UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

ANNUAL REPORT

DECEMBER 2008

1   INTRODUCTION

The second year of the University of Aberdeen's Disability Equality Scheme has brought achievement in relation to the key objectives we set last year and consolidation of the work undertaken in the Scheme's first year.

The lessons learnt from the development of the Scheme and the progress made in its first year has informed our priorities for the second and third years. For example, the Action Plan has been updated with realistic goals and an easy-to-view guide as to the progress of the actions; our successful Equality Open Sessions have continued to provide an insight as to the issues that staff and students face; communication and consultation have been key themes with the Equality and Diversity Questionnaire providing valuable qualitative and quantitative results.

The Scheme forms part of our Equality and Diversity agenda and our inclusive approach aims to ensure that progress for all equality groups can be tangible. We are aware that there is still considerable work to be done to achieve true equality across the University, however, with consistent operational development and strategic direction we look forward to working with the University community to deliver our equality objectives.

This report provides a summary of the progress on the key objectives that we identified as priority areas in 2007, outlines our priorities for 2008/09 and updates the report produced last year to highlight progress on the specific actions in the Scheme's Action Plan.

If you wish to provide feedback or comments on this report or our Scheme please contact Mrs Janine Chalmers, Equality and Diversity Adviser on 01224 273883/janine.chalmers@abdn.ac.uk or Dr Lucy Foley, Senior Disability Adviser on 01224 272023/l.foley@abdn.ac.uk

2   SUMMARY OF PROGRESS ON PRIORITIES SET IN 2007

Data Collection

We are committed to ensuring that reliable and consistent data, in relation to both staff and students, is available as we believe this is imperative to measuring the impact of our strategies and policies.

The progress that has been made is outlined below:

- The new Discoverer management information system does now contain student disability data. Staff disability data is not currently on the system and will require to be validated by Human Resources. The data held on staff disability is currently inaccurate so, as outlined below, work will be undertaken to rectify this situation. An implementation group, to be chaired by the University Secretary has been established and it is hoped that this will ensure that the system will be rolled out, in phases, over 2008/09.

- An Equality and Diversity Employee Questionnaire was issued to all University employees in February 2008. The questionnaire included questions about staff experiences of discrimination and harassment and whether employees had faced any barriers in accessing training or facilities at the University.

  The questionnaire attracted an excellent response rate of 50% and many respondents offered comments which provided a wider context for the results.

The results were positive, overall. Over 60% of respondents indicated that they had encountered positive experiences in relation to equality. The recruitment process was rated very positively and the overwhelming view was that the process was fair and transparent. There were some encouraging remarks made in terms of disability. Respondents generally felt that they had access to training opportunities and University facilities. The responses indicated a need to further promote equality policies and their functions throughout the University. There was also evidence of policies, particularly those which deal with flexible working, being applied inconsistently across the University. When asked whether respondents had experienced discrimination, 20% reported that they had. However, this result must be balanced against the generally positive nature of the comments received. A plan of action will be developed to further promote and embed the principles of equality.

The questionnaire asked respondents to disclose personal details. 50 respondents declared a disability. The questionnaire was anonymous so although this provided a much needed indication of the numbers of disabled staff we are not able at this point to update personal records.

- A staff questionnaire focussing on disability is planned. The questionnaire described above provided valuable data relating to the numbers of disabled employees and demonstrated that the data held officially by the University is inaccurate. In order to gain a clearer picture we will be issuing a questionnaire to all staff asking them to declare their disability status so that we can begin the process of updating our records. The questionnaire will also ask staff about their positive and negative experiences in terms of disability and provide an opportunity for staff to participate in a Staff Disability Network Group.

- Investigations have confirmed that we are able to report on student disability in the areas of:

  o Student applicant data by programme
  o Student offer data by programme
  o Student achievement by course and School
  o Student progression by programme (true progression rates year on year)
  o Student retention by programme and School

Involvement of Disabled People

The University continues to welcome feedback from disabled people and has actively sought to encourage staff and students to participate in consultation events.

- The University has now held four Equality Open Sessions focussing on disability. These are open to staff and students. There is no set agenda and it is an opportunity for participants to ask questions or to find out about the work that has been undertaken.

- The staff questionnaire undertaken in February 2008 provided respondents with the opportunity to make qualitative comments and these provided an insight and a context for the quantitative results. As a result of this questionnaire several members of staff requested to be included in the existing Equality Network Group which provides comments on policies and impact assessments by e-mail.

- The Disabled Students Satisfaction Survey is undertaken annually.

- The University's Access Panel provides the Estates section with views and suggestions on projects. They have been involved, along with the Senior Disability Adviser, in reviewing proposals for the new Library which is due to open in 2011.

- It is planned to set up staff network groups, one of which will focus on disability issues.

3 **FUTURE PRIORITIES**

Harmonisation of Equality Schemes

The University promotes an inclusive approach to delivering our equality agenda and the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity has in its work plan for 2008/09 a commitment to consider developing a Single Equality Scheme.

The main impetus for this approach would be to create an accessible and user-friendly document which stated our equality objectives and mapped out actions for achieving these. The indications are that the legal framework will also promote a streamlined approach to equality and will require public bodies to include sexual orientation, religion and age in their Schemes. Rather than developing six individual Schemes and Action Plans we would like to pull together common goals and approach the equality agenda in a consistent manner.

The concerns about this approach are that the particular issues within each strand would be lost. We would wish to avoid this and will build in strand-specific objectives where this was required.

A draft Single Equality Scheme will be presented to the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity in 2008/09 if it is agreed that this is the approach the University wishes to pursue.

Appendix I – summary of actions to date under each of the aims from the Action Plan

Appendix II – Disability Equality Scheme Revised Action Plan

Appendix III – Summary of Data on Disabled Students

Appendix IV – Results of the Equality and Diversity Staff Questionnaire

APPENDIX I - UPDATE ON PROGRESS ON THE DISABILITY ACTION PLAN

This part of the Annual Report demonstrates the progress against the Action Plan. Many of the actions involve long-term and ongoing work and we recognise these as important in embedding equality across the University.

The progress made in 2007/08 is highlighted in *italics* in this report and expands on the short summary of progress to be found in the Action Plan itself.

1.   **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT DECISION MAKING**

Objective: **To ensure that disability matters are fully considered in the governance, management and administration of the University.**

1.1   To involve disabled people in decision-making processes at all levels

- Successful input from Disability Advisory Group

Disabled staff and students were involved in the development of the Scheme through the Disability Advisory Group, chaired by Anne Begg MP. This group will be reconvened in order to review the progress of the Scheme and to provide further input where necessary.

- Open sessions for staff and students

Two open sessions for staff and students were held during 2006/07 in order to hear views about disability equality at the University. Many useful comments were made and will inform future decision-making. Further sessions are planned for Nov/Dec 07.

2007/08
Further successful open sessions have been held.

- Access Panel

An Access Panel, consisting of disabled students and members of staff, has been created to advise Estates on all aspects of improving the accessibility of the physical estate. As well as engaging in general discussions, this panel has been consulted on major projects, such as the design plans for the new library. External parties, including architects and members of Aberdeen City Council's Access Panel have also attended.

2007/08
Further meeting of the Access Panel have been held. Most recently, this was to advise Campus Services on issues relating to accessibility of catering provision on campus.

- Electronic Discussion Forum

Initial research has indicated that careful consideration is required in terms of assessing how the forum would operate. As it was not one of the priority actions, this will be revisited at a later date, if there is sufficient feedback that this is desired by disabled users.

2007/08
Following an Open Session in November 2008, in which some interest in this was expressed, the feasibility of this will be re-examined.

