



**QUEEN'S  
UNIVERSITY  
BELFAST**

**QUB Disability Action Plan  
Annual Progress Report  
31 October 2016 – 1 November 2017**



**PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended)**

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**QUB Disability Action Plan (2016 – 2020)**

**Annual Progress Report for the period 31 October 2016 – 1 November 2017**

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

36

Fully achieved

2

Partially achieved

1

Not achieved

Please note throughout this report where “disability” is mentioned, this refers to both disabilities and long-term medical conditions.

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what public life measures have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels. (Item numbers relate to internal project progress tracking document).

Local level for all items	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
1	To mainstream the new disability duties into all decisions and activities	We consulted on proposed changes to relevant policies and procedures to obtain the views and comments of sector groups and staff with a disability.	Changes to policies directly impacting staff with disabilities were discussed at quarterly meetings of the University's Disability Forum, which is attended by a wide range of staff and staff representatives.  In addition to this, a more transparent equality screening process was developed and promoted amongst staff. Policy leads and authors have been encouraged to undertake equality screening at the start of the policy development process.
2	To mainstream the new disability duties into all decisions and activities	As a result of any consultation process, we developed appropriate action measures based on the feedback received from disabled staff and senior managers.	To that end, we have produced clearer guidance on the Equality screening process (Guidance Notes, Templates, Flow Charts etc are all now available on the website: <a href="http://www.qub.ac.uk/diversity">www.qub.ac.uk/diversity</a> )  The new Equality Scheme 2018-23 was widely consulted and a variety of consultation methods offered (including telephone/SKYPE calls). We also offered to produce the consultation documentation in a range of alternative format to ensure widest participation and equal opportunities in terms of accessing information.
3	To mainstream the new disability duties into all decisions and activities	We provided an Annual Progress Report to the University Operating Board, Standing Committee and subsequently to the Equality Commission on the actions taken under this plan.	Our Annual Progress Report was presented to the University's Operating Board and the Standing Committee of Senate before being sent to the Equality Commission in December 2017.
4	Increase the representation of persons with a disability amongst staff	We included equal opportunities statements and a welcoming statement encouraging persons with a disability to apply for roles where there was an identified issue of under-representation.	Between 1 January 2017 and 30 November 2017 the University advertised 456 positions externally. All adverts contained an equal opportunities statement and welcoming statements. The welcoming statements were tailored to each vacancy and only included where under-representation was identified.
5	Increase the representation of persons with a disability amongst staff	We continued to provide applicants with an opportunity to indicate any reasonable adjustments which were required to assist them during the recruitment process.	All adverts contained an equal opportunities statement and welcoming statements encouraging people to contact the University with regard to reasonable adjustments and/or access requirements. We ensure that relevant forms were sent with recruitment packs to our new joiners. Our Occupational Health Unit got involved at early stages of recruitment as required. We implemented a range of reasonable adjustment assessments, collaborating with external agencies for specialist advice as and when required.
6	Increase the representation of persons with a disability amongst staff	We conducted a survey of all staff with a disability to determine what further support was required to facilitate their working at the University.	We issued correspondence to staff with disabilities and long term conditions in August 2017.
7	Increase the representation of persons with	We continued to provide support for staff via the Disability Support Fund, ensuring its	We continued to financially support disabled staff via the Disability Support Fund. To ensure equality of access to this financial support, formal Terms of Reference were developed

