



EQUALITY

AREA: STUDENTS

TOPIC: DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Herefordshire College of Technology

Disability Equality Scheme

2006 – 2009

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DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

Message from the Principal

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 requires Herefordshire College of Technology to promote disability equality. The First Disability Equality Scheme (DES) has to be published by 4th December 2006. With this in mind HCT aims to draw together a range of positive initiatives to ensure equality of opportunity regardless of disability

The scheme will enable the College to embed equality of opportunity in all College decisions and activities and allow us to anticipate and respond to the individual needs of disabled people.

We would like to create a positive atmosphere where there is a shared commitment to value diversity and respect difference.

THE DUTY TO PROMOTE DISABILITY EQUALITY

Source: LSC Core document: *The journey towards disability equality*

The Disability Equality Duty (DED) has six inter-related parts. We must have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others

Additional requirements recognise that:

- disabled people may be subject to considerable harassment in daily life; this may take many forms, from direct verbal abuse to comments that are intimidating or degrading
- while many people have positive attitudes to disabled people, some do not, for example expressing pity, prejudice, fear or a lack of respect; demeaning stereotypes or simply the absence of any representation in public images, can have a negative impact on disabled people
- disabled people are often under represented in public life, for example on councils, forums and committees
- equality cannot be achieved simply by treating disabled people and non-disabled people alike; this principle has always been recognised by the DDA, particularly through the duty to provide reasonable adjustments

THE DEFINITION OF A DISABLED PERSON

Source: LSC Core document: *The journey towards disability equality*

The definition of a disabled person under the Disability Discrimination Act covers people with a wide range of impairments including:

- physical or sensory impairments
- mental health difficulties such as depression
- specific learning difficulties such as Dyslexia
- medical conditions such as Alzheimer's, arthritis and cancer

The impairment must have:

- a substantial, adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- be likely to last for more than 12 months
- Normal day-to-day activities include:
- mobility
- manual dexterity
- physical co-ordination
- continence
- ability to lift, carry or move everyday objects
- speech, hearing or eyesight
- memory or ability to concentrate, learn or understand
- understanding of the risk of physical danger

There are some special provisions, for example:

- if a person's impairment has substantially affected their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, but doesn't any more, it will still be counted as having that effect if it is likely to do so again
- if a person has a progressive condition and it will substantially affect their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in the future, then they will be regarded as having an impairment which has a substantial adverse effect from the moment the condition has some effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities
- cancer, HIV infection and multiple sclerosis are covered from the point of view of diagnosis
- people who have had a disability in the past but are no longer disabled are covered by certain parts of the DDA

Non-disclosure

One in 5 people of working age (20%) could be described as having a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) of 2005. Many people are unaware that they have a disability and some people may choose not to disclose a disability. It is therefore important to clearly define "a disability" and explain how the information will be used in a supportive manner and that confidentiality will not be breached without their permission.

DISABILITY IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Source: Herefordshire Council Disability Equality Scheme 2006 – 2009
2001 Census

Herefordshire is a predominantly rural county and the city of Hereford is the major location in the county for employment, administration, health, education facilities and shopping. In 2005 the population of Hereford was estimated to be 178, 800

Estimated Resident Population of Herefordshire, Mid-2005

Age	Persons	Males	Females
0-14	30,400	15,600	14,700
15-24	18,900	9,700	9,200
25-59	80,900	40,600	41,500
60-74	30,200	14,700	15,500
75+	17,300	6,800	10,600
All Ages	178,800	87,300	91,500

Age profile of the Population

0-14	15-24	25-59	60-74	75+	TOTAL
17.3%	10.3%	46.3%	16.5%	9.6%	100%

It is estimated that more than 26,000 adults (aged 16 and over) in Herefordshire have at least one disability and that nearly 8,000 of these could be categorised as having a serious disability. Locomotive disabilities are the most common, followed by personal care. 18% of people (all ages) living in Herefordshire described themselves as having a long-term illness, health problem or disability, which limits daily activities or work.

The proportions of people with disabilities increase with age.