1.2   To ensure clear communication of the University's commitment to equality of opportunity

- Equality and Diversity website to be improved

Work is currently being undertaken to produce a comprehensive Equality and Diversity website for the University. This will be fully promoted throughout the University and will be accessible

from a range of internal sites. A specific section for disabled staff will be created, providing a clear pathway for staff to access information and support. The corporate style of the University web-pages is currently under review. Actions relating to links between the various pages and the accessibility of all pages will be addressed as part of this activity. New web pages created by the Web Team are fully accessible.

2007/08
The new Equality web pages were launched in November 2008.

- Questionnaire on Equality and Diversity to be issued to staff

The Equality and Diversity questionnaire will provide an opportunity to promote equality of opportunity and the results will allow the University to focus attention on key areas. As part of the exercise there will be an opportunity for staff to express an interest in contributing to initiatives. We already have a group of staff who expressed an interest in doing this following the questionnaire in 2006.

2007/08
The Equality and Diversity Questionnaire was issued to staff in February 2008. There was an excellent response rate and respondents provided extremely useful and insightful comments.

Overall, the results were positive. An action plan has been developed to ensure that the areas of concern are addressed.

The results provided the University's first true indication of the number of disabled employees and we are very keen to follow this up with a questionnaire to all staff specifically on disability and asking staff to actively declare whether or not they have a disability.

The results have been discussed at University Management Group and College Executives.

It has been agreed that the questionnaire will be repeated every two years.

- Training Plan been developed and implemented

The Equality and Diversity Training Plan prioritises staff groups for receiving equality training. New teaching staff receive a tailored induction, part of which covers equality and diversity. The general staff induction has just been reviewed and consists of a 'wallet card' system which is slotted into the USB port and leads to a web-based induction. This is supplemented by an induction session. Equality and Diversity is signposted within the programme with a specific reference to the University's commitment to equality.

1.3   **To ensure that Subcommittee on Disabilities meaningfully represents disabled staff and students**

- Review of committee structure to achieve full recognition of Disability Equality

The committee structure which oversees policy and practice in equality and diversity was reviewed in 2006/07. The previous structure consisted of a Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities and two sub-committees, one focussing on disabilities and one focussing on race. The review was prompted by the need to streamline the equality strands and to ensure that all strands were fully recognised. The Sub-Committee on Disabilities was not representative of staff and students and, although it was a useful forum, was not fulfilling its remit. Consequently, along with the Sub-Committee on Race Equality, the committee was dissolved and a new committee formed – the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity.

2007/08
The new Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity has been operating for one full year. It has discussed and debated a wide range of equality and diversity issues and will work to an annual work plan.

- Representation of disabled people on the committee to be achieved in 2007/08

The new Committee meets for the first time on 19 November 2007 and much of the first meeting will be used to identify key priorities and set a work plan. It is hoped that representation from equality groups will be achieved over the course of 2007/08.

2007/08
This action was to be a follow-on from the questionnaire and will now form part of the work plan for 2008/09.

- School Disability Co-ordinators play valuable role

The old Sub-committee on Disabilities comprised all the School Disability Co-ordinators. It is recognised that this role is extremely valuable in supporting disabled students and this group meets independently with the Vice Principal responsible for Equality and Diversity and the Senior Disability Adviser. A representative from this group will be a formal member of the new Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity.

2007/08
The representative was identified and attends the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity.

1.4   To conduct equality impact assessments on key areas/policies

- Equality Impact Assessment Strategy implemented

The Equality Impact Assessment Strategy has been implemented and impact assessments have commenced in specific areas throughout the University, both in the academic and administrative areas.

- Training delivered to highlight Impact Assessment

Training was delivered to conveners and clerks of key committees in January 2007 to ensure that Committees were aware that they should expect to see Equality Impact Assessment with all new policies or major changes to policies. Ongoing monitoring requires to be undertaken to ensure that this is happening. Training for Human Resources staff is planned for November 2007 to ensure that new staff are aware of the process and their responsibilities. In addition to these, a number of briefing sessions have been held in departments and schools involved in the Impact Assessment process.

2007/08
HR staff received impact assessment training. Briefing sessions are continuing to be held in departments/schools who are undertaking impact assessment. The Curriculum Reform Steering Group received a presentation on equality and diversity, including the need to impact assess the proposals.

- Structure for reporting and review of Impact Assessments

The date identified in the DES Action Plan for reporting on Impact Assessment was August 2007. Following the restructuring of the Committee structure, it has been agreed that the February meeting of the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity will review Equality Impact Assessments as its main Agenda item. Of the policy areas identified in the DES Action Plan, almost all are expected to report at that meeting. The exceptions to this are likely to be the Recruitment and Selection policy and practice which has not progressed because the development of the new policy was delayed and the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

2007/08
At the February 2008 meeting of the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity seven impact assessments were received for consideration and approval. The Committee requested that further work was required on four of the assessments and these returned to the Committee at its next meeting. The impact assessments which have been completed in 2007/08 are:

- *Policy on Student Complaints*
- *Code of Practice on student Discipline*
- *School of Medical Sciences – Staff Career Development and Appraisal*
- *Campus Services – Catering*
- *Campus Services – Provision of Accommodation for International Students with Families*
- *Careers Service*

An Action Plan for impact assessments in 2008/09 was agreed at the June meeting of the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity.

- Prioritisation of policies/practices to be assessed

The process of Impact Assessment has progressed at a slower pace than had been anticipated and implementation in Academic schools has required prioritisation of particular areas of policy and practice. These include:

- o Student experience on placement (School of Education)
- o Staff recruitment (School of Divinity, History and Philosophy)
- o Student support mechanisms (School of Medical Sciences)
- o Staff Induction process (School of Education)
- o Additional guidance has been produced to assist Heads of School in prioritisation and carrying out Impact Assessments.

2007/08
Progress on impact assessment has been consistent but slow. A new plan for 2008/09 has been developed and agreed by the Joint Committee on Equality and Diversity.

1.5   To engage with relevant external agencies

- Benchmarking and sharing good practice within the sector

The University welcomes contact and input from external organisations and recognises that this is an area where more work needs to be undertaken. The Senior Disability Adviser maintains links with the Disability Advisory Group at Aberdeen City Council. The Senior Disability Adviser and Equality and Diversity Adviser attend appropriate national forums and network with other Scottish Universities to benchmark practice and to share good practice. Disability Advisers have given presentations to guidance teachers from Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Schools and to careers advisers at Careers Scotland.

2.   DISABLED STUDENTS

Objectives:

To ensure that the University has robust mechanisms for measuring the experiences of disabled applicants, students and graduates.

To ensure that available data and information is analysed to inform decisions relating to making improvements.

To increase number of disabled students, at all levels, and ensure that the outcomes for disabled students are consistent with those of non-disabled students on the same programmes. (e.g. in progression, retention and achievement).

2.1.   To improve data collection and information gathering relating to the experiences of and the outcomes for disabled applicants and students

- Improving management information

The University is engaged in a major project relating to storing of and access to student data which involves the creation of a data warehouse and the implementation of a management information approach based on the use of Oracle Discoverer. The new approach is due for implementation in early 2008 and will allow reporting on key areas for students i.e.