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	a disability amongst staff	availability and terms of use/support is appropriately communicated to staff.	and approved by the Disability Forum in September 2017. We are also pleased to report that our Information Services Directorate have committed to providing all disabled students and staff with access to an Assistive Technology support toolkit in 2018. This should ensure that all staff and students have greater access to assistive technology which can be downloaded onto their PCs, tablets etc.
8	Increase the representation of persons with a disability amongst staff	We reviewed necessary reasonable adjustments required to retain staff who develop a disability during the course of their employment.	The assessments for reasonable adjustments are conducted by HR Business Partners with staff as required. This is a live, iterative process and is recorded as such.
9	Increase the representation of persons with a disability amongst staff	We further developed the University's Inclusive Employment Scheme for people with a disability in conjunction with the Department for Communities (DfC) and appropriate support groups.	This year's Inclusive Employment Scheme (2017) was launched on 1 March 2017; a Staff Gateway article was published giving more details on the success of the scheme. We were delighted to support 15 placements across a wider range of University Faculties, Schools, and Directorates. We are also pleased to report that a number of the 15 individuals went to secure employment after their placements in the University.
10	Increase the representation of persons with a disability amongst staff	We supported and delivered outreach initiatives, involving external stakeholders where appropriate, aimed at supporting those with a disability.	<p>Autism Awareness Training was delivered on 9 March 2017 (Orchardville) for approximately 20 staff.</p> <p>"Behind the Scenes" at Queen's was delivered on 7 April 2017. This was an outreach event on campus. 21 people attended from hard-to-reach groups across Belfast. Stakeholder organisations represented: Mencap, Belfast Works, Now Group, Belfast City Council, USEL, Bryson Group, NIHE, Clanrye Group, and Action on Hearing Loss. The event was designed to inform people about work/placement opportunities at the University.</p> <p>We held an Autistic Spectrum Disorder Taster Day – to Undergraduate Offer Letter Holders prior to start of term.</p> <p>Welcome and Orientation Activities were delivered in September / October: Welcome Week included an ASD Induction Day &amp; Equality and Diversity Quiz campaign and Roundtable Event.</p> <p>A Disability Awareness Training for Social Work Placement was delivered on campus.</p> <p>3 ASD Awareness Training sessions were delivered (Maths, Physics, Accommodation) internal training by Disability Officers.</p> <p>A Dyslexia awareness session provided to staff by EFDNI on 15 August 2017 as part of our Members of Excellence package.</p> <p>In November 2017 we supported the "Disable the Label" week-long programme of events to raise awareness about disability issues in the workplace and break down barriers/myths about disabilities.</p>
11	Increase the representation of persons with a disability amongst staff	We worked alongside the University's Occupational Health Physician to review the nature of staff related cases being dealt with by Inspire/Carecall.	The Head of Occupational Health liaised closely with HR on progress of individual cases. In addition, they conducted formal quarterly reviews. Formal review of issues handled by Carecall are carried out twice a year, and an annual report is provided to the Director of HR and Trade Unions.
12	Increase the representation of persons with a disability on Senate and its core committees	We reviewed the composition of Senate and its Core Committees with the Registrar's Office ensuring representation of people with a disability and to take appropriate action to address any emerging issues.	Discussions took place with the Registrar's Office (May 2017) to discuss a range of positive outreach and affirmative action measures to encourage applications/interest in positions on the University's Senate Committee.
13		We included a welcoming statement in all advertisements and promotional materials encouraging those with a disability to apply/stand for membership of Senate and	Senate will be reconstituted in January 2018 and the University will seek to ensure the appointed representatives are reflective of society.

Local level for all items	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
		University Core Committees guaranteeing that all necessary reasonable adjustments will be provided.	
14		We circulated a copy of all advertisements/election notices on the reconstitution of Senate to the University Disability Forum (internal elections) and disability interest groups (external appointments).	
15		We encouraged members of staff with a disability to apply for membership of committees, consultative groups and working groups where appropriate.	
16	Increase the representation of persons with a disability on Senate and its core committees	We encouraged students with a disability to be School representatives including School level Student and Staff Consultative Committees and Academic Board representatives.	<p>The Students Union moved all academic representation elections for Course Representatives and School Representatives online to the Queen's Online Facility.</p> <p>This assisted in enhancing accessibility, both for nomination and voting purposes.</p> <p>An action plan is currently being drawn up to improve and increase diversity amongst academic representatives.</p>
17	Increase the participation of students with a disability in Student's Union activities	We included a welcoming statement in all advertisements and promotional material encouraging students with a disability to nominate themselves for elected positions, particularly elections to the Executive Management Committee, and positions within clubs and societies.	<p>The SU undertook a number of initiatives to increase the participation of students with a disability in SU activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inclusion information in the Candidate Information Pack regarding the Executive Management Committee;</li> <li>• The monitoring of candidates with a disability via the Equality Monitoring Form.</li> <li>• The creation of a specific elected position for Disabled Students, the Disabled Students' Officer;</li> <li>• The inclusion of information on disabilities and accessibility in the Clubs and Societies Handbook regarding events;</li> </ul> <p>The provision of training to Clubs and Societies on disability issues.</p>
18	Increase the participation of students with a disability in Student's Union activities	We ensured that reasonable adjustments were put in place for candidates with a disability during elections for sabbatical and non-sabbatical posts.	<p>Throughout the elections process, the SU endeavoured to provide reasonable adjustments to candidates.</p> <p>Within the nomination form, candidates were asked to outline whether they required any specific access requirements for the duration of the election.</p> <p>The SU also provided printed materials to all candidates, assisting disabled candidates.</p>
19	Develop the University's Disabilities Forum	We ensured representation of staff members and students with a disability on the University's Disability Forum.	<p>In September 2016 we put out a call for new representatives on the Disability Forum.</p> <p>The Students' Union received two expressions of interest so both were nominated to share the role.</p> <p>The Vice President of Equality and Diversity attends the Disability Forum to represent the views of disabled students.</p>
21	Promote opportunities for students with a disability to be represented in the activities and functions of external organisations	We encouraged and supported students with a disability in making application for membership of external organisations.	<p>The SU undertook a number of initiatives to encourage and support students with a disability in making applications for membership of external organisations.</p> <p>These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Union of Students, Union of Students in Ireland, and National Union of Students-Union of Students in Ireland (NUS-USI)</li> <li>• The election of a number of QUB students to officer position and to the Disabled students Committee at the most recent NUS-USI Disabled Students' Conference;</li> </ul>

