?

➔ **Go to Assessments.**

Is the range, loading and time-tabling of assessments suitable for disabled students?

Has discussion taken place with the relevant professional body to seek their views on the "reasonable adjustments" that may be made to teaching and learning, and assessment?

➔ **Go to Professional Bodies.**

What procedures are used to ensure that "reasonable adjustments" have been made to non-campus locations for accessibility, e.g., off-site, placement and overseas?

Have additional support providers external to HEIs been identified by course teams, e.g., RNIB transcription service, the tactile diagram service, etc.?

Joint University Programmes

Where joint-universities' programmes are involved, have arrangements been made to ensure parity of provision for disabled students across institutions?

If a memorandum of co-operation is to be adopted for a joint-university programme, how will SENDA compliance be addressed?

Action Comments

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review



Checklist

Programme approval and review in college partnership and sub-contracting situations

Who has responsibility for SENDA compliance amongst the relevant faculty liaison staff?

During consultation with partners, what arrangements will be made to ensure that resources and staff expertise at the partner institution is SENDA compliant?

In the supporting documentation for a sub-contracted programme, e.g., liaison report forms, what evidence of SENDA compliance will be reported? In what ways is approval contingent upon satisfying such criteria?

Does the form of contract offered to partner institutions recognise the significance of the partners' EO policies?

Does the partnership arrangement mean that the teaching and other services supplied are made by or on behalf of the institution? If so, have accessibility issues been discussed and have "reasonable adjustments" been made? Where does responsibility for this lie?

➔ **Go to Admissions; Placement Learning.**

How will the HEI disability support service be involved in establishing liaison and support arrangements at partner institutions?

Accredited programmes and accredited partners

If a memorandum of co-operation is to be adopted between partner institutions, how will SENDA compliance be addressed?

With accredited programmes designed and delivered solely in a partner institution, what reporting and monitoring arrangements are in place for SENDA compliance?

Definitive documentation for programmes and awards including student handbooks, etc.

Does the definitive documentation/student handbook include reference to accessibility in the areas of teaching and learning, and assessment, including reference to alternative arrangements?

Action Comments

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Does the definitive documentation/student handbook show that the course development team have clearly applied mechanisms which do not discriminate against disabled students but, where necessary, have made anticipatory "reasonable adjustments" at the following points of reference:

- teaching and learning
- range and flexibility of assessment methods
- programme, pathways and structures
- learning environment?

What reference is made for disabled students to any specialist support in departments and other services such as libraries, open access computing suites, etc.?

Are students advised of the presence of the disability support service, its location and role?

Is a statement included on the availability of the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)?

Is mention made of specialist external sources of support?

Are disabled students advised of the availability of flexible study modes in circumstances where, because of disability, they might need to transfer to part-time study or make a year deferral?

Is the definitive documentation/student handbook in an accessible format and/or available in alternative formats?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Have the necessary enquiries been made of students to ensure that the format of the documents produced meets their needs?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Staff development

Is there staff development for new and existing staff on disability awareness and inclusive practice? How is the experience of staff fed back into the staff development review?

Student evaluation

What are the procedures for acquiring feedback from disabled students about courses and how is it applied to course reviews and future course planning?

4. Course development, programme planning, approval and review

+ Additional sources of information

Auditing for Change, (2000), Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities, London.

Available from:

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
Chapter House
18-20 Crucifix Lane
London
SE1 3JW

Telephone	0800 328 5050
Textphone	0800 068 2422
Email	info@skill.org.uk
Website	www.skill.org.uk

Case Studies in Problem-based Learning (PBL) from Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences, (2001), Planet, Learning and Teaching Support Network, Geography, Earth & Environmental Sciences. Available at: <http://www.gees.ac.uk>

Changing the Culture. Addressing the needs of disabled students, (2001), Mike Adams, Update on Inclusion: Widening participation in higher education. (Issue No. 3)

Inclusive practices for students with disabilities: a guide for academic staff, (2000), Universities Disabilities Cooperative Project, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, New South Wales, Australia.

Teachability - Creating an Accessible Curriculum for Students with Disabilities, (2000), Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, University of Strathclyde, Strathclyde.

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

▶ **Who might find this checklist useful?**

All staff involved in Publicity and Marketing Departments and staff delivering teaching and supporting learning, e.g., lecturers, technicians, research students, etc., and new staff on induction.

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):

- teaching, including classes, lectures, seminars, practical sessions
- independent learning opportunities such as e-learning
- learning equipment and materials such as...class handouts
- information and communication technology and resources. (3.14)

Example 5.2F

A tutor in Zoology delivers one of his modules through a computer-based learning environment and awards marks for students' participation in online discussion. The system does not work with a visually impaired student's software. The student is likely to be placed at a substantial disadvantage.

Example 5.6E

A university encourages its lecturers to put lecture notes on the institution intranet. It introduces new procedures to ensure that all notes put on the intranet meet established guidelines to ensure there is no conflict with specialist software or features that students with dyslexia may be using. It therefore anticipates reasonable adjustments that it might need to make for certain disabled students.

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

● **What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends**

Precept 10

The delivery of programmes should take into account the needs of disabled people, or, where appropriate, be adapted to accommodate their individual requirements. Institutions should consider making arrangements which ensure that all academic staff and technical staff:

- plan and employ teaching and learning strategies which make the delivery of the programme as inclusive as possible;
- know and understand the learning implications of any disabilities of the students whom they teach, and are responsive to student feedback;
- make individual adaptations to delivery that are appropriate for particular students, which might include providing handouts in advance and/or in different formats (Braille, disk)

Institutions should consider implementing IT and computer arrangements which maximise disabled students' access to learning, including:

- IT strategies and procedures that pay due attention to the needs of disabled students.
-

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

What students say about current practice

Donna - Science - dyslexia

Knowing what lectures are about in advance is really important to me. Some lecturers will give just a title but no detailed information about what a lecture might involve. For lecturers where I have known in detail what was going to be involved, I've been able to read a little first. That's helped a great deal and would help other students too and not just those with a disability. Whenever there is a lack of information it's disastrous for me.

Josh - Arts and Humanities - hearing loss

There is a big contrast between lecturers who make a real effort to produce good quality handouts and those who just do things like making lists of the slides they've shown. Actually you can see some of the differences in the grades I get. My best marks seem to be in areas where the quality of info is good.

Tajinder - Technology - visual impairment

I often can't read what the staff have written on the whiteboards and even what note takers write down may not be accurate. Sometimes when a lecturer is making a diagram and describing it, by the time my note taker has enlarged the diagram and passed it to me later in the week, I can't remember the discussion at all.

Alan - Science - visual impairment

There are some staff members who give me A3 paper despite being asked umpteen times not to. Enlargements on A3 are hopeless. I don't have an A3 file. Where do you punch the holes? Anyway they take up too much space for filing. A4 to A3 often doesn't make the print much larger anyway. Given that most materials are produced in Power Point or Word it is extremely easy for staff to upsize a copy. It just takes a few extra sheets of paper.

Sandra - Arts and Humanities - multiple sclerosis

One lecturer made assumptions and gave me a lot of stuff that was in very very large print. I mean very large print. She was speaking slowly to me and making copies of the overheads that were enormous. I had all this paper and after the lecture I said, "Excuse me I don't understand why you have given me all this large print stuff".

"Well, you need it," she said.

I'd never met her before and she had never met me, but she knew I had MS. She must have read up about it and read up about every symptom, one of which can be failing eyesight. But what she had done was assumed that I had all of it, the whole lot.

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

* What staff say about current practice

- Like many staff I make all my course presentation materials on my PC. That way I can store and retrieve them and modify them quite easily to satisfy the requirements of most students. For my own benefit I work in Ariel 13 point and when I have a student with a disability who might require something a little different I simply ask them and produce what they want. I don't see it as a big problem actually as long as I know who the students are.
- My first experience of students with disabilities was when the department enrolled several students with dyslexia a few years ago. It quickly became obvious that two of them in particular were really struggling with some of the specialist subject-specific terms. This prompted me to start making short glossaries that could be handed out to them in advance of lectures and now it is routine for all the students.
- All my lecture notes are available through the university intranet. I also put all my Power Point and OHT material there and several of the students have told me that they find it a good resource, and they're not just students with disabilities. I know it has proved to be particularly useful for a deaf student, who was having difficulty with the academic language of the course.

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

◆ Checklist

Pre-course preparation

What is the overall procedure for ensuring that staff are aware well in advance of the presence of a disabled student on their course?

**Action
Comments**

By what method do the staff become aware of the implications of a particular disability on an individual student's teaching and learning needs, and in particular the "reasonable adjustments" required to make course materials accessible?

Is the course documentation, e.g., summaries, course handouts, bibliographies, key readings, etc., made available well in advance of teaching sessions? Is sufficient time available for students to obtain texts on audio tape or Braille?

Have accessible materials also been produced for activities such as:

- fieldwork
- laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments
- placement learning?

➔ **Go to Fieldwork; Laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments; Placement learning.**

Document layouts

Will documents be printed on pastel coloured matt paper, e.g., buff, as glossy paper can cause glare?

Will documents be presented in black and/or blue typeface but avoiding a proliferation of typeface colours, especially those which can be less distinguishable for some people, e.g., red and green?

Will the font style be limited to one only, and be Sans Serif font, e.g., Arial, Times New Roman, Universe, etc?

Will the point size be a minimum point 12?

Will the numbering and symbol protocols be kept simple and take cognisance of the fact that some characters are difficult to differentiate or are easy to transpose, e.g., 3 and 8, 6 and 9, O and 0, S and 5, iv and vi?

Has care been taken to avoid, where possible:

- words split over lines
- italics
- underlining

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

- the capitalisation of whole sentences
- narrow line spacing, narrow margins and dense text
- faint print?

Will the typeface be set horizontally to avoid text set on curved lines and at angles?

Have text documents been generously spaced with a left-justified margin, e.g., not right justified as this can cause word elongation and irregular spacing?

Has centre justification been avoided except for main title headings?

Will enough space be left between columns to make sure that text flows easily from column to column?

If the option is that a reader might need to write on a page, has enough space been left for this, e.g., in a circumstance where a student has visual impairment or dexterity difficulties?

Documents with images

If the document includes images has attention been given to:

- ensuring that typeface is not superimposed over images
- avoiding putting text around images which produces a ragged left-hand edge
- placing photographs suitably to the right of text
- using only high contrast images with clean backgrounds?

Reproduction and reading

Have the necessary enquiries been made of students to ensure that the format of the documents produced meets their needs?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Does the documentation clearly flag up the key points, using plain language to explain subject specific terminology and does it use bullet pointed summaries rather than dense passages of text?

Have document binding methods and the number of pages contained in a document been considered as access issues for those readers using scanners and magnifiers?

Are the photocopies being made of good quality? Are measures being taken to avoid reducing document sizes, e.g., A3 reduced to A4 and of making copies from copies?

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Have arrangements been made to make large print copies for those students who might need them?

For transcribing purposes have written form versions or audio cassettes of graphs, charts and diagrams, etc. been made?

Materials for Visual Displays

Has consideration been given to the accessibility issues involved in the use of OHP transparencies, slide projection, audio video recordings, electronic presentation packages, DVD and virtual learning environments?

When producing visual displays have the caveats governing the production of printed and printable materials set out above been explored?

Have the different protocols involved in visual presentations been considered:

- size of projected image
- the length of time for the display of each image
- the overall length of time of the presentation
- the relative strengths and weakness of still versus animated images
- viewer positions and distances, etc
- other light sources that might be intrusive?

Has the text display been simplified, enlarged and given more space than a paper-based format, e.g., does it conform to the word count protocol that the maximum number of words on an OHP transparency should not exceed 25?