- o The student body
- o Student retention and progression
- o Admissions

2007/08

- *The new Discoverer management information system does now contain student disability data. We are able to report on student disability in the areas of:*

  - o *Student applicant data by programme*
  - o *Student offer data by programme*
  - o *Student achievement by course and School*
  - o *Student progression by programme (true progression rates year on year)*
  - o *Student retention by programme and School*

- Equality reporting requirements being built in to systems

A number of prepared formats will be set up for standard reporting, at University, College and School level to cover the main reporting requirements. Work has started on specifying reporting requirements relating to disability and the other equality areas. In addition to the standard reports, it will be fairly easy for managers to generate ad-hoc reports in relation to particular information requirements. There will be a slight delay in data on disability being added to the student data but this is expected to be added in Spring 2008.

2.2. To reduce any mismatch (if identified) between numbers of and outcomes for disabled and non-disabled applicants

- Analysis of applications and offers

Figures relating to applicants show that the University of Aberdeen compares favourably with national statistics in relation to applications from and acceptances of disabled applicants. The next step will be to do a comprehensive analysis of applicant information (e.g. there is some evidence nationally that lower proportions of applicants to professional qualifications such as law disclose an impairment. There is also evidence that, although disabled applicants are at least as likely as non-disabled applicants to receive offers, disabled applicants are more likely to receive conditional, rather than unconditional offers.).

- Action taken to address lower disclosure in professional qualifications

The University has started to look at applications to and acceptances for professional qualifications as it is believed that the proportion of students who disclose when applying for these degrees is lower than the average. The School of Medicine is introducing new procedures for considering disability information from applicants. As confidentiality is emphasised throughout this, it is hoped that disabled applicants will feel more able to apply. The Senior Disability Adviser is a member of the Expert Advisory Group for a GMC project on encouraging disabled people into medicine. The aim of this project is to provide advice to medical schools on supporting disabled students into medicine and retaining them in the profession. Over the next 1-2 years, the University intends to look at applications from disabled people for other professional qualifications and hopes to continue to work with professional bodies, where appropriate.

- Presentations to Careers Scotland

Disability advisers give presentations to the local branch of Careers Scotland on an annual basis, to ensure that they are aware of recent improvements in accessibility of Higher Education to disabled students.

- Disability Advisers are present at all Open Days and Applicant Days.

- Information for applicants has been included on the disability web-pages

- The applicants' portals include information about disability support, encouraging disclosure and offering confidential discussion.

2.3. To reduce any mismatch (if identified) between numbers of and outcomes for disabled and non-disabled students

- Analysis of outcomes for disabled students in Colleges and Schools to be improved

Work has commenced on setting up Crystal reports within E-Portfolio which will enable Schools and Colleges to compare performances of various categories of students. This will include the ability to compare the academic outcomes of disabled and non-disabled students for individual courses and at every level.

2.4. To improve the learning and teaching experiences of disabled students

- Improving profile of School Disability Co-ordinators

A list of School Disability Co-ordinators is available on the website and sent to all new disabled students. Many School Disability Co-ordinators have created their own webpages to highlight their role within the School. Work is ongoing to enable the sharing of good practice in this area across the Schools.

- Improving awareness of support for disabled students

The disability website has been restructured to make it more accessible and to ensure that students are aware of the support which is available and how this can be accessed. As well as information on the Disability Service itself, these pages give links to information about assistive technology which is available across the campus, library information and fitness and exercise opportunities for disabled users of the Sports and Recreation Service.

All applicants who disclose an impairment are sent further information regarding support available at the University and an invitation to make further contact. Support for disabled student is also highlighted as part of the induction programme.

All Schools display a poster promoting the University's commitment to equality of opportunity for disabled students and the service is regularly promoted on screens across campus.

2007/2008
As well as being contacted individually to ensure that support arrangements are going well, students are able to give disability-related feedback in the course evaluation forms for each course.

- Improved communication to ensure requirements of disabled students are met

Improvements have been made to the communication of the requirements of individual disabled students to relevant staff in Schools. The Student Advice and Support Office inputs the information onto Student Records and informs individual Schools of any update by email. Crystal reports within E-portfolio enable Schools to run up-to-date reports of the requirements of individual students on every course.

- The post of assistive technology adviser has been made full-time and permanent.

2007/2008
An additional 1FTE Disability Adviser has been appointed. An additional 1 FTE assistive *technology adviser is currently being recruited and will start before end 2008.*

- In-house assessment of needs brought positive benefits

Due to staffing difficulties at the local Access Centre, 72 assessments of needs for the Disabled Students Allowance were conducted in-house in 06-07. Although this has placed a

considerable strain on resources, it has enabled the assessment to be more specifically tailored to individual student's programme of study and the nature of their particular impairment. In academic year 07-08, approximately 80 assessments have been conducted in house between August and November 2007.

2007/2008
The University of Aberdeen has been revalidated to conduct assessments of needs in-house.

- Improving guidance for academic staff

The Senior Disability Adviser gives regular presentations to all new academic staff and all new advisers of studies to ensure that they are aware of issues relating to reasonable adjustments for disabled students.

The Senior Disability Adviser attends meetings at School or College level (e.g. College Teaching and Learning Committees) to discuss areas such as alternative means of assessment and legal responsibilities.

2007/2008
Improvements have been made to the staff section of the disability web pages, providing staff with guidance on how to meet the requirements of disabled students.

2.5. To continue with Teachability activities

- Embedding the principles of Teachability

The Schools in the College of Life Science and Medicine completed their Teachability reports in Autumn 2006 and have taken appropriate action to make improvements in their various disciplines.

The University's Internal Teaching Review process includes a section relating to the accessibility of the courses and the Senior Disability Adviser is invited to submit a formal response to each report, which the committee then discusses as part of the process. Since the publication of the Disability Equality Scheme, reviews have been conducted for Engineering, Language and Literature, Public Health and Computing.

As well as these formal activities, the Senior Disability Adviser ensures that the principles of Teachability are referred to in meetings and discussions. For example, the recent meeting of the School Disability Co-ordinators discussed accessibility and the Teaching and Learning Committee in the College of Arts and Social Sciences discussed alternative means of assessment.

2007/2008
There have been further discussions in the College of Arts and Social Sciences about further projects around Teachability. These will progress in the coming academic session.

2.6. To ensure that disabled postgraduate students and supervisors are aware of support available

- Direct presentations delivered

The Senior Disability Adviser gave a presentation to new postgraduate students to ensure that they are aware of the support available and how this can be accessed.

- Follow-up to disclosure is automatic

Postgraduate applicants who disclose an impairment are automatically sent further information regarding disability-related support.

- Proactive continuation of support

All disabled students who progress from undergraduate to postgraduate study at the University are invited to meet with a disability adviser to discuss ongoing support.

2.7. To improve the non-academic experiences of disabled students

- Improving accessibility to clubs and societies

The Senior Disability Adviser has worked with the Students' Association to ensure that activities organised by Clubs and Societies are made more accessible. This includes providing advice on accessibility to event organisers and ensuring that publicity material is more accessible and welcoming.

- Publishing articles

The publication of disability-related news articles improves disability awareness which, in-turn, contributes to improvements in attitude towards disabled students.

- Explicit reference to disabled students in placement material

Publicity material created by the Careers Service to encourage local businesses to create placement opportunities for students, states the University's commitment to ensuring that all activities are equally available to disabled students.

2.8. To conduct research in disability-related areas

- Research project on the academic achievements of disabled/non-disabled students.

A lecturer in Public Health in the School of Medical Sciences has conducted a research project comparing the academic achievements of disabled and non-disabled students at the University. The overview report will be published shortly and is likely to lead to more detailed research in specific areas.

2007/2008
This study was extended to include academic achievements from 2003-2006.

- Developing networks across disciplines on disability-related teaching and research activities

Cross-discipline discussions are taking place regarding academic work across the University in the field of disability. This network will be developed further in the next 1-2 years. A disability study module is currently being created for medical students and will include input from various disciplines.