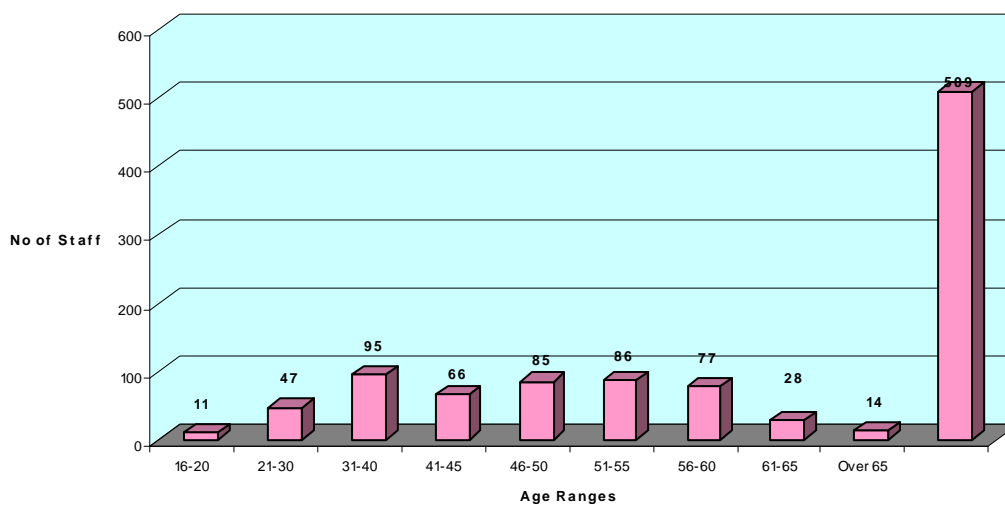
Estimated numbers of disabled people in Herefordshire – 2001

Type of Disability	Moderate	Serious	Total
Any	18,410	7,780	26,200
Locomotive	13,950	5,460	19,410
Personal Care	8,410	2,030	10,440
Sight	2,590	1,060	3,650
Hearing	6,660	580	7,240
Communication	1,460	560	2,020

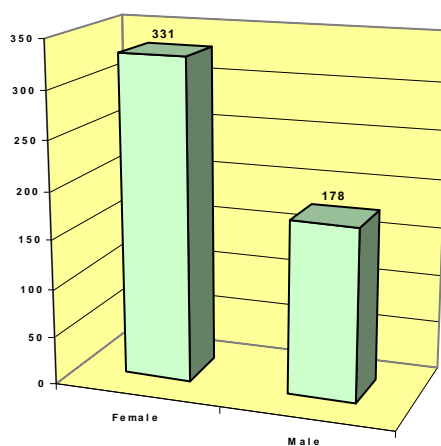
STAFF PROFILE AT HCT

509 staff are currently employed at HCT, 9 of which have a confirmed disability

AGE PROFILE AT NOVEMBER 2006



GENDER PROFILE ALL STAFF NOVEMBER 2006



Disability Profile

Number of staff	Nature of the Disability
1	Dyslexia
3	Diabetes
1	Hearing impairment
1	Eyesight impairment
1	Acquired brain injury
2	Other

STUDENT PROFILE

HCT students with a physical disability and/or Learning Difficulty

Source: MIS Data November 2006

	Physical Disability	04/05				05/06				06/07			
		16-18	19+	14-15	Total	16-18	19+	14-15	Total	16-18	19+	14-15	Total
01	Visual impairment	2	14	1	17	12	37	0	49	10	13	1	24
02	Hearing impairment	2	5	1	8	13	34	0	47	7	22	0	29
03	Disability affecting mobility	1	31	0	32	5	54	1	60	7	23	0	30
04	Other physical disability	0	4	0	4	3	19	0	22	2	21	0	23
05	Other medical condition (e.g. epilepsy, asthma, diabetes)	3	13	0	16	112	247	1	360	110	151	0	261
06	Emotional/behavioural difficulties	0	1	0	1	15	22	0	37	6	7	0	13
07	Mental ill health	0	7	0	7	3	53	0	56	2	41	0	43
08	Temporary disability after illness or accident	0	7	0	7	0	2	0	2	0	1	0	1
09	Profound complex disabilities	0	0	0	0	3	7	0	10	0	2	0	2
90	Multiple disabilities	0	0	0	0	8	28	1	37	27	36	0	63
97	Other	30	254	2	286	40	136	3	179	37	70	0	107
	Learning Difficulty												
01	Moderate learning difficulty	3	13	0	16	42	174	1	217	50	86	0	136
02	Severe learning difficulty	0	2	0	2	11	86	0	97	5	33	0	38
10	Dyslexia	5	8	0	13	69	108	1	178	74	74	0	148
11	Dyscalculia	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	0	1
19	Other specific learning difficulties	0	0	0	0	7	7	1	15	2	8	0	10
90	Multiple learning difficulties	0	0	0	0	1	13	0	14	4	12	0	16
97	Other	82	309	1	392	33	63	5	101	12	30	0	42
	TOTAL	128	668	5	801	379	1090	14	1483	355	631	1	987