Local level for all items	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enterprise SU engages with external organisations to ensure disabled students are supported fully and effectively;</li> </ul> <p>Volunteer SU ensures that any student, irrespective of ability can participate in their programmes and activities.</p>
22	Review student disability policy	We reviewed and revised the Student Disability Policy in light of past and best practice guidance offered by statutory bodies, student feedback and experience within the University and HE sector, referencing the Compact Scheme and participation in the Regional Initiative for a Special Application route for disabled applicants.	A full policy review was completed in conjunction with relevant University departments, student feedback and the Equality Commission for NI.
23	To provide students with a disability to engage with employability and skills development	We established a Specialist Placement Group with representation from Careers and Disability Services and Schools which will report to Senior Managers and identify areas for further work; and to establish shared protocols and processes for sharing information appropriately.	<p>The Specialist Placement Group was reformed in September 2016 as the Expert Placement Learning Group (EPLG).</p> <p>A representative from Disability Services attended the most recent EPLG meeting in December 2016.</p> <p>Disability Services have appointed two representatives to support the work of careers; one advising on study and placement abroad and the second advising on local placement.</p>
29	Ensure that suppliers and contractors are familiar with and supportive of the University's commitment to the disability duties	We ensured that the University's Terms and Conditions for Supplies, Works and Services requires suppliers and contractors subscribed to the University's commitment to Equality and Diversity where appropriate.	Our colleagues in the Finance / Procurement Directorate ensure that this happens as a routine activity.
30	Monitor and report on the successful implementation of the University's Disability Action Plan	We monitored the number of persons with a disability in the University's workforce.	Our Fair Employment Return for 16/17 contained this data.
31	Monitor and report on the successful implementation of the University's Disability Action Plan	We monitored the number of applicants with a disability to vacancies at the University following implementation of the welcoming statement.	Our data is monitored to reflect disability figures. Changes were made during this reporting period to enhance the use of welcoming statements.
33	Monitor and report on the successful implementation of the University's Disability Action Plan	We reported to the Standing Committee on an annual basis the progress on the Disability Action Plan.	The report will be submitted to the Standing Committee of Senate, 6 December 2017.
34	Monitor and report on the successful implementation of the University's Disability Action Plan	We monitored the participation of students with a disability represented on School, Faculty and University committees, consultative groups, and working groups.	The Students' Union conducted monitoring of participation of students with a disability on School Faculty and University Committees, consultative Groups and Working Groups.
35	Monitor and report on the successful implementation of the	We sought student and staff feedback on an annual basis relating to disability support.	Disability Services conducted an annual short survey and developed an action plan from the information received.

Local level for all items	Public Life Action Measures	Outputs <sup>i</sup>	Outcomes / Impact <sup>ii</sup>
	University's Disability Action Plan		Separately, correspondence was issued in August 2017 to all disabled staff. A survey of disabled staff may be undertaken in 2018.
37	Increase staff awareness of the disability duties and matters relating to disability	We continued to deliver Equality and Diversity training to new staff and existing staff where applicable.	This is an ongoing responsibility. Details of staff trained on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is provided in the Section 75 Annual Progress Report for 16/17. Details are also provided in section 2(b).
38	Increase staff awareness of the disability duties and matters relating to disability	We reviewed the requirement for specific training for Deaf Awareness, Start to Sign and SENDO (Special Educational Needs and Disability Order 05) in conjunction with Directorate of Academic and Student Affairs (DASA).	The review was completed in May 2017.
39	Increase staff awareness of the disability duties and matters relating to disability	We delivered specific training relating to disability awareness in the learning environment as part of the PGCHET.	Disability Awareness Training was provided as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Work Placement Practitioners and Supervisors;</li> <li>• PGCHET Lecturers;</li> <li>• PGCE Students;</li> <li>• Exam Invigilators;</li> <li>• QUB Appeals Committee Members;</li> <li>• RAs.</li> <li>• ASD Awareness Training: 3 sessions requested (Maths &amp; Physics and Accommodation)</li> </ul>

2(b) What training action measures were achieved in this reporting period?