3. DISABLED STAFF

Objectives: To ensure the University has robust mechanisms for measuring the experiences of disabled job applicants and employees

To ensure that available data and information is analysed to inform decisions relating to making improvements

To increase number of disabled staff, at all levels, and ensure that the outcomes for disabled staff are consistent with those of non-disabled staff (e.g. in staff development, retention, promotion etc).

3.1 To improve data collection relating to the experiences of disabled staff

- Plans to gather detailed staff disability information

Work is ongoing with external IT consultants to facilitate the re-introduction of the staff portal element of the HR system. Once the portals are live, all staff will be asked to update the personal information which is currently held within the HR system. This will include seeking more detailed information on the categories of impairment which are recorded by disabled members of staff. The questions which will be asked of staff regarding their impairment have already been agreed with the Senior Disability Adviser. It is recognised that the recorded number of disabled staff is extremely low and it is hoped that this information update will enable us to incorporate more realistic figures within our statistical reporting.

Due to these issues it has not been possible to fully analyse data relating to disabled staff. This will be a key priority for us over 2007/08.

2007/08
The staff portal has been withdrawn and will be replaced with a new system which will interface directly with the HR system. Therefore HR data collection on disability has not been undertaken. However, a questionnaire on disability status and experiences to be undertaken in November 2008 will provide a clearer picture of staff disability at the University. The Equality and Diversity staff questionnaire undertaken in February 2008 provided excellent feedback and 50 respondents declared a disability.

- Staff questionnaire on experiences

Work is ongoing to circulate a questionnaire to all staff in relation to equality and diversity issues. It is anticipated that this questionnaire, which will incorporate a section specifically relating to disability, will provide us with useful qualitative information which can be used to improve the experiences of disabled members of staff. This questionnaire will also be used to ask staff if they consider themselves to be disabled, if they have disclosed their impairment to the University and if not, reasons for non-disclosure. It is hoped that this method will lead to an improved understanding of the numbers of staff who consider themselves to be disabled and the reasons of the under-reporting.

2007/08
The questionnaire to staff was issued in February 2008. The results can be found at Appendix III.

- Analysis of the Promotions Procedure by disability

Analysis on the number of disabled applicants and the outcome of their applications in the Promotion and Contribution Award Exercise has been completed.

- Positive results from Investors in People surveys

7 Investors in People staff surveys have been undertaken across the campus on a rolling basis and work is ongoing to analyse the results. Initial analysis shows that the category "Treatment of Employees" has revealed some of the highest satisfaction rates across all areas surveyed. Within this category, staff are asked about their experience in relation to disability, gender and ethnicity and the results are consistently favourable. In all cases, the results have been reported back to the Heads of College/School/Section via presentations and reports.

2007/08
The College of Life Sciences and Medicine has been accredited with Investors in People status. Investors in People staff satisfaction surveys undertaken show a trend on continuous improvement.

- Improvements to management information

The data warehouse will contain HR data and similar standard reporting booklets are being developed. Data on the disability status of staff should be included in the data warehouse HR management area and statistical reports generated.

3.2   To improve recruitment procedures of disabled staff and increase the number of disabled staff appointed

- Jobs advertised on "DisabledGo" website

All University vacancies are automatically advertised on this website, which has been developed to provide information for disabled people and is accessed by up to 100,000 users every month.

- Positive About Disabled People Scheme

The initial Positive About Disabled People Scheme pilot was evaluated and it was agreed that the pilot should continue for a further period. The scheme will be evaluated in December 2007.

2007/08
The Guaranteed Interview Scheme is continuing following evaluation. The on-line recruitment system experienced significant problems in 2008 and all the data on the Scheme has been lost. We will be continuing with the Scheme and ensuring that appropriate records are kept.

- Improvements to Recruitment and Selection course

The Equal Opportunities in Recruitment and Selection training course (which is a mandatory course for those participating in Selection Committees) has been updated to highlight the importance of making adjustments for disabled people and giving additional guidance on sources of support.

2007/08
The course has been revised and will be rolled out in early 2009.

- Information Sessions

The University's training programme on Equality and Diversity has covered all the equality strands. Specific sessions on disability have not been developed however the mechanisms for achieving this will be explored further in due course.

2007/08
A number of Schools have received disability-specific training sessions in the context of supporting disabled students. This will continue to be offered to Schools.

3.3   Improve Experiences of Disabled Staff

- Open discussion sessions

A number of discussion sessions, which were open to both staff and students, were hosted by the Senior Disability Adviser and the Vice Principal with responsibility for Equality and Diversity. These sessions provided staff and students with the opportunity to provide feedback to senior staff within the University.

2007/08
Further open sessions have been held.

- Web page for disabled staff to be created

Work has commenced to create a page on the HR website aimed specifically at assisting disabled staff. This webpage will provide information about support that is available and

guidance to managers on making adjustments to accommodate prospective disabled members of staff or those who become disabled in the course of their employment.

2007/08
The new equality web pages have been created and will be launched in November 2008 and will be linked to the Human Resources page, which is also currently being updated.

- Investors in People review

The Investors in People "health checks" have been completed in all areas of the University except the College of Life Sciences and Medicine (which is currently in progress). Indicator 3, which relates to equality of opportunity, has been met in all areas to date.

2007/08
The College of Life sciences and Medicine has been accredited with Investor In People status. Health Check Indicator 3 continues to be met.

- Impact Assessments on staffing policies

An ongoing programme of Equality Impact Assessments is being conducted on staffing policies and procedures and take account of all equality strands, including disability.

4. INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Objective: To maintain and improve the condition, use, safety, security, amenity and aesthetic qualities of the University's physical estate and to enhance the provision and management of information and electronic resources

4.1 To make continuous improvements to the accessibility of the physical estate

Improve accessibility during any refurbishment or new project
The Estates section continues to implement a policy to address and improve issues of accessibility during any refurbishment or major project. This includes a commitment to achieve accessibility at a level which exceeds minimum compliance.

Continuous small works on accessibility
Ad-hoc improvements are made on an ongoing basis to address specific issues which are raised by disabled students or members of staff (e.g. creation of additional designated parking spaces, improved markings on external steps etc).

Creation of Access Panel
An Access Panel of disabled students and members of staff has been created to advise Estates on issues relating to accessibility on campus. This panel will be consulted on all major projects and will include direct discussions with architects involved.

2007/2008
The Access Panel has met on several occasions. This has included meetings with architects involved in large projects and a meeting with the Director of Campus Services regarding the accessibility of catering provision..

DisabledGo! Website
Following an access review by a researcher from DisabledGo, information regarding the accessibility of every building on campus will shortly be available on their website. This will give staff, students and visitors detailed information regarding each building so that they can assess its accessibility in relation to their own individual requirements.

2007/2008
The DisabledGo website has been completed and is being maintained.

4.2 To make continuous improvements to the availability of assistive technology on campus

A new assistive technology booth will shortly be completed in the MacRobert building. There is also a commitment to create one in the Polwarth building, one in the Matthew Hay building and several in the new library.

2007/2008
The Assistive Technology Booth in the Polwarth building has been completed. The loan pool of equipment has been extended. A new post (1FTE) Assistive Technology Adviser has been created and is currently being recruited.

4.3 To make improvements to the availability of suitable study space for disabled students

The Learning and Teaching Space Development Strategy, includes a commitment to ensure that the Senior Disability Adviser is consulted on all learning space development projects

Appendix II – Action Plan

1. Governance and Management Decision Making

Objective: To ensure that disability matters are fully considered in the governance, management and administration of the University.