* Please note the data refers to the number of physical disabilities and learning difficulties registered by the students. A student may have a physical disability and a learning difficulty. A student may also have more than one physical disability.

STAFF COMMITMENT

The DES for HCT has been developed in consultation with the senior managers who have a strong commitment to championing the needs of disabled students and staff. We have an established Equality and Diversity Committee who meet termly to discuss all aspects of equality of opportunity and diversity issues and the majority of senior staff are members of the Committee. The governors and disabled organisations locally and nationally are also represented. We have a very good working relationship with many external support agencies that support students at HCT with disabilities through Additional Learning Support.

Cross College managers have played an active role in developing the DES. All staff and students have been given the opportunity to involve themselves in the development of the scheme and this has had a very positive impact on raising the profile of the disabled across the College.

Equality and diversity features as a regular agenda item at cross College meetings and course team meetings. Equality and Diversity is a key feature of the Quality meetings.

From application through to enrolment all students are required to confirm any disability allowing the College to arrange appropriate support to enable them to achieve their individual learning goals. At student interviews tutors complete a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) with students who require support to ensure a safe evacuation from the College in the event of an emergency.

Certain aspects of the curriculum have however always had to exclude learners with certain disabilities on the grounds of health and safety, for example the operation of dangerous machinery by those with manual dexterity disabilities. The ethos of the curriculum offer is to make it as inclusive as possible. A review of the curriculum offer undertaken in 2005/2006 has ensured clear progression routes for learners from pre-entry level to level 7.

Additional Learning Support has always championed the needs of students with disabilities. Additional Learning Support is individually tailored to suit their needs ensuring a very supportive study environment.

Internal and external assessors play a major role in determining the students support needs during College examinations. This is conducted in collaboration with the awarding bodies and the Additional Learning Support team. We are permitted to provide amanuensis, readers and additional time.

Classes require all equality and diversity issues to be acknowledged through lesson planning. A summary of teaching and learning observations is produced through the Quality office and issued to staff. The summary and highlights topical issues appertaining to equality and diversity.

An awareness of equality and diversity issues is promoted through student induction and through the personal tutorial system. Twice a year students are invited to cross College focus groups to feedback on the "student experience". All students are actively encouraged to promote equality of opportunity. The Quality office produces an additional feedback report noting the issues students have raised.

Staff induction and training sessions highlight awareness of equality and diversity issues. Extensive staff development has been undertaken to ensure tutors are able to integrate disability awareness into the delivery of the curriculum.

All staff are aware of the complaints procedure and are able to raise sensitive issues with the knowledge that they will be dealt with appropriately.

An Impact Assessment Framework (IAF) has been introduced to assess the impact of all equality and diversity issues, including disability, on all HCT policies. The needs of students with disabilities are considered in consultation with staff, students and external agencies. Relevant data is gathered to support the process. The results of the impact assessments will be published on HCT on-line.

The College Self Assessment Review (SAR) covers all areas of the College, involving all staff at all levels and is used to improve the performance of the College. It is an important mechanism in highlighting awareness of equality and diversity issues.

Embedding equality of opportunity for all staff and students will inevitably take time but, we are as a College, embracing the aim of social inclusion for all.

INVOLVING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Involving people with disabilities in the development of a DES is a legal requirement of the DDA 2005.

Staff and students were invited to participate in the development of the DES. With their support we were able to identify barriers to equality of opportunity and prioritise future disability actions. This in has had a positive effect on staff satisfaction and morale and learner satisfaction and success rates. As well as our staff and students the knowledge available from external organisations has proved beneficial and has also shaped the DES. We now recognise that people with different disabilities are affected in many different ways and they were able to bring a variety of perspectives to the DES. They were and will continue to be the experts in the development of the DES and will be critical to the success of the DES.