For still displays has a suitable background been chosen that is a solid colour to avoid patterns, textures and images, e.g., by using high contrast images such as black on yellow?

Have measures been taken to avoid text over image and other visual clutter?

Alternatives to audio visual elements

Have arrangements been made to make available written form versions or audio cassettes of screen text, graphs, charts, overhead transparencies and electronic presentation packages, etc. for transcribing purposes?

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Where an audio element is present have arrangements been made to provide alternative visual displays and captions to augment sign language interpretation?

When a virtual learning environment is deployed, have text alternatives or sub-titles been generated for the sound clips?

Electronic dissemination

What arrangements have been made to make paper-based and visual materials available in electronic formats using intranet and e-mail?

Does the institution's web site comply with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines?

See Additional sources of information below.

Have arrangements been made for access to chat rooms and on-line discussions from the student's personal computer?

When students are users of assistive technologies have arrangements been made to ensure that electronic format material is readable via screen enlargement software, text-to-voice output, etc?

Have discussions taken place with disability support service to explore issues of accessibility in cases where assistive technologies are to be employed for document retrieval and/or reading?

If assessments are undertaken through CAL have accessibility issues been addressed?

➔ **Go to Assessment.**

Student evaluation

In pursuing a successful system for the production of printed, visual and electronic learning, assessment and information materials, what arrangements have been made for on-going student evaluation?

5. Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination

+ **Additional sources of information**

Accessibility Guidelines for Web Authors

Available at: www.demon.ac.uk/access

The Disability Discrimination Act Part 4. Learning and Teaching Good Practice Guide, (2002) Disability Rights Commission, London.

Available at: www.drc-gb.org

Inclusive practices for students with disabilities: a guide for academic staff, (2000), Universities Disabilities Cooperative Project, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, New South Wales, Australia.

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Available at: www.w3.org/WAI/

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

▶ **Who might find this checklist useful?**

All staff involved in delivering teaching and supporting learning, e.g., lecturers, technicians, research students, etc., and new staff on induction.

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):

- teaching, including classes, lectures, seminars, practical sessions
- curriculum design
- learning facilities such as classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, studios, darkrooms, etc. (3.14)

Example 5.2A

A partially deaf student who lipreads is attending a Business Studies course. One of her lecturers continues to lecture while simultaneously writing on the whiteboard. The student asks him to stop speaking when he turns his back to use the whiteboard so that she can follow what he is saying. The student is likely to be at a substantial disadvantage if this adjustment is not made.

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

● What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends

Precept 10

The delivery of programmes should take into account the needs of disabled people, or, where appropriate, be adapted to accommodate their individual requirements. Institutions should consider making arrangements which ensure that all academic staff and technical staff:

- plan and employ teaching and learning strategies which make the delivery of the programme as inclusive as possible;
 - know and understand the learning implications of any disabilities of the students whom they teach, and are responsive to student feedback;
 - make individual adaptations to delivery that are appropriate for particular students, which might include...short breaks for interpreters to rest, or using radio microphone systems, or flexible/interrupted study for students with mental health difficulties.
-

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

What students say about current practice

Sarah - Science - deaf/hard of hearing

I still have difficulty hearing what's going on in lectures even with induction loops and I have problems with lecturers moving about constantly. I do lip read and I do try to follow what they are saying but I have to rely on my note taker. My note taker sometimes becomes aware that I have suddenly switched off completely because I haven't got the stamina to follow any more.

Karen - Business Studies - visual impairment

When I tell the staff I can't see the overhead it makes me feel really awkward. It's as if I am a burden. They say "Oops what are we going to do with you then?" I'm thinking, "Oh help, here we go again".

Gemma- Science - dyslexia and Meares Irlen Syndrome

They don't understand the problems I have with trying to hear, see and write all at the same time. I find it incredibly hard, incredibly hard. If I've got nice short bullet points to copy down that's great and I can go away and read up about it.

Sandra - Arts and Humanities - multiple sclerosis

This year I've been in much smaller groups and the layout of the room has been fundamental to my participation or lack of it. When the room layout has been chairs in rows, I've been stuck at the end of the row by the door, because the room is too narrow for me to get across to the other side in my wheelchair. Worse still when we break into small working groups I tend to get stuck with whoever I happen to be next to, which may not be who I want to be working with. The best arrangement for me is when the room is arranged into a "u" shape of tables, so that I can manoeuvre. This has the added advantage of my wheelchair becoming less obvious and I feel more comfortable with that.

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

* What staff say about current practice

- As a department we have a procedure for getting early notification of any student with a disability that is going to be studying on a course. Initially I was worried that it was going to cause me a huge additional workload. In practice it has meant amending my teaching to include a broader range of presentation methods including technologies I had not embraced, like Power Point.
- We had a student with a hearing impairment due to attend the lectures and I met with him to discuss where he would sit and how best to proceed. To start with it was difficult to stop myself turning towards the whiteboard while I was still talking and I know I have a habit of obstructing my face with my hand when I'm explaining something. After each of the first few lectures I met with him to see how he was getting on. I found the feedback useful and he became more confident as well. If I am honest, I feel that trying to be sensitive to what he wanted has made my lecturing style a bit clearer for everyone.

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

◆ Checklist

Overall procedure

What is the overall procedure for ensuring that the delivery of lectures and seminars/tutorials is flexible and versatile to meet the individual needs of students with a range of disabilities?

By what method do staff become aware of the implications of a particular disability on an individual student's teaching and learning needs, and in particular the "reasonable adjustments" required for lectures and seminars?

Is targeted disability awareness training available for full and part-time staff, from the disability support service? Is this available on a regular basis? Who initiates the sessions? Who attends?

The availability of supporting materials

Is the course documentation made available well in advance of lectures/seminars and has a systematic approach been taken to make it available in an accessible format for a range of disabilities?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Organising the teaching space

Has an opportunity been made to meet or discuss with students any necessary "reasonable adjustments" that need to be made? Whose responsibility is this?

Is the time tabling of teaching space supported by a reliable access audit and is the allocation suitable and accessible to the disabled students?

What arrangements are to be made where the following apply:

- that some students may utilise assistive technology or employ medical and non-medical helpers to support them.
- that a wheelchair user does not want to feel marginalised by a lecture or seminar room layout?
- that a student with a speech impairment may want another student to ask their questions?
- that students may require additional support to prepare a presentation?
- that having two people talking at once will disadvantage someone with a hearing impairment?
- that a lip reader or a student with a visual impairment may want to be introduced to the student group and have some ground rules set down for communication, etc?

Action Comments

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

● that students and sign language interpreters may need short rest breaks?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Are all presentation areas suitably lit, e.g., is it possible to avoid back or side lighting from windows or other light sources, and how are task lights to be supplied when necessary?

Teaching and learning strategies

Is positive communication employed, e.g., by facing the student group when speaking, avoiding obscuring the face by hands or gestures and are staff aware that beards, microphones and books can be obstructive to lip readers?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Are a variety of teaching and learning methods to be used, supported by accessible written and visual material, e.g.:

- positive communication
- whiteboards
- OHP transparencies
- electronic presentation packages
- audio-visuals, etc
- invitations for student input?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Is the material displayed on electronic presentation packages, OHP transparencies and whiteboards, etc., including graphs and charts, explained orally? Are they available in written form for transcribing purposes?

Is complex information summarised through bullet-pointed summaries?

Will plain language be used when speaking and to explain specialist terminology, thus avoiding jargon and colloquialisms?

Will strategies be used to re-iterate key points, re-phrase information that is likely to be misunderstood and re-emphasise questions asked by students?

Will in-session announcements be produced in written and electronic formats, e.g., concerning the content of future sessions, venues and times including amendments, arrangements for fieldwork, etc.?

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

◆ Checklist

	Action Comments
Will students be encouraged to make tape recordings of lectures and seminars if required?	
In-class assessments Where in-class assessments are scheduled have "reasonable adjustments" been made to self and peer assessment, group work, problem-based assessment, OMRs and CBAs, etc.? ➔ Go to Assessments.	
Post lecture and seminar activities Will course material be posted on the intranet and will email aide-mémoires be used for students who may have been absent for disability related reasons? Is there a chat room that can be used for this purpose?	
Student evaluation Is there a system in place for disabled students to evaluate the learning opportunities provided by lectures/seminars?	

6. Lectures, seminars and tutorials

+ Additional sources of information

The Disability Discrimination Act Part 4. Learning and Teaching Good Practice Guide, (2002), Disability Rights Commission, London.
Available at: www.drc-gb.org

Inclusive practices for students with disabilities: a guide for academic staff, (2000), Universities Disabilities Cooperative Project, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, New South Wales, Australia.

Teachability - Creating an Accessible Curriculum for Students with Disabilities, (2000), Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, University of Strathclyde, Strathclyde.

7. Fieldwork

▶ **Who might find this checklist useful?**

Staff responsible for designing, planning and delivering fieldwork activities, e.g., academic staff, technicians and administrators.
DSA assessors and new staff on induction.

7. Fieldwork

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):

- field trips and outdoor education
- outings and trips. (3.14)

Example 5.8E

As part of an Earth Science course, students are required to undertake a field trip involving an overnight stay in a mountain hut. A student who needs regular dialysis cannot stay overnight in the hut because the hut is not an appropriate environment for her to set up her dialysis equipment. A likely reasonable adjustment would be for the tutor to arrange for her to take part during the days but for someone to return with her to a nearby village at night where she has set up her equipment.

7. Fieldwork

● What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends

Precept 11

Institutions should ensure that wherever possible disabled students have access to academic and vocational placements including field trips and study abroad.

Where placements, including international placements, are a formal requirement or standard component of the programme, institutions should consider ways of ensuring that the specified learning opportunities are available to disabled students.

Where a placement is an optional but desirable element of the programme, institutions should consider making similar arrangements to support access for disabled students.

7. Fieldwork

■ What students say about current practice

Stacey - Science - deaf/hard of hearing with a visual impairment

We had a fieldwork day in October on the moor, isolated and windy. Therefore no hearing aids. I was aware of the problem but I didn't know who to speak to. Basically I spent the entire field day very stressed, very worried and I nearly got lost about three times. I couldn't see the difference in the grass levels because of my glasses and I fell over four times because my balance is appalling.

Grant - Science - visual impairment

We had a field trip last semester and I was able to get a note taker to come with me through my Disabled Students Allowance. That was great because I was able to rely on the notes being taken while I was able to participate in the group.

7. Fieldwork

* What staff say about current practice

- The presence of one student last year with a visual impairment forced us to really review our procedures for planning fieldwork. We make sure now that we keep a visual record of all our regularly used sites, it's intended to be a comprehensive video backed up with a small portfolio of stills showing any barriers in close up. Actually it was the student who initiated the fieldwork access library, and collecting this information fits well into the course work.
- It was the health and safety issues that became the first focus for group discussions about the presence of a student with epilepsy on our most recent residential field trip to North Yorkshire. But we soon realised that there were a lot of other issues to address and we were pleased to find that the rest of the student group were really pro-active in establishing a formal support arrangement that the student was comfortable with. I actually felt that it helped the group gel.

7. Fieldwork

◆ Checklist

Pre-Fieldwork activities

Designing fieldwork opportunities

Within the rigour of maintaining academic standards, what design measures have been adopted to build inclusivity and flexibility into the area of fieldwork?

Has the financial planning for the course allocated sufficient resources to ensure that fieldwork elements are accessible to disabled students?

Does curriculum design allow students to have a choice of destinations that best meets their needs?

Does the level of learning required stipulate minimum periods to be spent in the field? How can this be made more flexible?

Can disabled students be assessed on some aspects of the fieldwork if necessary and demonstrate other learning outcomes through other means?