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
1.1 To involve disabled people in decision-making processes at all levels	Continue with and strengthen Disability Advisory Group. Meet at least 4 times/year.	Annually at May meeting of JCEO	**Vice-Principal (E&D)** Senior Disability Adviser, Equal Opportunities Adviser	Meetings held and evidence of influencing decisions, policy development and implementation.	G1, G3, G6	Action moved forward to 2008/09 for further consideration
	Develop and Promote Electronic Discussion Forum.	Dec 2006	**Manager, User Services, DIT** Senior Disability Adviser	Discussion forum operating and publicised.	G1, G3, G6	Removed from plan following research on level of interest
	Hold open meetings for disabled staff, students and representatives of local groups.	November and March each year	**Vice-Principal (E&D)** Senior Disability Adviser, Equal Opportunities Adviser, External Relations	Meetings held.	G1, G3, G6	Complete and will continue.
1.2 To ensure clear communication of the University's commitment to equality of opportunity	Add links on equality to the University's website, in particular in Student Recruitment and Admissions, Human Resources and the University's home page.	Dec 2006	**Communications** Student Recruitment and Admissions, Human Resources, Web Team	Clear links to relevant pages.	G1, G3, G5	Ongoing (delays as awaiting redesign of SRAS webpages)
	Ensure that all University web-pages are accessible to all users.	March 2007	**Communications** Web Team, all University Sections	Accessible web-pages.	G1, G3	Complete

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
	Ensure that equality and diversity training is embedded into staff induction and ongoing staff development is provided.	Oct 2007 & ongoing	**Human Resources** Equal Opportunities Adviser, Senior Disability Adviser	Training delivered.	G1, G3, G5	Ongoing
1.3 To ensure that Subcommittee on Disabilities meaningfully represents disabled staff and students	Reconsider remit and composition of Subcommittee on Disabilities. Ensure that disabled staff and students are adequately represented and have meaningful input into relevant decisions.	June 2007 Ongoing	**Vice-Principal (E&D)** Subcommittee on Disabilities	Feedback that the Sub-Committee is having meaningful influence on relevant decisions and policies.	G1, G3, G6	Complete Ongoing
1.4 To conduct equality impact assessments on key areas/policies	Deliver staff training to conveners and clerks of key committees to ensure that decisions made/passed by committee are equality impact assessed.	Dec 2006	**Policy, Planning and Governance** Senior Disability Adviser, Conveners and Clerks of Committees and Project Boards	Training delivered.	G1, G3	Complete
	Human Resources – Recruitment and Selection Policy and Practice Promotions Policy and Practice Appraisals Policy and Practice.	August 2007	**Policy, Planning and Governance** Human Resources	Impact Assessment conducted and published and key actions identified.	G1, G3	Ongoing
	Student and Academic Services- Code of Practice on Student Discipline Complaints Procedure.	August 2007	**Policy, Planning and Governance** Student and Academic Services	Impact Assessment conducted and published and key actions identified.	G1, G3	Complete
	Centre for Learning and Teaching – Learning and Teaching Strategy.	August 2007	**Policy, Planning and Governance** University Committee on Teaching and Learning	Impact Assessment conducted and published and key actions identified.	G1, G3	Moved forward to 2009/10
	Campus Services – Hillhead Halls of Residence.	August 2007	**Policy, Planning and Governance** Campus Services	Impact Assessment conducted and published and key actions identified.	G1, G3	Complete

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
	Careers Service.	August 2007	**Policy, Planning and Governance** Careers Service	Impact Assessment conducted and published and key actions identified.	G1, G3	Complete
	College of Life Sciences and Medicine – School of Medicine.	August 2007	**Policy, Planning and Governance** School of Medicine	Impact Assessment conducted and published and key actions identified.	G1, G3	Complete
	College of Arts and Social Sciences – School of Education School of Divinity, History and Philosophy.	August 2007	**Policy, Planning and Governance** School of Education, School of Divinity, History and Philosophy	Impact Assessment conducted and published and key actions identified.	G1, G3	School of Education will report in February 2008. School of Divinity, History and Philosophy will commence 2008/09.
1.5 To engage with relevant external agencies	Continue involvement with the Disability Advisory Group at Aberdeen City Council.	Ongoing	**Senior Disability Adviser**	Continued involvement with Aberdeen City Council.	G1, G3, G5	Ongoing
	Build on existing relationships with voluntary organisations and build new relationships.	July 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** Vice-Principal (E&D)	Clear relationships with voluntary organisations of and for disabled people.	G1, G3, G5	Ongoing

2.   Disabled Students

Objectives: To ensure that the University has robust mechanisms for measuring the experiences of disabled applicants, students and graduates.
To ensure that available data and information is analysed to inform decisions relating to making improvements.
To increase number of disabled students, at all levels, and ensure that the outcomes for disabled students are consistent with those of non-disabled students on the same programmes. (e.g. in progression, retention and achievement).

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
2.1 To improve data collection and information gathering relating to the experiences of and outcomes for disabled applicants and students	Conduct detailed analysis of disabled applicants, including a breakdown according to programme of study and nature of impairment.	July 2007 & ongoing	**Student Recruitment and Admissions** Admissions tutors	Clearer understanding of the profile of applicants in terms of disability; Comparison of outcomes for disabled and non-disabled applicants.	G1	Ongoing. Report annually in Disability Equality Scheme Annual report.
	Conduct detailed analysis of disabled students, including a breakdown according to programme of study and nature of impairment. This should include analyses of progression, retention and achievement at all levels.	Dec 2007 & ongoing	**Student and Academic Services** Colleges	Clearer understanding and comparison of outcomes for disabled and non-disabled students.	G1	Ongoing.
	Monitor effectiveness of and feedback from Student Course Evaluation Forms, in the light of addition of disability-related question.	July 2007 & ongoing	**Registry** Academic Standards Committee, Senior Disability Adviser	Database of feedback from students relating to specific courses.	G1, G3	Ongoing
2.2 To reduce any mismatch (if identified) between numbers of and outcomes for disabled and non-disabled applicants	Decide on further actions to address any mismatch between the outcomes for disabled and non-disabled applicants, highlighted by the above analyses.	July 2007 & ongoing	**Student Recruitment and Admissions** Admissions Tutors, Heads of Graduate Schools, Senior Disability Adviser	Specific actions identified for 2007-09. This will include setting clear targets to ensure that the University figures are in line with national averages across HE and then moving beyond to increase participation in line with the general population of disabled people.	G1, G3	Ongoing
	Take action, as identified in above activity.	July 2008 and July 2009	**Student Recruitment and Admissions** Admissions Tutors, Heads of Graduate Schools Senior Disability Adviser	Increase in applications from disabled applicants.	G1,G3	Ongoing

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
	Update and improve information available to potential applicants via the website (this should take account of the fact that some applicants who require adjustments might not identify themselves as disabled).	March 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** Student Recruitment and Admissions	Good feedback from applicants/students; Increase in applications from disabled applicants.	G1,G3, G4	Complete
	Build relations with schools in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray, through the relevant Councils, to ensure that disabled pupils are aware of opportunities available at University.	June 2007 & ongoing	**Senior Disability Adviser** Student Recruitment and Admissions, Local Councils	Increase in applications from disabled applicants.	G3, G4	Relations established and ongoing
	Ensure information regarding opportunities for disabled students is conveyed nationally, beyond the local area.	June 2007 & ongoing	**Student Recruitment and Admissions** Senior Disability Adviser	Increase in applications from disabled applicants.	G3, G4	Ongoing
	Include information for disabled students in all recruitment presentations.	July 2007 & ongoing	**Student Recruitment and Admissions** Senior Disability Adviser	Increase in applications from disabled applicants.	G3	Information included and ongoing