The College intends to form a working party to include:

- Students with disabilities
- Staff with disabilities
- Representatives from external agencies
- Parents or carers of students with disabilities

The working party will meet termly to discuss how the College should approach the new DDA duties and the introduction and development of the DES. The working group will play a key role in initiating change and monitoring the progress of the DES. Gathering data on the College experiences of the disabled will allow us to assess the impact of our policies, procedures and practices, enabling us to identify where disability equality can be further developed.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT MEASURES (EDIMS)

EDIMS list areas the College has identified as important in the promotion of equality for students. The DES will include actions which will support the EDIMs selected by the College

THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

HCT has established an Impact Assessment Framework (IAF) to assess the impact of all of our policies on the disabled and the five other strands of equality and diversity:- Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation.

The procedure identifies the main aims of each policy and how it works in practice. Relevant internal and external information is considered and analysed with regard to the policy. The impact of each strand of equality and diversity is assessed as HIGH (H), MEDIUM (M), LOW (L) or NONE (N). During the process the views of disabled people are considered to be integral to the effectiveness of the process and to shape the decision making process.

If the evidence indicates that the policy is likely to have an adverse impact, a course of action will be determined to remove the adverse impact or, alternatively the policy will be changed.

All policies will be reviewed annually and will be available through Personnel.

Disability Equality Scheme

Marketing

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
To ensure key promotional materials are available to all potential students	To continue to produce key promotional materials (prospectuses) in both Audio and Braille	Leanne Ashton	To ensure that Braille and Audio versions are available via Enquiries upon request	To be completed within 6 wks of a new document being printed.	Braille and Audio copies are held by Enquiries.
To ensure that the HCT website complies with DDA legislation	To ensure the new website's layout and content complies with DDA guidelines.	Leanne Ashton James Burt	A new website that meets legislative requirements and DDA recommendations.	April 2007	HCT website
To ensure anyone with a disability is able to attend HCT events i.e. Information Evenings / Graduation, etc.	To continue to be aware of students needs and to cater for them wherever possible. To ensure anyone attending feels comfortable and welcome	Leanne Ashton	Positive feedback from attendees at HCT events	April 2007	Letters of request for special support requirements Positive feedback

Student Admissions

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
Determine students access needs prior to interview	Review Admissions documentation to ensure applicants support needs for access are determined prior to interview	Admissions Officers	To inform interviewing tutors to enable them to arrange appropriate interview venues	February 2007	Admissions documentation CELCAT
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) to be completed at interview to ensure students are able to exit relevant buildings in emergencies if they enrol	Interviewing tutors to complete a PEEP where required at interview in consultation with the applicant	Admissions Officers Interviewing tutors Gill Cooper	To ensure that all students can evacuate the building in an emergency	February 2007	Completed PEEPs and resulting strategies for emergency evacuation of individual students
Implement appropriate strategies for individual students to exit a building in an emergency	A completed PEEP will prompt liaison between Estates, Student Services, Health and Safety Officer, course/personal tutor and student to agree a suitable strategy for exiting relevant buildings in an emergency	James Burt Denise Thomas Gill Cooper Tutors Students	A suitable exit strategy for individual students agreed and recorded	March 2007	Completed PEEPs and overview documentation
To ensure health and safety support issues – equipment and staffing are discussed at interview prior to a course offer being made.	To establish a procedure, which will ensure support needs are identified prior to a student being offered a place on a course.	Interviewing Tutors Denise Thomas James Burt Gill Cooper	To ensure that identified specialist equipment or specialised staffing support is acknowledged and in place before a student is offered a place on a course.	March 2007	Admissions Interview packs Established cross college procedure Risk assessments
To communicate any documentation received from full time applicants regarding disabilities to course tutors	To copy all documentation referring applicants disabilities to relevant staff	Admissions Officers Course tutors Student Support	To communicate to relevant staff information regarding applicants disabilities	February 2007	Referral of information logged by Admissions