➔ **Go to Assessments.**

Are alternative activities built into the course design to provide equal educational experiences for some students?

What training do staff members receive in order to be competent to arrange and participate in fieldwork involving disabled students, to meet the learning outcomes and to comply with disability, and health and safety legislation, etc?

Are staff aware of the issues relating to positive communication?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Planning fieldwork activities

Prior to fieldwork are students offered the opportunity to declare a disability?

In pursuing a model of inclusivity and mutual adjustment, have the following been discussed with the student:

- all travel arrangements
- accommodation
- the formal fieldwork curriculum
- individual & group work
- the social and informal elements?

Do any of the students rely on helpers, and if so, what are their requirements for transport and accommodation?

Action
Comments

7. Fieldwork

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Has preparatory material, e.g., photographs or video recordings, been used to show the accommodation to be used, the field site, access points and previous students undertaking typical fieldwork activities?

To support student familiarisation, has the programme of activities, relevant support materials and information about the whereabouts of accessible toilets, etc. been made available well in advance in a written and accessible format?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Has early discussion taken place with the HEI's disability support service and/or a specialist external advisor, to assist in organising assistive technologies, learning support and special funding arrangements through the DSA? Is this initiated by the student? How are they informed about this? Has this taken place at information interview or prior to entry?

Have a set of negotiated ground rules been established for circumstances where additional resources are being used? What procedures are there for:

- maintaining contact between vehicles
- special parking arrangements
- the presence of guide dogs
- the use of personal helpers
- the role of specialist technology
- the parameters of support?

Have issues relating to peer-support, health and safety and student medical need, been addressed through the general guidance provided by departments, during group discussions of responsibilities and mutual student/staff expectations about behaviour?

If there is a group work element, has it been discussed and negotiated with the student and staff participants, to ensure that the disabled student can, if necessary, show that they have understood a process in a circumstance where it would not be possible for them to demonstrate it personally?

Are there opportunities for staff and students to explore alternative ways of meeting required learning outcomes, e.g., if an assessed field notebook is not viable?

➔ **Go to Assessment.**

7. Fieldwork

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Are there opportunities for relevant issues to be discussed with the other staff involved in the field trip?

What strategies are in place to respond to unexpected events?

In the case of free-standing fieldwork what system has been established for future communications between the student and the department?

Do the designated locations and field sites present specific challenges for particular disabilities? If they do, have the following been considered:

- adopting a different transport policy to existing locations
- finding alternative locations that can replicate the learning experience
- organising different activities of equal educational value
- providing field experience over a longer period of time?

Are there circumstances where "reasonable adjustments" are not possible, and if so can they realistically be substituted through the use of video, film or virtual fieldwork?

Fieldwork activities

Have arrangements been made to team manage all health and safety matters?

Is there a procedure, prior to each site visit, for guidance to be given regarding specific hazards in relation to particular disabilities?

Has sufficient time been allocated for the range of fieldwork elements, to meet the needs of disabled students, which may include interruptions to the schedule for rest or medical requirements?

Has sufficient time been allowed to move around the site and from site to site?

Have arrangements been made to use oral or visual briefings to support materials prepared in advance?

What positive communication procedures will be used to maximise student opportunity to see and hear?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

7. Fieldwork

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Some disabled students will find the challenge of completing assessment tasks in the field particularly daunting. What "reasonable adjustments" will be made?	
Will a day-to-day review of activities focussing on the needs of disabled students be possible if necessary? If so, will it include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">● time management● transport● accommodation● the programme of activities itself● meeting the learning outcomes● student-peer issues and the social programme?	
Will additional factors such as the impact of the weather on certain disabled students be considered?	
Post-Fieldwork activities	
Is fieldwork monitored to contribute towards a more inclusive curriculum and to address the vocational aspirations of disabled students?	
Student evaluation	
What are the procedures for using disabled student feedback from fieldwork to inform the planning, development and review of courses?	

7. Fieldwork

+ Additional sources of information

Supporting Disabled Students Undertaking Fieldwork and Related Activities, (2001), Geography Discipline Network.
Available at: <http://www.glos.ac.uk/gdn/disabil/index>

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities - learning and teaching guidance for Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences (2002), Planet
Available at: <http://www.gees.ac.uk>

8. Laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments

► **Who might find this checklist useful?**

All academics, technical and demonstrator staff involved in teaching and learning in laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments, admission tutors, estates, Health and Safety Committees, DSA assessors and new staff on induction.

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):

- teaching, including classes, lectures, seminars, practical sessions
- curriculum design
- research degrees and research facilities
- learning facilities such as classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, studios, darkrooms, etc.
- learning equipment and materials such as laboratory equipment, computer facilities, class handouts, etc
- information and communication technology and resources. (3.14)

Example 6.20A

A student with AIDS is on a Chemical Engineering course. He does not want other students to know of his condition. His condition means that he sometimes needs to have time off. His tutors have offered to arrange extra time in the laboratory for him after hours to make up for the time he misses. However, he has refused this on the grounds of confidentiality. Instead they offer to provide him with extra lecture notes. Although this adjustment is less effective, it is likely to be lawful.

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

● **What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends**

Precept 3

Institution should ensure that facilities and equipment are as accessible as possible to disabled students.

Institutions should consider the requirements of disabled students in such matters as:

- the height and layout of classroom tables and laboratory benches
 - supporting access around the campus with appropriate signage and information, such as large print and Braille notices
 - the design and layout of seating especially in...computer laboratories
 - ease of use of equipment in laboratories, computer and teaching rooms
 - alternative safety systems such as flashing fire alarms or vibrating pagers.
(extract)
-

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

What students say about current practice

Anna - Science - dyslexia and Meares Irlen Syndrome

We are very lucky in the department. The technicians have been really helpful to me. I am always allowed to use one of the post-graduate research microscopes that we wouldn't usually have access to. They have also arranged to get a blue filter to put on top of the light source which helps cut out the glare and is much more restful on my eyes.

Aiden - Technology - visual impairment

Some of the software which is integral to our computer course, isn't compatible with my enabling technology. Some of my systems analysis assignments use packages that are difficult to navigate, where scanning is impossible. They use diabolical fonts and you can't change the background colours. Unfortunately I have to use them a lot. I can't even use the mouse wheel to navigate it. Sometimes I end up with one entity on the screen when the overall picture is a complex systems map of ellipses and connecting systems lines. I even have the courseware on my own system but it seems to crash a lot.

Jan - Science - visual impairment

In one of our practical sessions I was the one who stuck their hand up and said, "I can't read this". So the lecturer got it enlarged and did about 10 sheets and he put them down and all of a sudden 10 sheets disappeared because nobody could read it. Nobody else but me was prepared to say anything and it's a shame that it wasn't done in the first place.

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

* What staff say about current practice

- We organise a familiarisation programme for disabled students so that they can have a good look at the workshop space and all the equipment. We run through the health and safety issues and ask the students what they are concerned about. They are invited individually which is more time consuming but when we tried it as a group activity we felt that the students were much more reticent to participate. Some don't turn up at all.
- We have been liaising with the disability advisor for some years now and this has been crucial for our understanding of the kinds of technology available for disabled people. Since the beginning of the last academic year we have had a member of the lecturing staff who has taken responsibility for keeping abreast of specialist technology, ergonomic devices and such like.
- We have a student who could do with a computer monitor on a wall bracket and a different height desk. Who's going to pay for this? Is it the department, the disability service or the DSA?

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Preparation

What is the overall procedure for ensuring that staff are aware in advance of the presence of a disabled student on their course?

By what method do the staff become aware of the implications of a particular disability on an individual student's teaching and learning needs? In particular how do staff become aware of the "reasonable adjustments" required to make laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments accessible, while remaining in line with health and safety legislation?

Is the course documentation made available well ahead of sessions and has a systematic approach been taken to make it available in an accessible and plain language format for a range of disabilities?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Is sufficient time available for students to obtain texts on audio tape or Braille?

What training do staff members receive in order to be competent to organise and monitor the learning environment for disabled students, to meet the learning outcomes and to comply with disability, and health and safety legislation, etc?

Are staff aware of the issues relating to positive communication?

➔ **Go to Appendix 1: Positive communication.**

"Reasonable adjustments" and the provision of technology and helper support

Prior to working in practice-based environments has it been established that students have been offered the opportunity to declare a disability?

Has early discussion taken place with the HEI's disability support service and/or a specialist external advisor, to assist in organising assistive technologies, learning support and special funding arrangements through the DSA? Is this initiated by the student? How are they informed about this? Has this taken place at information interview or prior to entry?

What are the funding issues for making "reasonable adjustments"?

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Is the learning environment supported with any specialist technology, e.g., induction loops, screen reading software, CCTV, magnification aids, etc., and if so is it properly installed and maintained?

Is there a member of staff with responsibility for accessing information about specialist disability aids, with experience of their application and potential?

Student induction

Are disabled students provided with an individual orientation to the laboratory, workshop or other practice-based environments, including the equipment and health and safety procedures?

Are there opportunities for organising pairing or 'buddy' arrangements with other students?

Auditing existing facilities for accessibility and to make "reasonable adjustments"

Has an audit of the suitability of all floor and work surfaces, seating arrangements, equipment, switches, taps, handles, display features, lighting, etc., etc., been conducted to support "reasonable adjustments" in the context of the standards set out in the literature promoting accessibility? At departmental level, how often is this evaluated and who has responsibility?

See the accessibility documentation listed below in the Additional sources of information.

When considering the viability of "reasonable adjustments" is the disabled student fully involved in the discussions?

"Reasonable adjustments" to fixed features

Where fixed features are fitted, e.g., heavy equipment, fume cupboards, sinks, etc., could a range of safe standing or sitting surfaces be provided?

Is it possible for larger pieces of equipment to be placed on a lower workbench to promote accuracy and safety?

"Reasonable adjustments" to other features

Is it necessary to relocate door handles and shelving for disabled people with restricted reach?

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Is it necessary to change the width of benches to allow a disabled person to have a controlled reach of electrical power points, taps and other controls?

Are the 'corridors' between benches sufficiently wide to allow someone with a physical disability or a wheelchair user along them, or do they need modifying?

Is it possible to provide individual adjustable workstations for disabled students to reflect their needs and the tasks being performed?

Is there a need to acquire specialist equipment or modify existing equipment?

Do special arrangements need to be made to accommodate a medical/non-medical helper (extra pair of hands), reader or interpreter, or guide dog, etc.?

What "reasonable adjustments" need to be made to recognise the organisational implications of student absence for disability related reasons?

Power and water supplies

For disabled people to have controlled reach of power and water supplies, e.g., wheelchair users, people of short stature, those with difficulties of balance and those with upper limb disorders, do switches and taps need to be moved (subject to health and safety requirements)?

Can power poles be situated at the corners of workbenches while still remaining safe?

Are the switches fitted of the push, rocker or easy lever style, and are they easily distinguishable from the wall colour? Do the taps incorporate a capstan design?

Are flexible power and gas lines in place to improve accessibility?

The visual dimensions

Is there a procedure for ensuring that the visual aspects of laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments include the following:

- that an appropriate amount of light is available for the tasks
- that special non-glare task lights are supplied as required

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

- that overhead lights have useful cut off diffusers
- that the available light is evenly deployed
- that there are no areas of deep contrast, pools of light and/or shadows
- that there is no glare or reflection obscuring surfaces or displays?

To counter glare and reflection problems, have modifications to the design of windows been considered, e.g., for the inside anti-glare filters, blinds or curtains in a matt finish and/or for the outside, light reflecting awnings?

Accessibility of computers, displays and print outs

Are staff ensuring that software compatibility issues between assistive technology and courseware are being addressed, e.g., for those students using screen readers and text enlargement software?

What arrangements are being made for computer based assessments (CBA)?