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
2.3 To reduce and remove any mismatch (if identified) between outcomes for disabled and non-disabled students	Decide on further actions to address any mismatch between the outcomes for disabled and non-disabled students, highlighted by the above analyses.	July 2007 & ongoing	**Student and Academic Services** School Disability Co-ordinators, Sub-Committee on Disabilities, University Committee on Teaching and Learning, Academic Standards Committee, Heads of Colleges and Schools	Improved feedback from disabled students; Reduction in any mismatch in subsequent years.	G1, G3	Ongoing
2.4 To improve learning and teaching experiences of disabled students	Improve profile of School Disability Co-ordinators and clarify role.	June 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** School Disability Co-ordinators	Improved feedback from disabled students.	G1, G3, G5	Ongoing
	Improve awareness of support for disabled students through student induction process.	Oct 2007	**Student and Academic Services** School Disability Co-ordinators, Students' Association	Improved feedback from disabled students.	G1, G3, G4	Awareness raised and ongoing
	Develop guidance on the provision of accessible learning and teaching materials for disabled students.	Dec 2006	**Student and Academic Services** Directorate of Information Technology, Colleges, Schools	Improved feedback from disabled students.	G1, G3, G5	Improved guidance on web. Further improvements ongoing

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
	Ensure that support arrangements for students are reviewed systematically twice a year.	Twice yearly	**Senior Disability Adviser** Disability Advisers, School Disability Co-ordinators	Improved feedback from disabled students.	G1, G3, G4	Improved monitoring of support ongoing.
	Improve communication of students' requirements to relevant staff.	July 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** Directorate of Information Technology, Registry	Improved feedback from staff and disabled students.	G1, G3, G4	Complete (and will continue)
	Commit to the long-term provision of Assistive Technology support.	March 2007	**Directorate of Information Technology** Vice-Principal (E&D)	Commitment to permanent, full-time position for post of Assistive Technology Adviser.	G1, G3, G4	Complete
	Continue to conduct in-house needs assessments as part of students' applications for a Disabled Students' Allowance.	Ongoing	**Disability Advisers** Assistive Technology Adviser (Directorate of Information Technology)	Conducting 15-20 in-house assessments each year; Committing to Assistive Technology Adviser being a permanent, full-time post.	G1, G3, G4	Complete (and will continue)
	Consider alternative/accessible means of assessment for disabled students as part of a review of assessment strategy.	July 2009	**Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching)** University Committee on Teaching and Learning, Registry, Colleges, Senior Disability Adviser	Ensuring there is clear guidance available to academic staff on alternative/accessible means of assessment, including examples of good practice; Evidence of consistency across Schools and Colleges.	G1, G3, G4	Ongoing

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
2.5 To continue with Teachability Activities	Complete Teachability Reports for Schools in the College of Life Sciences and Medicine.	Oct 2006	**Relevant staff in College of Life Sciences and Medicine** Disability Advisers, Subcommittee on Disabilities	Completed Teachability reports.	G1, G3, G4	Complete
	Take forward key actions identified in above reports in College of Life Sciences and Medicine.	May 2007	**Relevant staff in College of Life Sciences and Medicine** Disability Advisers, Subcommittee on Disabilities	Key actions carried out.	G1, G3, G4	Ongoing
	Continue with improvements resulting from previous Teachability activity in College of Physical Sciences.	May 2007	**Relevant staff in College of Physical Sciences** Senior Disability Advisers	Key actions identified and carried out.	G1, G3	Ongoing
2.6 To ensure that disabled postgraduate students and supervisors are aware of support available	Improve information for disabled postgraduate students via University website and postgraduate student representatives.	Jul 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** Graduate Schools, Web Team	Improved feedback from postgraduate students.	G3, G4	Ongoing
	Provide guidance for supervisors regarding support for disabled students.	Jul 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** Graduate Schools	Improved feedback from postgraduate students.	G3, G4, G5	Ongoing

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
2.7 To improve the non-academic experiences of disabled students	Improve awareness of issues relating to disabled students through articles in the student newspaper, university webpages etc.	Ongoing	**Senior Disability Adviser** Students' Association, School Disability Co-ordinators	Improved feedback from students.	G5	Awareness raised and ongoing
	Work with the Students' Association to ensure club and society events are accessible.	July 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** Student Affairs Committee, Students' Association	Clear guidelines to clubs and societies regarding accessibility; Improved feedback from students.	G1, G3, G4, G5	Improvements made and ongoing
	Work with the Students' Association to encourage activities which make a positive contribution to the experiences of disabled students.	July 2007	**Senior Disability Adviser** Student Affairs Committee, Students' Association	Improved feedback from students.	G4, G5	Improvements made and ongoing
	Ensure that the implementation of Personal Development Plans has a positive impact for disabled students.	Sept 2007 (start of roll-out)	**Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching)** Centre for Learning and Teaching, Senior Disability Adviser	Successful roll-out.	G1, G3	Ongoing
2.8 To conduct research in disability related areas	Research Project: Analysis of relationship between impairment and assessment outcomes for disabled students at Aberdeen University.	June 2007	**Public Health** Registry, Senior Disability Adviser	Report of analysis. Identification of relevant criteria to enable broader, longer-term study. Identification of areas requiring positive action in the future.	G1, G3	Complete
	Create database of disability-related research activities.	March 2007	Vice-Principal (Research) Colleges	Database created and regularly updated.	G5	Discussions held.

3.   Disabled Staff

Objectives: To ensure that the University has robust mechanisms for measuring the experiences of disabled job applicants and employees.
To ensure that available data and information is analysed to inform decisions relating to making improvements.
To increase number of disabled staff, at all levels, and ensure that the outcomes for disabled staff are consistent with those of non-disabled staff (e.g. in staff development, retention, promotion etc).

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
3.1 To improve data collection relating to the experiences of disabled staff	Implement new HR system, including questions relating to disability, impairment and staff requirements.	Dec 2006	**Human Resources** Equal Opportunities Adviser, Senior Disability Adviser	New system in operation.	G1	Ongoing
	Circulate a questionnaire to all staff asking for feedback relating to disability-related experiences.	April 2007	**Human Resources** Equal Opportunities Adviser, Senior Disability Adviser	Questionnaire circulated and results analysed; Improved disclosure from disabled staff.	G1, G2	Complete and will be repeated regularly
	Analyse all data relating to disabled staff, including applications, retention, promotion.	July 2007 & ongoing	**Human Resources** Equal Opportunities Adviser, Senior Disability Adviser	More robust data and information.	G1	Ongoing
	Analyse results from staff surveys relating to Investors in People.	July 2007	**Training and Development Adviser (HR)** Equal Opportunities Adviser, Senior Disability Adviser	More robust data and information.	G1	Complete