Staff Recruitment and Selection

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs) to be completed at employment offer stage	To ensure that staff are pro-active in the use of the procedure.	Debra Baldwin Gill Cooper Interviewing staff	To ensure that all staff can evacuate the building in an emergency	March 2007	Completed PEEPs and resulting strategies for emergency evacuation of individual staff
To ensure health and safety support issues are discussed at interview before a member of staff is offered employment.	To devise a procedure to ensure support needs are identified prior to being offered employment.	Interviewing Tutors Debra Baldwin James Burt Gill Cooper	To ensure that identified specialist support equipment and staffing is available prior to a member of staff being offered employment.	March 2007	Personnel interview packs Risk assessments
To maintain current information data bases of staff who have impairments (as defined by the DDA)	Identify the DDA specified impairments of staff. Regularly review and update the impairment information To store the information in a manner which complies with current legislation	Ken Hayden	Staff impairments identified and continuously updated	Jan 2007	Personnel and Staff Development records

Policies, Procedures and Practices

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
To impact assess all staff policies against disability	To set up a working party to support the review of policies which may impact on staff with disabilities	Debra Baldwin	All staff policies to be impact assessed against disability	April 2007	Minutes of meetings Impact Assessment Framework documentation
To impact assess all student policies against disability	To set up a working party to support the review of policies which may impact on staff with disabilities	Denise Thomas	All student policies to be impact assessed against disability	April 2007	Minutes of meetings Impact Assessment Framework documentation
To ensure staff policies and procedures are in line with current DDA legislation	Review existing policies and new policies	Debra Baldwin	Suitable policies in place for disabled applicants and employees	August 2007 and on-going	Policies
To ensure student policies and procedures are in line with current DDA legislation	Review existing policies and new policies	Denise Thomas	Suitable policies in place for disabled student applicants	August 2007 and on-going	Policies
To ensure that recruitment and selection policies and procedures do not discriminate against the disabled	Annually review policies and procedures. Continue to improve – i.e. application format for sight impaired applicants	Debra Baldwin Moe Netting	Establish up to date policies and procedures which do not adversely affect disabled applicants	August 07 and on-going	Policies and procedures
To ensure that enquiries and admissions policies and procedures do not discriminate against the disabled	Annually review policies and procedures. Continue to improve – i.e. application format for sight impaired applicants	Denise Thomas	Establish up to date policies and procedures which do not adversely affect disabled applicants	August 07 and on-going	Policies and procedures

Enrolment and Data Collection

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
Location of full time enrolment process is inclusive	Set up enrolment to ensure access for all learners irrespective of any disability	Chris Kench ERG OMT	All learners experience an efficient and effective full-time enrolment process	August 2007	ERG Enrolment review
Data gathered relating to disabilities is clear and unambiguous	Review and amend all enrolment forms to ensure sufficient and relevant data is captured	Chris Kench ERG	Relevant data is available to appropriate staff	August 2007	ERG minutes New enrolment form
Request for ALS is integral to the enrolment form and clearly states the need for support	Review and amend the enrolment form to allow students to request specific ALS	Chris Kench ERG	A specific request for ALS	June 2007	New enrolment form
Requests for ALS via the enrolment forms are issued to ALS for prompt action	MIS to collate student requests for ALS and issue to ALS promptly	Chris Kench	Prompt action in assessing the students needs for ALS	June 2007	New enrolment form Collated request from MIS to ALS
To inform college managers and external agencies of the number of students receiving ALS	Develop a set of accessible reports for college managers to interrogate learner data relating to disabilities and learning difficulties	Chris Kench ERG OMT	College managers have access to ALS data at course level for their use	May 2007	MIS Reports
To determine the achievement for ALS students	To produce an achievement report to determine the number of students in receipt of ALS who achieve their learning goals	Chris Kench	Data report outlining the students in receipt of ALS and their achievement	July 2007	Achievement data f*or students in receipt of ALS