➔ **Go to Assessments.**

Has an accessibility review been made of computer monitors, measurement markings, LED and other equipment displays?

Are the LED displays correctly positioned and adjusted, at the right height and angle, and how are they lit?

Are the display characters and symbols in a Sans Serif font, point size 12 or above, using adequate line spacing and an accessible colour contrast between text and background? Is there a clear delineation between potentially confusing characters such as O and 0, S and 5?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Has the position of equipment relative to the outside windows been reviewed for visual accessibility? Is any equipment facing a window and receiving excessive glare, or does any display have its back to a window thus creating high contrast?

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Health and safety

Is there a procedure for regular risk assessments to be undertaken to ensure the health and safety of disabled students and to ensure the health and safety of others in relation to disabled students?

What "house keeping" system is in place to prevent obstructions, spillage and other hazards that may be particularly dangerous to disabled people?

If required, is there a nominated individual such as a technician, with responsibility for the safety of a disabled student. Is there a reserve person responsible in circumstances of absence?

What procedures exist for monitoring student use of equipment, etc. during times when the student is using medication?

Are safety notices clearly displayed in an accessible format? Does this include instruction and workshop manuals, and health and safety documentation?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Are operating buttons, taps, switches and containers of hazardous materials clearly labelled to include raised relief symbols or Braille?

Are floors well maintained and without unnecessary slopes or raised sections?

Does standard protective equipment and clothing, e.g., safety glasses, protective gloves, laboratory coats, masks, etc., need to be adapted to meet disabled user needs?

Are alarms and safety devices available in both auditory and visual forms, e.g., clearly audible and obviously distinguishable from other sounds and visually available as well?
Are vibrating pagers in use?

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments



Checklist

Action Comments

Learning outcomes and virtual practices

Are there opportunities for staff and disabled students to explore alternative ways of meeting the required learning outcomes?

Are there circumstances where "reasonable adjustments" are not possible, and if so can they realistically be substituted through the use of virtual element?

Student evaluation

Is there a system in place for disabled students to evaluate the learning opportunities provided by laboratory and workshop experience?

8. Laboratories and workshops and other practice-based environments

+ Additional sources of information

Access Audits. A guide and checklist for appraising the accessibility of public buildings, (no date), Centre for Accessible Environments, London.

Barrier Free Design, (1996), Holmes-Siedle, J., Butterworth Architecture, Oxford.

Building Sight, (1995), Barker, P., Barrick, J., and Wilson R., HMSO in association with the Royal National Institute for the Blind, London.

Designing for Accessibility: an essential guide for public buildings, (1999), Lacey, A., Centre for Accessible Environments, London.

Disabled Workers in Laboratories, (1998), Environment, Health and Safety Committee, Royal Society of Chemistry, London

Science Laboratory Access Manual. A guide to designing a laboratory for access for people with disabilities, (1992), Best, Victorian University of Technology, Melbourne.
Available at <http://www.deakin.edu.au/extern/rdlu/lab.pdf>

Sign Design Guide. A guide to inclusive signage, (no date), Baker, P. and Fraser, J., JMU Access Partnership, London.

Centre for Accessible Environments
Nutmeg House
60, Gainsford Street
London SE1 2NY

Telephone	020 7357 8182
Fax	020 7357 8183
Email	info@cae.org.uk
Website	www.cae.org.uk

9. Placement learning

► **Who might find this checklist useful?**

Placement officers, placement co-ordinators, practice supervisors, admissions tutors, careers advisors, DSA assessors and new staff on induction.

9. Placement learning

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):

- arranging study abroad or work placements
- placement finding services. (3.14)

3.5 In some cases, responsible bodies may arrange for a third party to provide education, training or other related services for students on its behalf. This provision remains the responsibility of the responsible body, and so is covered by the Act.

Example 3.5D

As part of an Art History course at a university in Great Britain, students spend a month in Italy on a programme run by an Italian university. It will be the British university's responsibility to ensure that the Italian university can provide access to a disabled student who uses a wheelchair.

3.6 However, to the extent that the provision is not made by, nor made on behalf of, the responsible body, it is not covered.

Example 3.6A

A disabled student undertakes a work placement in a local business. The placement tutor has worked with the student and the manager with whom the student will be working to prepare both parties for the placement, and set up the necessary support. This is part of the institution's duty under the Act. However, the placement is not provided by the institution, and the local business is not under any contract with the institution. Because the student is not employed by the business he is not covered by Part 2 of the Act (employment). Any treatment that the disabled student receives on the placement is not covered by Part 4 of the Act because it is not made by or on behalf of the institution. (original emphasis)

9. Placement learning

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

Example 3.6C

A university has a partnership arrangement with a college overseas. The university awards the qualification, but does not provide the teaching or any services; the overseas college provides these. The university is not responsible for any treatment that the student receives from college staff *because it is not made by or on behalf of the university.* (original emphasis)

Example 3.6D

Another university has a partnership arrangement with a college overseas. The university supplies the teaching on the course using its own staff. The university is responsible for ensuring that students are not discriminated against in relation to the teaching they receive *because this is provided by the university.* (original emphasis)

3.7 Even if an initial discriminatory act is not carried out by the responsible body, a responsible body may retain responsibility under the Act for preventing the discrimination continuing or recurring.

Example 3.7A

A disabled student is being harassed by permanent staff members in the office where he is on work placement. The harassment is because of his disability. The placement tutor finds this out when talking to the student as part of his monitoring of the placement. The institution is responsible for preventing the discrimination continuing or recurring. In this case, the tutor might talk to the office manager, who agrees to take appropriate action to make sure this does not happen again.

Example 3.7B

Students on a language course spend two months studying at a partner institution in Europe. Despite the work that the British institution has done with the European institution to explain the needs of disabled students on the programme, disabled students continue to complain that they have been discriminated against during their stay. The British institution is responsible for preventing the discrimination continuing or recurring. In this case, the British institution might decide to sever its links with that institution, and find an alternative partner.

9. Placement learning

● **What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends**

Precept 11

Institutions should ensure that wherever possible disabled students have access to academic and vocational placements including field trips and study abroad.

Where placements, including international placements, are a formal requirement or standard component of the programme institutions should consider ways of ensuring that the specified learning opportunities are available to disabled students.

Where a placement is an optional but desirable element of the programme, institutions should consider making similar arrangements to support access for disabled students.

9. Placement learning

What students say about current practice

Tariq - Business - visual impairment

Getting a quality work placement in a good advertising company was a tough nut to crack for my department. I know my tutor had to do a lot of negotiating with the company but we had an early three-way meeting where a lot of big issues got aired. I hadn't really realised just how much time was going to be involved in making sure that the technology I needed was available and compatible with the packages used in the company.

Rob - Education - hidden disabilities

I had a meeting with the programme leader and we jointly agreed on a "shadowing" strategy for me. One of the full-time teachers agreed to just keep a quiet eye on things and give me some support if I needed it.

Meena - Technology - hard of hearing

I kept in regular contact with my placement advisor and he did trouble-shoot a couple of tricky moments for me. At one time I felt I was being harassed because of being disabled and I know he spoke to the supervisor on my behalf. The situation did improve quite quickly and overall it was a good experience.

Paula - Arts and Humanities - physical disability

To be honest my placement was a disappointment to me. I really wanted to work with disadvantaged adolescents but my placement supervisor pushed all the time for me to work with disabled people. I really don't see myself as that disabled, despite the wheelchair, and I felt that she had a stereotyped idea of what I could do and who would give me a work placement experience.

Karen - Modern Languages - cerebral palsy

I spent a year at a Paris university which was quite successful thanks to some financial help that I got from the EU's Socrates-Erasmus Programme. It recognised that I had special needs and that it would cost me more money to study abroad than other students. I wouldn't have known about it except that my placement tutor was really switched on.

9. Placement learning

* What staff say about current practice

- Undoubtedly the most complex element of the discussion and negotiation about arranging a placement for my first visually impaired student, was trying to establish what he could realistically achieve, what the employer could provide and our role in maintaining a system of monitoring. I think we probably underestimated the student, didn't fully recognise the ramifications beyond the obvious health and safety ones and didn't give sufficient attention to the amount of resource required within the department to continuously monitor things.
- At the outset our difficulty as a department was envisaging how the student was going to be supported throughout the term at an off site location. We organised a work placement support assessment through the disability service and that provided us with solutions for technology but also an enabler funded through the Disabled Students Allowance.
- Liaising regularly and well in advance with colleagues at the university in Barcelona was absolutely fundamental to establishing a really workable support package. For a start, in Britain, we simply don't have the resource of volunteers that the Spanish university could so willingly supply. Knowing of its availability made a huge difference, especially in supporting the daily transport arrangements between the halls of residence and the campus proper.
- As a university we have started to review our placement practice in the context of disability. It is becoming obvious that some students with disabilities, where observed employment-based and/or professional practice is involved, would benefit from the involvement of a specialist supervisor. At the moment we are considering how best to provide this service to satisfy the competing needs of different faculties.

9. Placement learning

◆ Checklist

Course development and policy

Has the course development team/programme management team considered the placement issue for disabled students at the course planning or review stage?

How has the disability focus been embedded in the policies and procedures governing areas such as:

- the institution's legal responsibility to make "reasonable adjustments" and prevent discrimination
- the approval and finding of placements
- health and safety
- collaborative and responsible arrangements with placement providers?

Are the staff who are responsible for student placement learning absolutely clear about the lines of responsibility for "reasonable adjustments" in host organisations?

See the SENDA examples above.

What training do staff members receive in order to be competent to arrange, approve and monitor placements for disabled students, to meet the learning outcomes and to comply with disability, and health and safety legislation, etc?

Are staff aware of the issues relating to positive communication?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Making "reasonable adjustments"

Is there a need to adjust the learning outcomes or assessment methods employed in the placement learning to accommodate disabled students? If not, is it being built into the next course review?

➔ **Go to Assessment.**

What "reasonable adjustments" can be made to placement learning opportunities? Do they involve adaptations to the placement environment? What are the resource consequences and who will be responsible for meeting them?

What procedures have the institution for acquiring access audits of placement providers?

What written record of the "reasonable adjustments" will the student receive?

Action Comments

9. Placement learning checklist

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Does the institutional publicity and marketing include an explanation of the placement learning arrangements, including the "reasonable adjustments", that can be made for disabled students?

Are all documents related to placement learning available in an accessible format?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Disability disclosure

Is there a supportive culture of disclosure for disabled students? Does it include an opportunity for students to declare disability prior to placement?

Does the disability disclosure procedure contain a clear policy of confidentiality and dissemination targeting placement issues?

What is the procedure for managing harassment and discrimination in the placement environment?

Admissions and placement learning

What are the procedures for departmental staff, with responsibilities for placements, to inform admissions tutors of the demands of the placement and the likely impact on disabled students?

During the admissions process, what is the framework for discussing the placement learning opportunity in a disability context, e.g., information interviews involving the disability officer?

Transparent procedures for placements

Are there written guidelines and agreements for students and placement providers clearly indicating:

- respective roles and responsibilities including on placement support provision
- health and safety aspects, e.g., for students with sensory impairments, physical disability, on medication, etc.
- (for overseas placements) socially and culturally specific disability information
- procedures for the termination of a placement, e.g., in the circumstance of discrimination
- the continuing support provided by the institution?

9. Placement learning checklist

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Having obtained student consent, is there a named person at the placement who is fully briefed on the student's disability and needs, and on the procedures to ensure that students will receive induction into health and safety issues?

In matching students to placement opportunities, what criteria have been employed? For example, have the student's skills acquired as a result of being disabled been considered in a positive light?

Arranging support

Do students receive timely and correct information regarding the funding support available through the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) and Access to Work Funding? Who is responsible for this?