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
3.2 To improve recruitment procedures of disabled staff and increase the number of disabled staff appointed	Decide on further actions to address any mismatch (if identified) between the numbers of and outcomes for disabled and non-disabled applicants, highlighted by the above study.	July 2007 (with further actions set for 2007-09)	**Human Resources** Equal Opportunities Adviser, Senior Disability Adviser	Specific actions identified for 2007-09. This will include setting clear targets to ensure that the University figures are in line with national averages across HE and then moving beyond to increase participation in line with the general population of disabled people.	G1, G3	Ongoing
	Evaluate the Guaranteed Interview Scheme pilot and consider options for taking forward full commitment to Positive about Disabled People Scheme.	Dec 2006	**Human Resources Officer** Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities, Equal Opportunities Adviser	Decision taken to adopt Positive about Disabled People Scheme across the University; Increase in appointment of disabled staff.	G3, G4	Initial evaluation complete.
	Deliver information sessions/guidance notes to existing managers regarding the benefit of recruiting disabled people, potential support etc.	Annually	**Human Resources (Deputy Director, Staff Development)** Equal Opportunities Adviser	Information sessions delivered.	G5	Ongoing
3.3 Improve experiences of disabled staff	Establish clear structures for disabled staff to access support at the University.	June 2007	**Human Resources** Equal Opportunities Adviser, Senior Disability Adviser,	Improved feedback from disabled staff.	G1, G3, G4	Ongoing
	Ensure that all staff are informed of available support and have easy access to this information.	June 2007	**Human Resources, Heads of Colleges, Schools and Sections** Communications, Web team	Clear guidance available to staff; Positive feedback from disabled staff.	G1, G3, G4	Ongoing

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
	Identify positive steps to address any mismatch (if identified) between the outcomes for disabled and non-disabled staff, highlighted by the above study (including retention, promotion and development).	June 2007	**Human Resources, Heads of Colleges, Schools and Sections** Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities, Equal Opportunities Adviser	Evidence that disabled staff have the same opportunities in employment as non-disabled staff (targets to be set in the light of initial study).	G1, G4	Ongoing
	Collect data from Indicator 3 of Investors in People and implement action plans to address areas for development	July 2007 & ongoing	**Heads of Colleges, Schools and Sections** Training and Development Adviser (HR)	Indicator 3 of Investors in People is met across the University.	G1, G3	Ongoing

4. Infrastructure and environment

Objective: To maintain and improve the condition, use, safety, security, amenity and aesthetic qualities of the University's physical estate and to enhance the provision and management of information and electronic resources.

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty ref	Progress
4.1 To make continuous improvements to the accessibility of the physical estate	Aim to optimise the accessibility of new buildings, rather than aiming for minimum compliance.	Ongoing	**Estates** Senior Disability Adviser	Improved accessibility standards for new buildings.	G1, G3	Ongoing
	Establish an ongoing programme of work to improve the accessibility of the University Estate, beyond new-build and refurbishment projects.	Annually	**Estates** Subcommittee on Disabilities	Improved accessibility of University buildings (including parking and toilet provision).	G1, G3	Ongoing

Aim	Action	Reporting Date	Lead / Working With	Success Measure	General Duty Ref	Progress
	Ensure that contractors are aware of the high standards of accessibility which the University requires.	Ongoing	**Estates** Senior Disability Adviser	Clear guidelines for contractors.	G1, G3, G6	Ongoing
	Seek the views of disabled people regarding the accessibility of major capital works, including the new Library, Matthew Hay building and Regional Sports Facility.	Ongoing	**Estates** Senior Disability Adviser, Disability Advisory Group, Access Panel at Aberdeen City Council (External)	Evidence of meaningful input from disabled people on issues relating to design of major projects.	G1, G3, G6	Complete and now embedded
	Ensure that the views of disabled people are sought with respect to the accessibility of any building project.	Ongoing	**Estates** Senior Disability Adviser, Disability Advisory Group, Access Panel at Aberdeen City Council (External)	Evidence of meaningful input from disabled people on issues relating to design of major projects.	G1, G3, G6	Complete and now embedded
4.2 To make continuous improvements to the availability of assistive technology on campus	Improve provision of assistive technology at Foresterhill site.	July 2009	**Directorate of Information Technology** Estates, Senior Disability Adviser	Assistive technology at Foresterhill matching that provided at King's College.	G1, G3, G4	Complete
	Ensure all users have easy access to information relating to the accessible C&IT.	July 2007	**Directorate of Information Technology**	Improved feedback from users.	G1, G3	Complete
4.3 To make improvements to the availability of suitable study space for disabled students	Ensure that the requirements of disabled students are addressed as part of a Learning and Teaching Space Development Strategy.		**Vice-Principal (Learning and Teaching)** Space Development Strategy Working Group	Feedback from disabled students of appropriate space provision.	G1, G3, G4	Complete and now embedded

APPENDIX III – DATA RELATING TO DISABLED STUDENTS

1.   Registered Disabled Students

2007-08

Impairment category	Total	With individual arrangements
Dyslexia	454	369
Visual Impairment	36	20
Hearing Impairment	52	21
Wheelchair User/Mobility Difficulties	40	28
Mental Health Difficulties	128	61
Aspergers/Autistic Spectrum Disorder	19	17
Unseen disability (e.g. diabetes)	142	49
Multiple Disabilities	73	64
A disability not listed above	201	161
Total	**1145**	**790**
Total in receipt of DSA		**tbc**

2.   Comparison of initial decisions on full-time, first degree applicants for 2008

2008
Total number of applicants: 12495
Total number of disabled applicants: 601 (4.8%)

Total offers:
Disabled applicants: 481 (80%)
Non-disabled applicants: 9092 (76.4%)

Unconditional Offers:
Disabled applicants: 174 (29%)
Non-disabled applicants: 4069 (34.2%)

Conditional Offers:
Disabled applicants: 307 (51.1%)
Non-disabled applicants: 5023 (42.2%)

Rejections:
Disabled applicants: 96 (16%)
Non-disabled applicants: 2273 (19.1%)

3. Comparisons of Graduates

		2006	2007
Total number of graduates		1696	1571
Total number of disabled graduates (as % of all graduates)		163 (9.6%)	133 (8.5%)
Total number of graduates with dyslexia (as % of all students)		65 (3.8%)	53 (3.4%)
1st Class honours	Non-disabled graduates (as % of all non-disabled graduates)	122 (8%)	135 (9.4%)

	Disabled graduates (as % of all disabled graduates)	10 (6.1%)	5 (3.8%)
	Graduates with Dyslexia (as % of all students with dyslexia)	2 (3.1%)	1 (1.9%)
2:1	Non-disabled graduates	741 (48.3%)	704 (49%)
	Disabled graduates	71 (43.6%)	53 (39.8%)
	Graduates with Dyslexia	27 (41.5%)	22 (41.5%)
2:2	Non-disabled graduates	366 (23.9%)	311 (21.6%)
	Disabled graduates	43 (26.4%)	37 (27.8%)
	Graduates with Dyslexia	18 (27.7%)	15 (28.3%)
3rd	Non-disabled graduates	25 (1.6%)	22 (1.5%)
	Disabled graduates	5 (3.1%)	1 (0.8%)
	Graduates with Dyslexia	3 (4.6%)	1 (1.9%)
Unclassified	Non-disabled graduates	279 (18.2%)	266 (18.5%)
	Disabled graduates	34 (20.9%)	37 (27.6%)
	Graduates with Dyslexia	15 (23.1%)	14 (26.4%)

4. Comparisons of first destination statistics
TBC

5. Comparisons from Satisfaction Questionnaires

Quality of Service from Disability Adviser:

	V. Good/Good	Satisfactory	Poor/V. Poor
06-07	89.7%	8.6%	1.7%
07-08	87.6%	6.4%	6%

Quality of Service from School Disability Co-ordinator:

	V. Good/Good	Satisfactory	Poor/V. Poor
06-07	63.1%	16.7%	20.2%
07-08	70.8%	15.6%	13.6%

Response from School to student's requirements:

	V. Good/Good	Satisfactory	Poor/V. Poor
06-07	53.2%	30.1%	16.7%
07-08	63.5%	23.4%	13.1%

Extent to which agreed provisions were delivered:

	Fully	Partially	Not at all
06-07	55.9%	39.8%	4.7%
07-08	61.8%	32.7%	2.7%

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

EMPLOYEE QUESTIONNAIRE FEBRUARY 2008

1   Background

The University aims to achieve excellence in Equality and Diversity practice. We have undertaken a diverse range of work to ensure that not only are our legal obligations met, but that we create a wholly inclusive work and study environment. Significant progress has been made, but we recognise that more needs to be done in order to achieve our aim.