Student Support

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
To ensure all tutors actively encourage students to apply for ALS where necessary during their course of study	To promote the request process for ALS and the provision of appropriate support throughout the year	Denise Thomas Team Leaders Course tutors	Maintain an awareness of the request process for ALS throughout the academic year	May 2007	Completed ALS request forms and resulting support arrangements
To ensure open access to assessments for exam concessions are initiated	Maintain liaison with ALS for updated reports and early notification of students' support requirements for exams.	Lynda Gibbs Denise Thomas	Exams are notified of students' who require exam concessions	October 2007	Students' achievements.
Exam concessions are activated	Support arrangements are actioned to support students' examinations needs	Lynda Gibbs Denise Thomas	Support is in place for students to be assessed to determine their exams concessions	October 2007	Planned examinations and support arrangements
To determine the achievement for ALS students	To produce an achievement report to determine the number of students in receipt of ALS who achieve their learning goals	Chris Kench	Data report outlining the students in receipt of ALS and the achievement	July 2007	Achievement data for students in receipt of ALS
To provide advice and guidance to HE students re: the Disability Student Allowance (DSA)	To produce guidelines for HE students eligible for the DSA	Denise Thomas Patsy Marson	To offer guidance and support to HE students claiming the DSA	April 2007	Guidance notes Allocate staff to offer support
To ensure accommodation (housing) is suitable for students with disabilities	To determine disabled friendly accommodation for students	Denise Thomas	A database of disabled friendly accommodation	April 2007	Accommodation database
To maintain good links with external agencies who support disabled students	Communicate regularly with external agencies and update those concerning changes in students' needs.	Denise Thomas	Continued good communication	On-going	Database of external agencies

Access and Resources

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
Provide adequate access to Estates Facilities	Provide reasonable access to buildings with the use of suitable ramps and where appropriate a lift.	James Burt	Adequate access available to College Facilities where reasonably possible.	Dec 2007	Working with HLV project to ensure full DDA compliance. Hearing Loop provided in Reception and nominated Classrooms.
Provide suitable IT equipment i.e. hardware/software for student use within the classroom	Ensure equipment required by students is requested by interviewing staff to ensure we are able to satisfy the demand prior to enrolment	James Burt	Set up a database of equipment required to ensure we can satisfy demand	December 2006	IT Requirements are identified at the interview stage to ensure IT Support is available. A laptop loan scheme established
Exit strategy from the library in an emergency for mobility impaired users	To determine an exit strategy for users with mobility problems	Catherine Wrathall James Burt Gill Cooper	An acceptable exit strategy for users with mobility problems	May 2007	Agreed exit strategy Minutes of the meeting
To ensure all bookshelves are accessible to wheelchair users	Train all staff to assist users to access items located on top shelves of book stacks	Catherine Wrathall	Trained and supportive staff to assist wheelchair users	March 2007	Minutes of LRC staff meeting
Improve signage for sight-impaired students introduce Braille signage	Liaise with Marketing to design and produce appropriate Braille signage for book shelves	Catherine Wrathall Leanne Ashton	New Braille signage on book stacks	May 2007	New signage
To ensure risk assessments are completed for all areas within the college	To ensure that staff are pro-active in the use of the procedure.	James Burt Gill Cooper Designated staff	All risk assessments are completed	March 2007	Completed risk assessments

Curriculum

Objectives	Intended actions	Named staff	Intended Outcomes	Target dates	Evidence
Ensure disability awareness is integrated into the delivery of the curriculum	Inform staff to ensure disability awareness is built into Schemes of Work and lesson plans	Ruth Johnston Andy Thomas Teaching & Learning Observation team	High level of awareness of disability issues amongst staff and students	July 2008	OTL reports
Schemes of work and lesson plans detail disability issues where appropriate	Monitor Schemes of work to ensure disability awareness is covered in all curriculum areas	Ruth Johnston Andy Thomas Teaching and Learning Observation team	Schemes of work and lesson plans incorporate relevant disability issues	July 2008	Schemes of work Lesson Plans
Review curriculum to remove any unnecessary barriers to access for learners with disabilities	Undertake a review of curriculum to ensure there are no unnecessary barriers to access	Ruth Johnston Andy Thomas	Inclusive education	July 2008	2009 /2010 Prospectus identifies any programmes with barriers to access
Classes timetabled to accommodate the needs of disabled students	Determine appropriate rooms for timetabling students with disabilities	Ruth Johnston Andy Thomas Team Leaders	Rooming list identifying	June 2007	CELCAT
Ensure disability awareness is incorporated within the tutorial system	To produce suitable resources for use in group tutorial sessions	Denise Thomas Tutorial Steering Group (TSG)	Tutorial resources	July 2007	Resources Tutorial Scheme of Work