Does the student require a support needs assessment or workplace assessment prior to the commencement of the learning placement? Who is responsible for organising this and who will provide the assessment?

If the placement is not a sandwich year arrangement, has the DSA been accessed for a placement assessment for assistive technologies, non-medical helper support and additional travel costs (above those incurred by a non-disabled student for travel)?

If the placement is a sandwich year has Access to Work funding been accessed at the earliest opportunity? Has it been considered for financing support at an interview, an holistic work placement assessment, the provision of assistive technologies, a support worker and additional travel costs?

Disabled students may need specialist on-going guidance on long, industrial or international placements. Who holds the specialist knowledge?

Does the framework for organising quality placements for students allow for the possibility that considerable amounts of additional time may be needed?

9. Placement learning checklist

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Monitoring and student evaluation

Does the faculty/school/department operate a system of monitoring and evaluating placement learning opportunities for disabled students, which includes student and placement provider feedback? Does this include procedures for recording and responding to complaints?

Are the conclusions drawn from evaluation and monitoring fed into the system of strategic planning, course development and review?

Alternatives to placement learning

If necessary does the department have the flexibility to provide an alternative experience that will meet the learning objectives of the course, or should the student be advised to make an alternative course choice?

9. Placement learning

+ Additional sources of information

Providing Work Placements for Disabled Students. A good practice guide for further and higher education institutions, (2002), Department for Education and Skills.

Trans-European Access and Mobility for People with Disabilities (TEAM).

A Guidance Resource for Higher Education Study and Graduate Level Employment, (2000), (Eds.) Judith Waterfield & Bob West, University of Plymouth, Plymouth.

The Employers' Forum on Disability

Nutmeg House
60 Gainsford Street
London
SE1 2NY

Telephone	020 7403 3020
Email	efd@employers-forum.co.uk
Website	www.employers-forum.co.uk

Workable

Third Floor
67 Goswell Road
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EC1V 7EP

Telephone	020 7608 3161
Email	workableuk@aol.com
Website	www.employers-forum.co.uk

10. Assessment

► **Who might find this checklist useful?**

Academic Boards, Faculty Boards, Teaching & Learning Policy Committees, Deans and Heads of Departments, Review and Approval Offices, Approval Panels, Undergraduate and Post-graduate Programme Committees, Programme Teams, Subject Group Heads, Subject Assessment Panels, Award Assessment Boards, Partnership Management Committees, Faculty Partnership Liaison Monitoring Committees, Faculty Partnership Managers, Faculty liaison staff, Quality and Standards Committees, Information and Learning Services, Examinations Officers, lecturing staff, technicians, and new staff on induction.

10. Assessment

Because SENDA requires university environments to be free from discrimination, to make "reasonable adjustments" wherever possible, policies and practices need to be developed to meet the needs of disabled students. By adjusting traditional practice and seeking new solutions, institutions can adopt a more inclusive practice where disabled students are no longer assessed by methods designed with the non-disabled in mind. In addressing the needs of this student cohort other students may also be better served.

Over the past decade the significant rise in the numbers of disabled students entering higher education, has resulted in escalating numbers now receiving special examination arrangements. In many institutions this is becoming an unmanageable situation and so it is timely that compliance with SENDA provides an opportunity to review current policy and practice. The development of special arrangements as a solution to "levelling the playing field" has not been based on rigorous research, but has become expedient as a "bolt on" solution to existing practice. While there will always be a need for some special arrangements to be made, other students may be better served by alternative assessment methods being deployed.

The purpose of alternative assessment

It is universally accepted that academic requirements and standards cannot be compromised and should be applied to all students whether or not they have a disability. Alternative assessment strategies should be pursued to minimise the impact of disability on a student's performance at assessment. Alternative assessments should accommodate the student's functional differences that arise as a consequence of disability, their methods of communication, learning styles and physical considerations. Using such approaches, disabled students will be better able to demonstrate their ability. Without alternative provision, assessment results will reflect the impact of the disability and prevent student's acquiring independence in their learning.

The permutations involved in establishing an effective alternative assessment strategy for a specific student relate to three aspects:

- the range of assessment methods currently applied within the course or module
- the viability of alternatives for assessing the learning outcomes of the course
- the impact of the disability on the particular individual.

This section is designed to assist staff to explore these issues and examine practice.

10. Assessment

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

5.6 Responsible bodies should not wait until a disabled person applies to do a course or tries to use a Service before thinking about what reasonable adjustments they could make. Instead they should continually be anticipating the requirements of disabled people or students and the adjustments they could be making for them (to):

- curriculum design
- examinations and assessments. (3.14)

6.3 The Act does not require a responsible body to do anything that might mean it cannot maintain academic or other prescribed standards in a particular learning programme.

6.4 Some courses may not have defined academic standards, but they may have other prescribed standards which the responsible body needs to maintain.

Example 6.4A

A student is following a Music degree, which involves both theory and practice. Her specialist instrument is the piano. During the course she develops arthritis and is unable to continue with the practical parts of the course. Although it might be possible for her to continue with the theory it is unlikely to be reasonable for the university to make an adjustment whereby she could receive a degree for the whole course by only completing the theoretical parts.

6.5 However, it might be reasonable to allow a student to validate the attainment of academic standards by using means different from those used by other students.

Example 6.5A

A profoundly deaf student is following an art course. Most of the course is practically based. However, students are expected to give an oral presentation of their work. It is likely to be reasonable to allow this student to present her work using British Sign Language.

10. Assessment

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

6.6 There could also be instances in which it was appropriate to make reasonable adjustments for a student who needed additional support to attain the standards prescribed by the course.

Example 6.6A

A partially sighted student applies to do Dance. He has excellent physical mobility but requires floor markings to be very clearly accentuated and also requires extra time to be taken through certain movements. These are likely to be reasonable adjustments for the provider to make.

● What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends

Precept 13

Assessment and examination policies, practices and procedures should provide disabled students with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.

Precept 14

Where studying is interrupted as a direct result of a disability-related cause, this should not unjustifiably impede a student's subsequent academic progress.

10. Assessment

What students say about current practice

Formative and summative assessments

Sean - Science - deaf/hard of hearing

The essays are hard for me to do because I have problems understanding very complex questions. It's a common problem for people with my hearing problems.

Gemma- Science - dyslexia and Meares Irlen Syndrome

For me to write up a chemistry assessment can take a solid weekend whereas for someone else it might be a three or five-hour stint. I don't think they understand how much effort some of us have to put in to be there with the rest of the class.

Trish - Technology - visual impairment

With in-class tests my scribe has to read out the questions for me in a hushed voice. Somehow I feel I am disturbing other people. So it's a bit of a quick fix solution. Really I should have my own room but then it wouldn't exactly be an in-class test would it?

Jenny - Arts and Humanities - mental health problem

The criminal justice course was good because students had mini essays, long and short answer questions in the workbook and in the exam we had multiple choice questions as well as short and long answers. I felt they were assessing my different skills.

Assessment submissions arrangements

Sean - Science - deaf/hard of hearing

It's still hard to explain to my tutor that I need to hand in my essay a little bit late because I'm still working on it. I may have been working on it until 3 in the morning and I just know that I can't work on it any longer. At one point I didn't meet a deadline for a month - I just had so much on I couldn't do it. Luckily the tutor was really understanding and he didn't pressurise me. When I did do it, it was a good essay.

Paula - Arts and Humanities - multiple disabilities

There is not enough time and I can't keep up because of my medication. The essays seem to come all at once. They are not set out throughout the semester but in a two week period. They give you the questions ahead but I'm still learning so I don't know what to do. You can't start the work on an essay in advance because you have to wait for next week's seminar to get the direction you need to make a start.

10. Assessment

What students say about current practice

Self and peer assessments

Sheena - Science - deaf/hard of hearing

We had an exercise where we had to collect and identify samples and then peer assess each other. Well, 90% of my participation is through lip reading so I miss a lot on field trips. I got so stressed because I couldn't follow what was going on. I was pestering people for an answer. You know, "What are we doing now? Tell me what we are doing, write it down so I know what we are doing." If only the tutor had given us proper information beforehand I might have understood more.

Group work/problem-based assessments

Jo - Technology - visual impairment

I had to do a group work presentation with a couple of other guys who didn't know I was partially sighted. That put them off completely so I had to go and ask to do it on my own, which I did and got a good grade. But it was a difficult situation. Generally I try to work with mature students who are more understanding.

Optical Mark Reader (OMR) assessments

Greg - Technology - visual impairment

Completing the OMR is really difficult, as there are tiny circles you have to mark. I can't even see them, so I have to use my enabler for that. I can't even complete my student number on them.

Computer Based Assessment (CBA)

Sean - Science - deaf/hard of hearing

We've had a lot of CBAs lately and we have been able to do them in our own time. We can do them in our own room if we want. I just go home and do it in my own study where it is nice and quiet and I don't have any distractions. Oh yes, computer based assessments I love them.

10. Assessment

What students say about current practice

Practice-based assessments

Gemma - Science - dyslexia and Meares Irlen Syndrome

This year I've done chemistry practicals and that's been hugely difficult. When you turn up it's the first time you've seen the written instructions and you're expected to follow them and carry out a practical. That's been stressful, hugely stressful. It would be fantastic to see them before, even just a day before to look through them to process them and to sort out the information.

Special examination arrangements

Graham - Business - visual impairment

I use specialist software for screen enlargement so I was allowed into the exam room ten minutes early to make sure everything was set up correctly. That was really useful but unfortunately my PC broke down during the exam and there was no one available to fix it.

Paul - Technology - physical disability

My writing is awful so I have to have someone else there with me in an exam, which isn't easy. That's a pressure in its self because I'm thinking "oh no, I'm making a mess of this in front of somebody else".

Paula - Arts and Humanities - multiple disabilities

For exams I sit in a room on my own. I get extra time, 15 minutes per hour, to help me digest the questions properly. All my exams have been in the afternoon by which time I've had it because of my medication. That's my time for sleeping.

Sandra - Arts and Humanities - multiple sclerosis

There are two main criteria for who is selected as a scribe for my exams. They have to be a person not known to me and someone who is a specialist in my field. That is a good and fair arrangement.

Student information

Ross - Science - dyslexia and Meares Irlen Syndrome

I don't like it when mock exam papers are photocopied from A4 and reduced down, so that you have two A4 pages reduced down to A5 size on one page. The quality of the print starts to deteriorate. I find it especially difficult with multiple choice questions when things are very very similar.

10. Assessment

○ Case Studies of alternative assessments

Arts and Humanities - student with dyslexia & physical disability

Standard assessment method and the issues arising

Requirement: 2,000 word essay.

When discussing the subject the student shows considerable knowledge and understanding. The written work is disjointed and sparse. It doesn't convey the depth of understanding shown in the seminars.

Alternative assessment method

Solution: Proposed viva voce instead of the written assessment. This arrangement was agreed to by all the Module Leaders and the Module Assessment Board. Outcome as yet unknown but the student feedback will inform future practice.

Student feedback

At present the student feels slightly apprehensive about this assessment method as he has not used it before. He is going to have a "practice run" to see how successful it is and what issues it throws up before it is used for a summative assessment.

10. Assessment

○ Case Studies of alternative assessments

Arts and Humanities - student who is deaf/hard of hearing

Standard assessment method and the issues arising

Requirement: Unseen written examinations. The student is a B.S.L. user and finds written English difficult. She is unable to express herself and to formulate critical arguments in English commensurate with her understanding of the academic subject.

Alternative assessment method

Solution: Making a video. In this instance the student "signs" her answers on to a video. An independent B.S.L. interpreter (local deaf association services) translates the content into a written/vocal form. This method is still in the process of being validated so the outcome is unknown.