An important element of the equalities agenda at the University is receiving and encouraging feedback from staff and students. Effective and meaningful communication and consultation are fundamental if we are to assess fully the effectiveness of our policies and to ensure that our future work addresses the key concerns of our staff and students.

In relation to staff consultation the University has issued two questionnaires. The first was conducted in 2006 and the results were used to plan work priorities. The second was issued in February 2008 and incorporated questions related to direct experiences of discrimination and harassment. This paper provides the results and analysis of this questionnaire.

2   Summary

The response rate to the questionnaire was 52% (1335 responses). This was an excellent response and was an improvement on the response rate to the questionnaire conducted in 2006.

The questionnaire was issued via e-mail to those with access to a PC and paper copies were issued to staff without access to a PC. The vast majority of responses were completed using the e-mail system.

As well as providing statistical information, the responses contained a considerable number of personal comments. These were invaluable in ascertaining the true issues and the level of personal satisfaction with the strategic and operational aspects of the equalities agenda.

3   Results

Knowledge of Equality and Diversity Policies

Respondents were asked how aware they were of Equality and Diversity policies.

Policy	No knowledge	Little/some knowledge	Familiar/fully familiar with
Equality and diversity Policy and Code for Staff and Students	18%	65%	17%
Race Equality Action Plan	31%	59%	10%
Race Equality Policy	24%	62%	14%
Gender Equality Scheme	22%	62%	15%
Disability Equality Scheme	19%	60%	21%
Equality Impact Assessment Strategy	43%	49%	8%

First Impressions of the University - Recruitment

Only 3 respondents (of those who had been recruited in the last 12 months) recorded that they had encountered barriers in the recruitment process.

93% of respondents who had been recruited in the last year reported that it had been a positive experience in terms of equality.

These comments are representative:
- "I was always considered fairly"
- "No inappropriate questions asked"
- "I felt that I had been interviewed for the post and been judged on my answers and ability to answer"
- "Fairly treated, I believe, despite my race"
- "Refreshing to have 'me' interviewed and not my illness"

<u>Working in the University</u>

3.3.1 *Positive Experiences*

61% of respondents indicated that they had **encountered positive experiences** in relation to equality issues while working at the University.

These related to:

Working hours	37%
Disability	17%
Age	14%
Gender	12%
Ethnicity	9%
Religion/belief	8%
Sexuality	4%

These comments are representative:

- "The working hours are flexible even on a part-time contract which enables me to be more efficient and effective"
- "I had asked for a part-time working arrangement when applying for a full-time post and it was arranged for me and I've had nothing but support since I started"
- "People seem to be accepting of my dyslexia and the need to approach things slightly differently because of it"
- "I doubted the likelihood of getting a post in the University, given my age. I thought it would counteract my CV"

3.3.2 *Training*

92% of respondents reported that they had **not encountered barriers in taking up training and development** opportunities as a result of an equality issue. Of those who had encountered barriers (109 respondents) 45% of the barriers related to working hours.

The comments revealed that respondents felt that there was **not a route open to them to formally report** or raise the issue.

These comments are representative:
- "I was never told No but I was made to feel that I shouldn't go"
- "Felt no opportunity to further my career from current grade"
- "No there was no route *(to formally report it)*. The senior managers here are extremely close and any report would not have been kept confidential"
- "Up until this year I had not received any formal training with the University in approximately 8 years although male colleagues had"

3.3.3 *University Facilities*

97% of respondents indicated that they had not encountered barriers in using University facilities. 36 respondents indicated that they had experienced barriers - 20 related to working hours and 10 were related to disability.

3.3.4 Working Relationships

144 respondents (11%) felt that their working **relationship with their manager** had been influenced negatively by an equality issue. 30% of those felt that it had been negatively influenced by their age, 28% in relation to working hours and 25% in relation to gender.

149 respondents (12%) felt that their working **relationship with colleagues** had been influenced negatively by an equality issue. 32% of those felt that the reason was their working hours.

3.3.5 Promotion

95 respondents (7%) had applied for promotion and been unsuccessful and felt that an equality issue had affected the outcome. 35% of those cited age as the factor they believed influenced the decision.

3.3.6 Discrimination

255 respondents (20%) had **personally faced discrimination**. 70% felt they had been discriminated against by a member of staff and 30% had been discriminated against by either a student or an external person.

The breakdown of the equality areas were:

	By member of staff	By student	By external person
Disability	10	1	2
Ethnic Group	23	5	8
Age	49	7	10
Gender	49	17	9
Sexual Orientation	3	2	2
Religion/Belief	4	3	4
Working hours e.g. pt time	41	3	3

Form of discrimination:
Being excluded from discussions, meetings and social occasions	36%
Misuse of power/position by a senior colleague	30%
Being denied promotion opportunities	23%
Being denied training opportunities	11%

64% did not take any action for the following reasons:
Thought that nothing would be done	24%
Felt it was not sufficiently serious	21%
Did not want to make a fuss	19%
Was concerned that it might make things worse	15%
Did not know who to complain to	5%
Was concerned that I might not be believed	4%
Other	11%

3.3.7 Harassment

82 respondents (6%) had **personally faced harassment**. 70% of those felt they had been harassed by a member of staff and 30% had been harassed by a student or external person.

Form of harassment:
Verbal	48%
Misuse of power/position by a senior colleague	29%
Intrusion by pestering, spying, following, stalking etc	9%
Unwanted physical contact including the invasion of personal space and/or inappropriate touching	7.5%
Written	6%

63% did not take any action for the following reasons:

Was concerned that it might make things worse	23%
Did not want to make a fuss	20%
Thought that nothing would be done	19%
Felt it was not sufficiently serious	16%
Did not know who to complain to	6%
Was concerned that I might not be believed	6%
Other	11%

317 respondents (24%) reported that they had **witnessed discrimination or harassment**. 73% of those reported that they had witnessed discrimination or harassment by a member of staff, 21% by a student and 6% by an external person.

The discrimination or harassment by a member of staff related to:

Gender	26%
Ethnicity	19%
Working hours	18%
Age	16%
Religion/belief	7%
Disability	7%
Sexual orientation	6%

3.4 Disability

51 respondents (4%) indicated that they consider themselves to have a disability.

3.5 The Future

Staff were asked for their views on how equality and diversity could be taken forward in the future and how the principles could be embedded.

Respondents provided comments on a wide range of aspects of equality and diversity. There were several key themes:

- Concern around the University policy on age diversity and how that was to be implemented
- Equality policies should be promoted more rigorously
- Regular training should be provided and that consideration should be given to introducing mandatory training in this area
- A perception that men are actively encouraged to apply for promotion and women are not and that the promotion exercise itself does not encourage women.
- A recognition that positive steps have been taken to ensure disabled students can fully participate in University life, but that action was still required to ensure consistency.
- Concern regarding the future of the Rocking Horse Nursery.
- Positive acknowledgement of the work that is being undertaken.
- Concerns expressed about the lack of diversity at senior levels in the University administration.
- A mix of responses related to part-time working. Many respondents reported positive experiences and noted that they had been well-supported in negotiating part-time hours. Others felt that part-time workers were under-valued.

Further information can be gained from Janine Chalmers, Equality and Diversity Adviser on tel 01224 273883 or e-mail Janine.chalmers@abdn.ac.uk