Other comments

As the video necessitated the use of an interpreter, additional arrangements still needed to be made. Subject knowledge is not necessarily required of the interpreter but departments need to ensure examination questions are available to the interpreter well in advance for familiarisation. The interpreter should interpret nothing beyond the student's paper or the examining officer's communication. B.S.L. interpreters have a code of practice that they have to adhere to. The student should still be afforded a flexible deadline for submission.

Arts and Humanities - student with dyslexia

Standard assessment method and the issues arising

Requirement: 8,000 - 10,000 word dissertation.

Alternative assessment method

Solution: The student submitted a collection of audio tapes, containing research and interviews on the subject. The assignment was passed.

Student feedback

The student had to spend a significant amount of time on the project, more than would have been required for the written dissertation.

10. Assessment

○ Case Studies of alternative assessments

Arts and Humanities - student with cerebral palsy

Standard assessment method and the issues arising

Requirement: 8,000 word dissertation.

Alternative assessment method

Solution: The student produced a multi-media CD Rom. as part of an interactive web site design.

Student feedback

Student was able to communicate more effectively using a multi-sensory media.

Arts and Humanities - student with Asperger's Syndrome

Standard assessment method and the issues arising

Requirement: Three end-of-term examinations all in essay formats.

Alternative assessment method

Solution: As a small research project to explore the validity of different assessment methods for this individual, the student was offered 3 alternative ways of undertaking the assessments: as an essay with extended time allowance; as a viva voce; and as a Cloze.

Other comments

The three different assessment methods had different outcomes.

- The essay with extended time allowance provided a weak pass (approximating to a 3rd class honours).
- The viva voce was conducted informally to a structured set of questions. Two members of staff were present in addition to the student's non-medical helper. The viva voce was tape recorded for the benefit of the external examiners. The outcome was a stronger showing than the essay option (suggesting an upper second class honours).
- The Cloze comprised of three written answers with key dates, ideas and concepts represented as 100 blanks to be filled in. The paper was completed under examination conditions but in a separate room. This approach produced results comparable to those of the viva voce.

10. Assessment

◆ Mapping the field of assessment methods

The following list outlines the range of assessment methods identified in the QAA Subject Benchmark statements. It provides a potentially rich, cross-discipline, resource from which to identify alternative methods for assessing learning outcomes.

- Analytical exercises
- Briefings
- Computer-based assessments and exercises
- Continuous assessment
- Coursework with discussion elements
- Critical diaries, learning logs and journals
- Crits
- Data interpretation exercises
- Design tasks
- Dissertation
- Documentation
- Electronic presentations: CD, web pages, etc
- Essay assignments
- Examinations (seen)
- Examinations (open book)
- Examinations (take away)
- Examinations (unseen)
- Exhibition and poster displays
- Extended investigations (e.g., statistical)
- Fieldwork reports
- Finding primary source material
- Geological mapping
- "In class" and module tests
- Internship diaries
- Laboratory practical reports
- Laboratory examinations and practical tests
- Multiple choice testing
- On-line assessment
- Optical Mark Reader Assessments
- Oral examinations
- Placement or Exchange reports
- Peer and self-evaluation
- Personal research projects
- Portfolios and sketchbooks
- Problem based learning
- Projects, independent or group
- Practical reports
- Sandwich Year reports
- Simulation exercises
- Slide and picture tests
- Student-led seminars, presentations and discussions
- Synoptic examinations
- Treatment reports
- Video formats
- Viva voce examinations
- Work books
- Work experience report

10. Assessment

◆ Checklist

Course development & review

	Action Comments
Is disability awareness training and SENDA compliance information provided for members of Programme Teams, Assessment Panels, Award Boards, Subject Panels, School Boards, etc?	
Within the learning and teaching policy and strategy, how will alternative assessment be considered in future course development and review to promote comparable academic standards?	
Is the assessment policy flexible enough to allow an individual response to the specific individual requirements of a disabled student?	
Where reliable evidence is provided that delayed completion of assessed work, non-attendance at examinations, deferral or withdrawal has been due to a disability-related cause, is this recorded in non-prejudicial terms in all academic progress files?	
Is there an opportunity at departmental level to explore the use of alternative assessments as a more measured tool to assess the core learning outcomes?	
Is there a transparent and consistent mechanism for arranging alternative assessments and special examination arrangements, which is made available to students?	
How are the learning materials required to support assessment activities accessible, e.g., access to key texts for students who cannot browse the library?	
Have resources for "reasonable adjustments" for alternative assessments and special examination arrangements been identified which are not dependent on students' individual funding arrangements, e.g., the Disabled Students Allowance (DSA)?	
Which staff members have been identified as responsible to carry forward the changes necessary in departmental culture, to enable the ethos of alternative assessments through research and strategic planning to be carried forward?	

10. Assessment

◆ Checklist

Professional bodies

Is there departmental liaison with the professional bodies where there are prescribed standards for professional practice, to open the debate with regard to policy on the inclusion of disabled people?

➔ **Go to Professional Bodies.**

Where a professional body has licensing responsibilities, what dialogue has the department entered into, to consider "reasonable adjustments" to the traditional assessment methods, to promote non-discriminatory and equitable practices?

Formative and summative assessments

Is the information from the students DSA report used to support the negotiation of possible alternative assessment strategies?

Are there ways in which previously untried assessment methods can be utilised and evaluated in a formative way, as a precursor to their adoption for summative purposes?

Does the volume, range and time tabling of assessment tasks accommodate the functional differences of disabled students, which are a direct consequence of disability?

Does the department apply special arrangements to in-class assessments?

Can flexible deadlines for coursework be considered to accommodate the needs of disabled students, e.g., hospitalisation, the effects of medication, longer hours of study required, etc?

In the event of necessary extenuating circumstances are the procedures required a barrier to equality?

Are there opportunities for students to receive disability awareness training about equality of opportunity as part of a PDP, especially in relation to peer assessment, group assessment and problem based assessment?

Assessment submissions arrangements

How transparent and "user friendly" for disabled students are the practicalities of the submission of assessments, e.g., completion dates and times, flexible deadlines, etc?

Action Comments

10. Assessment

◆ Checklist

Self and peer assessment

When self and/or peer assessment is used for formative and summative assessment what guidance is provided to students to ensure that there is full understanding of the ramifications of a range of disabilities on verbal presentation, language, grammar, posters and performance, etc. for feedback to peers? How is equity and non-discriminatory judgement assured?

Are guidelines for learners in self and peer assessment available in accessible formats and language?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

Group work/problem-based assessments

Do staff members facilitate dialogue within the student group to ensure that the allocation of tasks is equitable and values the diversity of input of disabled students? How is an equitable and non-discriminatory process arrived at?

Optical Mark Reader assessment (OMR)

Are students with certain disabilities given practice in using an OMR to ensure that it is a viable method, e.g., difficulties of manual dexterity, dyspraxia, visual impairment, etc?

Computer Based Assessments (CBA)

Are staff aware of the accessibility issues for CBA, e.g., text equivalents for video and graphics, transcribed versions of audio recordings, etc?

Are staff ensuring that software compatibility issues between assistive technology and courseware are being addressed, e.g., for those students using screen readers and text enlargement software?

If CBA is used in class what arrangements are made for students using a non-medical helper, voice recognition or text-to-speech output, e.g., individual rooms?

Can on-campus computing facilities be made accessible for disabled students, e.g., through supplying adjustable height desks, posturite boards, modified keyboards, etc?

Is there departmental research and development in the area of web-based opportunities for disabled students to test their generic and subject-based skills?

Action Comments

10. Assessment

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

Where a student's assessment relies upon on-line discussions, e.g., through a virtual learning environment, how is parity of opportunity and independence of use assured?

Practice-based assessments for fieldwork, placement, laboratories, workshops and other environments

What "reasonable adjustments" can be made to assessments in the above locations to ensure parity of assessment opportunities for disabled students, e.g., early and accessible information, individual orientation, peer and staff awareness, modified work stations, additional task lighting, accessible signage, personal helpers, alternative venues, etc?

➔ **Go to Fieldwork; Laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments; Placement Learning.**

Could an alternative assessment be considered where issues of health and safety might prevent participation?

Alternative assessments

Are students currently given the option to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes in alternative ways, such as through problem-based assessment, signed presentations, viva voce examinations, audio-visual material, performance, additional course work, etc?

Are there assessment methods used in non-cognate subject areas that can be applied to your subject?

➔ **Go to Mapping the field of assessment methods.**

Special examination arrangements

For some disabled students, in circumstances where special examination arrangements would be offered, has the provision of an alternative assessment method been considered instead?

Is there an individual member of staff within the department, designated to liaise with the disability support and examination services?

Where there is a need for an individual arrangement over and above the usual range of special arrangements, is there a process for dialogue between the student, the programme leader and the disability service to establish the appropriateness of provision, e.g., modifying carrier language?

10. Assessment

◆ Checklist

Action Comments

If departments make arrangements for invigilators, amanuensis, readers, sign language interpreters and personal assistants for mainstream and in-class assessments, what guidelines are available to support recruitment and what training is available for those appointed?

Student information

How will students be aware of adjustments available through alternative assessments and special examination arrangements, or through extenuating circumstances, e.g., prospectus, student programme/ handbook, disability service information, admissions interviews, etc?

Is this information available in accessible or alternative formats?

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

If required will students also receive feedback on their coursework in alternative formats?

Have the necessary enquiries been made of students to ensure that the format of the documents produced meets their needs?

➔ **Go to Appendix I: Positive communication.**

Student evaluation, course monitoring and review

What measures are employed to analyse the effectiveness of adjustments, alternative assessments and special examination arrangements, including for individual students, e.g., pre-examination discussion and post-examination feedback?

Are the assessment results for disabled students statistically analysed as part of corporate information?

10. Assessment

+ Additional sources of information

A Briefing on Assessing Disabled Students, (2001), David McCarthy and Alan Hurst, Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN), York.

Disability Discrimination Act Part 4. Examinations and Assessment Guide, (2002), Disability Rights Commission, London.
Available at: www.drc-gb.org

Formative Assessment via the Web using ELEN, (October 2000), Roy Lowry, CAL-laborate, A collaborative publication on the use of Computer Aided Learning for tertiary level physical sciences and geosciences.

Inclusive practices for students with disabilities: A guide for academic staff, (2000), The Universities Disabilities Cooperative Project, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, New South Wales, Australia.

Why Should On-Line Experiments Form Part of University Science Courses? (October 2000), Hugh Cartwright, CAL-laborate, A collaborative publication on the use of Computer Aided Learning for tertiary level physical sciences and geosciences.

11. Professional Bodies

11. Professional Bodies

► What the SENDA Code of Practice requires

3.8 Some aspects of provision may be the responsibility of bodies other than the responsible body. In particular entry to some courses may be regulated by a professional body, and many examinations are the responsibility of external examining bodies.

Example 3.8B

A student applies to do a degree in Medicine at a university. Both the course and the examination are accredited by the General Medical Council (GMC). The student needs adaptations made to both the course and the examination because of his disability. The university is responsible for making the adaptations. However, to the extent that the GMC accredits both the course and the examination, the university is not responsible for decisions about whether adaptations may be made. (original emphasis)

● **4.22 A responsible body should not be looking for reasons or excuses to discriminate against disabled people or students. It is in the responsible body's own best interests to see that provision is accessible. However, in limited circumstances, the Act does permit responsible bodies to justify treating a disabled person less favourably than other people. If the responsible body can show that the treatment in question is justified, then the treatment is not considered discriminatory in law.**

4.23 Less favourable treatment may be justified only if one of the following conditions is fulfilled:

- it is necessary to maintain academic standards
- it is necessary to maintain other prescribed standards
- it is of a prescribed type
- it occurs in prescribed circumstances
- the reasons are both material to the circumstances of the particular case and substantial.

4.24 If a disabled person or student can show that he or she has been treated less favourably than others for a reason relating to his or her disability, it is for the responsible body to show that the action taken was justified. The justification must fall within one of the categories listed in paragraph 4.23.

4.25 The responsible body can only use one of these justifications if the justification would still be valid even after reasonable adjustment had been made.

11. Professional Bodies

- **What the QAA Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities recommends**

Precept 15

Institutions should ensure that where a programme forms part of the qualifications regime of a professional or statutory body, clear information is available to staff and students about specific assessment requirements that must be met for progression towards the professional qualification.

11. Professional Bodies

■ The views of some Professional Bodies

Association of Building Engineers (ABE)

We comply with the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) as amended by the Special Educational Needs Disability Act (2001) and would be pleased to provide alternative assessments or special examination arrangements for our own professional examinations, should they arise. The Association aims to assess each person's case individually and to make the appropriate necessary adjustments, according to the nature of the person's disability, so as not to prejudice their chances of becoming a member or of entering the profession.

The British Psychological Society

Examination arrangements are made on an individual basis, e.g., specialist equipment, an interpreter, alternative assessment methods, etc. On our accredited undergraduate courses we do not have a general policy but are aware that the QAA has guidelines. At postgraduate level some of our training committees have set policy on equal opportunities. In general terms we have an EO statement and policy which outlaws discrimination on the grounds of disability. Our EO Committee plans to produce a Disability Code of Practice and guidelines for psychologists in relation to the DDA.

Engineering Council

There is no policy statement or guidance regarding the inclusion of disabled people. It has generally been assumed that this will be covered by overall policies within each university and that there is nothing within the accreditation requirements that would cut across these.

General Council of the Bar

The Bar Council expects higher education institutions to comply with section 3 of the QAA code of practice. With regard to the Bar Vocational Course there is a requirement in the course specification requirements and guidance that (section 5, paragraph 13): Institutions will be expected to ensure that all reasonable efforts are made to accommodate disabled candidates and in section 6, paragraph 9: Procedures must be put in place to identify and evaluate the needs of disabled students. The provider must agree a learning contract with any disabled student that requires special accommodation in which the duties and obligations on each side are clearly set out.

11. Professional Bodies

The views of some Professional Bodies

The Bar Council is concerned to ensure that academic standards are maintained and would consider less favourable treatment of disabled students to be justified if it were necessary to maintain academic standards, in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2001, section 28S(6). We are currently in the process of considering the guidelines produced by the Law Society for the legal practice course on special facilities for disadvantaged candidates and we are hoping that the Bar Council and Law Society can produce common guidelines for providers of the legal practice course and Bar Vocational Course. Both courses provide greater obstacles to students with disabilities owing to the fact that they are professional skills based courses, successful completion of which demonstrate the ability to enter into practice. There are certain circumstances therefore when we would not consider it acceptable for students to have extra time far in excess (i.e., more than 100 percent) of the usual time allowed for completion of assessments.

General Medical Council

After graduation, students are automatically entitled to provisional registration with the GMC. Medical Schools should not, therefore, permit any student to graduate whose condition prevents them from completing the full course satisfactorily.

Institute of Chartered Accountants

The Institute aims as far as possible for students entering the exams to start on a "level playing field". For some students this necessitates special arrangements in the exams.

Institute of Civil Engineers

There is a policy for dyslexic candidates applying for the Professional Review and arrangements are made for candidates with other disabilities. If a person has a disability that may affect their performance at interview, or when undertaking a written assignment, they should enclose a letter with supporting documentation to enable the institution to make appropriate arrangements.

Institute of Electrical Engineers

As a body there is no specific policy because there is no distinction made between disabled people and non-disabled people.

Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management

Currently there is no documentation in place but guidance is being drawn up.

11. Professional Bodies

■ The views of some Professional Bodies

Institute of Management and Information Systems

There is no policy but the Institute does accommodate students with special needs and considers applications on an individual basis. Generally extra time is allocated for exams and we insure that the examination centre has appropriate facilities to accommodate any other special needs.

Institute of Personnel and Development

An EO Policy has been adopted which complies with the legislation and best practice.

Royal Institute of British Architects

Although RIBA does not have a policy on accessibility for disabled students on architecture course we encourage it and would expect all universities to have their own policies and guidelines in place.

Teacher Training Agency

Underrepresented groups including people with disabilities are a focus for recruitment over the coming years. Our corporate plan for 2001-2004 has a target of increasing the number of trainees with disabilities to 3% by 2002-2003. During the recruitment year 2001-2002 2.3% of trainees recruited were disabled.

From September 2002 trainees must be able to satisfy trainee entrance requirements with regard to physical and mental fitness to teach, and be able to read effectively and communicate clearly and accurately in spoken and written standard English.

11. Professional Bodies

* What staff say about current practice

- I am concerned there are some categories of disability that we could not take, because they could not go into the field vocationally. We need clear guidance from our professional body about it.
- It would be refreshing if we could take the opportunity offered by this new legislation to change some of our assessment practices. The Institutes would need to accept such changes that would benefit other groups of students as well.
- I realised recently that the policies that we have in place, and the individual responses made to them by departmental staff, are thoughtful and realistic ones. By contrast our professional body is in the position of having to get up to speed and write suitable disability policies of its own.

11. Professional Bodies

◆ Checklist

	Action Comments
Does your professional body have a policy on the recruitment of disabled people into the profession?	
If yes, what are the implications for making "reasonable adjustments" and maintaining academic standards?	
If there are prescribed standards to be met that prevent disabled students from entering professional practice, what pre-entry guidance is offered and what exit opportunities are recommended?	
If as part of your selection procedure candidates undertake an interview to satisfy professional body requirements, are systems in place to identify any special arrangements required? ➔ Go to Admissions; Appendix I: Positive communication.	
If your profession has entry requirements that involve a pre-course selection test, what measures are in place to ensure that disabled applicants receive the special arrangements they are entitled to for the assessment? ➔ Go to Assessment.	

11. Professional Bodies

+ Additional sources of information

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities produce the following range of publications:

Into Architecture, (2000), **Into Art**, (1995), **Into Law**, (2000), **Into Science and Engineering**, (1997), and **Into Teaching**, (1998).

Available from:

Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
Chapter House
18-20 Crucifix Lane
London
SE1 3JW

Telephone	0800 328 5050
Textphone	0800 068 2422
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Website	www.skill.org.uk

Appendix I: Positive communication

▶ **Who might find these principles useful?**

All staff.

Positive communication - some general principles

► **Before the meeting**

Acquire background knowledge of the disability of the person you are intending to meet. Discover as much as possible about the impact of the disability upon the individual.

Consider the needs of the individual when scheduling the meeting. If they are on medication, for example, it may mean that certain times of day are more difficult than other times. This is particularly the case for people with mental health problems, some hidden disabilities and some medical conditions.

➔ **Go to Hidden Disabilities; Mental Health Problems.**

Find out what is the preferred mode of communication for the individual is. This is especially important for sensory and speech impairments.

➔ **Go to Deaf/Hard of Hearing; Physical Disabilities; Visual Impairment.**

Be aware of the accessibility issues for the meeting venue, in relation to suitable parking, potential obstacles and the availability of adapted toilets. Select a suitable venue that offers adequate space, that is suitably lit, and noise free.

Provide clear and concise information in plain language about the meeting in advance (place, time, venue, directions, etc.). Give the names of all those attending, their areas of responsibility and the remit for the meeting. For some disabled people these instructions should clearly indicate the presence of any hazards.

Information should be available in an accessible format and if necessary in an alternative format as required by the individual.

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

As an aide-mémoire confirm the meeting appointment with the individual in the days beforehand.

Consider the possibility that the individual may wish to attend the meeting with a friend, a helper or a professional support worker, such as a sign language interpreter.

Organise special reception arrangements if these are necessary.

Positive communication - some general principles

► **During the meeting**

On meeting the individual confirm with them their preferred mode of communication. This is especially important for those with sensory and speech impairments. If the individual has elected to attend the meeting with a third party (friend, helper or sign language interpreter, etc.) ascertain the role of that person within the communication.

➔ **Go to Deaf/Hard of Hearing; Physical Disabilities; Visual Impairment.**

Recognise that there may be sensitive issues relating to disability disclosure which can make the prospect of a meeting a daunting experience. With some disabled people, the fact of disability, an individual's past medical and mental history, and the arrangements made to meet their support needs, may have contributed towards experiences of discrimination, stigma and failure.

Individuals are more likely to share their concerns in an atmosphere conducive to openness and honesty. It is important to be open about institutional and staff uncertainties but also to recognize that the individual has their own concerns.

Discussing previous educational experience and recent effective coping and support strategies with the individual will help establish the appropriateness of any course of action.

With some disabilities, e.g., hidden disabilities, mental health problems and some physical disabilities, being aware of the individual's past medical history may give some indication of the likely pattern of their current and future needs in higher education study, assessment and support. This should not be used to restrict opportunity, but to support realism about the challenges faced.

➔ **Go to Asperger's Syndrome; Hidden Disabilities; Physical Disabilities; Mental Health Problems.**

In scheduling the meeting ensure that sufficient time has been allocated and that it includes opportunities for "time out", which is particularly important for those with sensory and speech impairment, some physical and hidden disabilities and mental health problems.

➔ **Go to Deaf/Hard of Hearing; Asperger's Syndrome; Hidden Disabilities; Physical Disabilities; Mental Health Problems; Visual Impairment.**

Positive communication - some general principles

Remember that the meeting is a two way process and that in circumstances where the individual is faced with a number of members of staff (tutors, disability officer, admissions tutor, accommodations officer, nurse, etc.) adequate opportunities must be made for the individual to question those present.

All staff present at the meeting should have taken the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the general principles of positive communication and the specific principles relevant to the individual they are meeting.

It is critical to remember that the individual is likely to be anxious and that the stress induced by the meeting can exacerbate some disabilities, such as Asperger's Syndrome, dyslexia, mental health problems, physical disability and hidden disabilities such as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.), etc.

➔ **Go to Asperger's Syndrome; Dyslexia; Hidden Disabilities; Physical Disabilities; Mental Health Problems.**

Be prepared to make available detailed information to support the focus of the meeting. Some disabled people can only arrive at informed decisions if the information they need to do so is made previously available, e.g., for screen reading, or is on hand at the time to supplement their processing skills.

➔ **Go to Admissions; Lectures, seminars and tutorials; Fieldwork; Laboratories, workshops and other practice-based environments; Placement learning; Assessment.**

Keep a written record of the outcomes of the meeting and forward this to the individual as an aide-mémoire.

Make sure that all the information is available in an accessible format for the individual to take away from the meeting for later inspection.

➔ **Go to Preparing documents for printing, visual display and electronic dissemination.**

▶ **After the meeting**

If the meeting was an admissions or information interview, or subject to an evaluation as part of teaching and learning, seek feedback from the individual to support monitoring and staff development programmes.

Positive communication - specific principles

Asperger's Syndrome

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

Dyslexia

Hidden Disabilities

Mental Health Problems

Physical disabilities

Visual Impairment

Asperger's Syndrome

► Specific principles for positive communication

Although presently subsumed as a "Hidden Disability", this sub section on Asperger's Syndrome has been added in anticipation of changes to the UCAS coding for 2003. In future Asperger's Syndrome will be identified as a discrete field in the disability coding with other Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

People with Asperger's Syndrome have neurological differences which can become prominent during face-to-face meetings, such as:

- **difficulty in reading non-verbal cues**, e.g., body language and difficulty in determining proper body space
- **marked deficiencies in social skills**, e.g., gaze avoidance and on introduction turning away when meeting someone)
- **one-sided social interaction** that may be naïve and inappropriate
- **paucity of empathy**
- **clumsy and ill-coordinated movements** and odd postures
- **speech which is pedantic and monotonic**
- **obsessive routines** that may be preoccupied with a particular subject of interest which may have been learnt by rote
- **poor organisational skills**
- **being overly sensitive** to sounds, tastes, smells and sights, even sensory stimuli that others may not perceive
- **anxiety.**

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

► Specific principles for positive communication

▷ Before the meeting

Deaf people use a range of communication methods that may involve speech, sign language, finger spelling, expressions, residual hearing and writing, or a combination of these known as "open communication."

As part of the preparation it is imperative to know the preferred communication methods of the individual in advance.

Arrangements may have to be made to provide the following:

- a radio hearing aid
- a portable loop system
- a lip speaker
- a sign language interpreter.

If an interpreter is required and unknown to the individual it is imperative that they have a short time prior to the meeting, to resolve any issues related to the communication delivery.

▷ During the meeting

The importance of the venue

The venue for the meeting should be a room where:

- noise is minimal
- the light falls on the face of the meeting organiser
- seating is arranged so that the individual is not seated next to a window, which would put the meeting organiser's face in shadow
- there is room for the interpreter to be strategically placed for the individual to see them
- a flashing fire alarm should be fitted and clearly visible.

Key communication rules for meeting a deaf person with a sign language interpreter

- **the interpreter:** the role of the interpreter is to facilitate communication only and not to participate.
- **off task conversations:** never engage an interpreter in a conversation when they are communicating for the individual.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing

- **speed of speech:** use a normal rate of speaking, with natural breaks for pauses. A 10-15 minute break is necessary when giving large amounts of information.
- **allow time:** the process of translating requires time - the deaf person must be able to receive the information and to respond.
- **advance information:** provide information in advance of the meeting to the interpreter and if possible to the deaf person. Prior access to names and specific terminology will save time during the meeting.
- **clarification:** unfamiliar names or terminology which arise during the session could be written on a board for clarification.

Key communication rules for meeting a deaf person who is a lip reader

The individual may require technical support in the form of a radio hearing aid or a portable loop system in the room, to facilitate the use of the hearing aid.

Lip reading requires a high level of concentration and can be extremely exhausting, as much as three-quarters of lip reading is intelligent guess work and intuition, relying to some extent on contextual clues.

- **speak clearly** at a reasonable pace without shouting or over enunciating as this distorts sound and lip patterns
- **rephrase if necessary** rather than simply repeating words
- **check position and room lighting** as lips cannot be read at a distance or in a dim light
- **avoid nodding too much**, turning of the head or moving about the room
- **use facial expression and try to maintain eye-contact**
- **gain the individual's attention** before speaking
- **give a clear view of lips:** avoid covering the mouth with hands
- **make time adjustments** to allow the individual to adjust to unfamiliar lip patterns
- **remember that many sounds and words look alike on the lips**, e.g., t,d,n have the same configuration of the lips as do p,b,m.

Key communication rules for meeting with someone who is hard of hearing.

The individual may require technical support in the form of a radio hearing aid or a portable loop system in the room, to facilitate the use of the hearing aid.

Dyslexia

► Specific principles for positive communication

People with dyslexia are not a homogenous group. They are all individuals and the impact of their dyslexia will vary according to their degree of difficulty, the recency of their diagnosis, their particular strengths, their choice of study and their coping strategies.

When planning and undertaking a meeting it is vital to:

- **provide clear directions and instructions** on the place and time of the meeting. People with dyslexia will often forget dates and times of appointments and therefore need a written and/or verbal reminder.
- **use a quiet space** to help maintain concentration for the individual
- **keep the carrier language simple** so that additional energy is not wasted on unnecessary decoding
- **invite questions** to monitor full comprehension
- **write down important information** for the individual to take away
- **allow additional time** for the processing of information
- **encourage the use of a tape recorder** if the individual would like to use one.

Be aware that the person with dyslexia may experience increased anxiety at a meeting, exacerbated by a possible difficulty in absorbing verbal information or insecurity about their own verbal expression.

There may be those who need the supportive presence of a friend, colleague or partner at a meeting because of the tension engendered by the process.

Hidden Disabilities

► Specific principles for positive communication

"Hidden disability" covers a broad range of different disabilities such as, asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (M.E.), and many, many others. It is important to obtain information on the individual's disability.

For some people with hidden disabilities the following issues may need to be given additional thought when organising a meeting:

- **the anxiety of self disclosure** may be specially acute
- **past medical history** and the frequency of episodes of ill health may cause cancellation
- **proximity to noises or atmospheric pollution** can create difficulties
- **the day-to-day effects of medication** may be detrimental
- **meetings are likely to be found to be additionally fatiguing**
- **offering to be flexible** and making alternative meeting times may be required
- **giving very clear information** on the purpose of the meeting prior to and during the meeting.

Mental Health Problems

► Specific principles for positive communication

The label of "Mental Health Problem" can be very all encompassing and often stigmatising. Being clear about what is meant by this term is fundamental to understanding the range of disabilities that may be grouped under it, for example, mood related disorders (depression), anxiety-related disorders (phobias, panic, post-traumatic stress, compulsive behaviour), psychosis (schizophrenia), eating disorders (bulimia, anorexia nervosa) and personality disorders.

For some people with mental health problems the following issues may need to be given additional thought when organising a meeting:

- **providing in advance a very clear resume** of the purpose of the meeting, the names of all those attending and their roles
- **previous experience of stigma and discrimination** in their life
- **the anxiety of self disclosure** may be specially acute
- **past medical history** and the frequency of mental health episodes may indicate the possibility of cancellation
- **fluctuations in concentration or mood**, confusion or disorientated thinking
- **self-perception** may not be the same as that of others
- **the day-to-day effects of medication** may be detrimental
- **additional fatigue** is likely to be caused by the meeting process
- **offering to be flexible** and making alternative meeting times may be required
- **providing quality written information** at the meeting for post-meeting uses is essential to support future action.

If an applicant attends a meeting and is unable to answer ordinary questions and is acting inappropriately, it might be appropriate to ask detailed questions about the applicant's medical history, and its impact on study and the study environment. Their responses may sustain doubts about their ability to cope with the higher education experience, and it is important afterwards to liaise with other services and external agencies to clarify the situation with the student's consent. This situation is delicate and needs careful management to avoid further adverse effect on the applicant's health.

Physical Disabilities

► Specific principles for positive communication

Ascertain the degree of personal independence of the individual in advance, e.g., will they:

- need special parking arrangements
- walk unaided
- manage steps or stairs
- require specialist seating
- use and require access for a wheelchair
- benefit from a meeting room on the ground floor with proximity to an accessible toilet.

Some individuals with physical disabilities may have communication aids, or use speech that may be difficult to follow, or attend the meeting in a wheelchair and/or come with a personal helper. Be prepared for these eventualities.

- **Enquire about the best format** for organising the face-to-face aspects of the meeting, taking into account the role of the communication aid, the position of the wheelchair and the presence of the personal helper.
- **Speak clearly and naturally** to avoid exaggerated, slow or loud speech.
- **If a personal helper is present** make sure that all communication is directed to the person with the disability and not through the third party (unless this is the wish of the disabled person).
- **If the individual is a wheelchair user** the meeting organiser should be sat at the same level. Do not lean on the wheelchair as it is likely to form part of the individual's personal space.
- **If the person with a disability has a communication aid** it is important to let them use this as a matter of course and not interrupt.
- **If the individual has a speech impairment** this may make communication difficult. Do not give the impression of understanding if you haven't. Being asked to repeat several times is likely to be a familiar experience for the individual, if they have chosen to be independent in this way. If there is still doubt about what is being said, the meeting organiser should clarify a statement by repeating it.
- **Schedule the meeting to take longer** and offer time out.

Visual Impairment

► Specific principles for positive communication

- **Prior to the meeting** the organiser should clarify with the individual their degree of loss of vision and ascertain whether they will be escorted to the meeting or be accompanied by a guide dog.
- **Letters and information to support the meeting** should be available in an appropriate form, depending upon the individual's preferred communication mode (i.e., Braille, large print, audio tape, etc.).
- **At reception** the individual should be met and escorted to the meeting room as required.
- **Be hazard aware.** If asked to guide a blind person to a destination, take the person's arm above the elbow, describe the route to be taken and detail any potential hazards, e.g., steps, corners and doorways. They may need to be guided to a suitable chair.
- **Lighting levels** need to be discussed with the individual and seating should be arranged with daylight behind the individual.
- **Contrasting colours** are helpful for those with low vision.
- **Introductions** should be made in a way that ensures that the individual is able to put a voice to a name.
- **Verbal indications** are necessary if any of the participants leaves or re-enters the room, or if joined by a third-party.
- **A guide dog** is highly disciplined and should not be distracted or petted when working. Only approach a guide dog with the owner's permission.

Additional sources of information

There are many organisations and publications dedicated to providing information and support for the full range of disabilities. A brief selection of publications is listed below. Details of some of the following texts are available at the world wide web sites listed in the next sub-section.

Publications

Asperger Syndrome, a practical guide for Teachers, (1998), Cumine, V., Leach, J., and Stevenson, G., David Fulton Publishers, London.

Breaking down barriers: access to further and higher education for visually impaired students, (1998), Jane Owen Hutchinson, Karen Atkinson and Jenny Orpwood, RNIB.

Deaf Students in Higher Education, (2001), Department of Student Support Services, Nottingham Trent University.

Dyslexic Learners, a holistic approach to support, (2002), The proceedings of a one-day conference on dyslexia support, De Montfort University, Leicester.

Dyspraxia, a guide for Teachers and Parents, (1997), Barrett, J., and Ripley, K., David Bulton Publishers, London.

Guidelines on student mental health policies and procedures in higher education, (2000), Ambrose, P., et al, Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals.

Inclusive practices for students with disabilities: a guide for academic staff, (2000), Universities Disabilities Cooperative Project, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, New South Wales, Australia.

Lifelong Learning, Summary Report of a project to discuss improving educational opportunities for people with sight problems, (2000), Cheryl McCandish, RNIB.

Panic attacks and how to manage them: A guide for Invigilators, (2000), Joanna Lester, University College Northampton.

Procedure for advising and managing a student in distress: A guide for Student Services and Information Centre staff, (2000), Joanna Lester, University College Northampton.

Supporting students with mental health difficulties: A guide for academic staff, (2000), Joanna Lester, University College Northampton.

Additional sources of information

World Wide Web Addresses

The following addresses provide access to the contact details for a small range of relevant organisations, many of which contain links to a large array of relevant world wide web links to other useful disability related organisations.

Action for M.E.

www.afme.org.uk

Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (ASBAH)

www.asbah.org.uk

British Council of Disabled People

www.bcodp.org.uk

The National Autistic Society

www.nas.org.uk

British Dyslexia Association

www.bda-dyslexia.org.uk

Epilepsy Action

www.epilepsy.org.uk

Dyspraxia Foundation

www.emmbrook.demon.co.uk/dysprax/what.htm

Mental Health Foundation

www.mentalhealth.org.uk

MIND

www.mind.org.uk

O.A.S.I.S (On-Line Asperger's Syndrome Information Resources)

www.udel.edu/bkirby/asperger/index.html

Royal National Institute for Deaf People

www.rnid.org.uk

Royal National Institute for the Blind

www.rnib.org.uk

SKILL: National Bureau for students with disabilities

www.skill.org.uk

TechDis (For information on making electronic materials accessible)

www.techdis.ac.uk

University students with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome

www.users.dircon.co.uk/~cns/index.html

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University of Exeter

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