Local Level	Training Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Equality and Diversity Training (DiversityNow)	Annual mandatory staff training through e-learning training programme.	469 members of staff completed the online Equality and Diversity e-learning training course (DiversityNow) during the reporting period.
2	Unconscious Bias Training	Mandatory staff training through e-learning programme. Content on unconscious bias towards those with disabilities.	2,612 staff out of 3832 (68%) have completed this package as at 1 November 2017. The package was only implemented in March 2017.
3	Autism Awareness Training with the Orchardville Society, 16 March 2017	1 hour presentation and videos to raise awareness of how Autistic people can process different situations; the additional challenges a job interview may bring for someone with ASD and finally, information on sensory processing.	Very positive feedback from the 20+ staff who attended. Orchardville presented the session, and we published a website article with additional training videos and guidance online.
4	EFDNI Dyslexia Awareness Training 15 August 2017	1.5hr presentation and workshop from EFDNI. Collaboration with Student Disability Team who brought examples of learning aids and equipment for short practical session on what Queen's University can provide to both staff and students overcoming dyslexia.	Positive feedback obtained from staff who attended training.
5	Deliver specific training relating to disability awareness in the learning environment as part of the PGCHET.	Disability Awareness Training: Social Work Placement Practitioners and Supervisors, PGCHET Lecturers, PGCE Students, Exam Invigilators, QUB Appeals Committee Members, RAs. ASD Awareness Training: 3 sessions requested (Maths & Physics and Accommodation)	Staff mandatory training requirements met. Additional training above minimum mandatory requirements provided, with excellent feedback from attendees.
6	Deliver Equality and Diversity session on Induction Training package	Regular staff induction training module	The University includes a specific session on disability awareness as part of the induction session for each new member of staff.

(c) What Positive attitudes action measures in the area of Communications were achieved in this reporting period?

Local Level	Communications Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
24	Review the University's communications strategy to encourage positive attitudes towards disability.	We reviewed a range of internal and external communication policies, practices and procedures to ensure that disability was portrayed positively and to identify opportunities to include positive images of disability in University publications, social media and on websites.	Positive images of disability were used across a number of media platforms and communications materials, including: - Twitter and YouTube - New YouTube video promoting the importance of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the University; - The QUB website - The Disability Action Plan
25	Review the University's communications strategy to encourage positive attitudes towards disability.	Continued to promote a positive student experience for students with a disability or and support available through outreach and recruitment activity.	Several outreach, recruitment and positive attitude activities were delivered:  - Dec '16 "Disable the Label" was a week long programme of events, information sessions and demonstrations on campus for staff; the aim was to raise their awareness of disability issues and challenge their preconceptions of colleagues with disabilities. - "Behind the Scenes at Queen's" event 7 Apr '17 promoted online and through outreach with local stakeholder groups.  - We also developed 5 profiles of disabled staff and hosted these online, illustrating their stories and demonstrating how we have supported them in the workplace.
26	Review the University's communications strategy to encourage positive attitudes towards disability	Positively promoted the profiles of staff and/or students with a disability demonstrating the contribution they are making to Queen's University.	
27	Ensure accessibility of University's website, publications, internal documents and information systems	Reviewed the University's website to ensure it is in line with best practice across the sector, in terms of the standard of accessibility, and seek to adequately promote disability and inclusion.	The Diversity and Inclusion webpages were reviewed and updated in the May/June 17 as part of the University's digital transformation project, designed to meet Level AA (2) of the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C-AA) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.
28	Ensure accessibility of University's website, publications, internal documents and information systems	Ensured that all University publications and internal documentation shall be made available in alternative accessible formats upon request.	All University publications can be provided in accessible formats.

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to 'encourage others' to promote the two duties:

	Encourage others Action Measures	Outputs	Outcome / Impact
1	Queen's University Belfast Inclusive Employment Scheme (2016-2017)	Successful placements for 15 individuals across several Schools and Directorates.	Successful placements for 15 individuals across several Schools, Directorates on campus.  Positive feedback received from all participants on how useful the experience was to broaden and prepare skills ready for joining the workforce.
2	Engaged with the Registrar's Office on the Reconstitution of Senate and positive action/outreach measures which could ensure more applications from those with disabilities.	May 2017	As detailed above.

2 (e) Please outline any additional action measures that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

		Outputs	Impact
1	<p><b>“Disable the Label”</b>: on Monday 5th December 2016, triple Irish Paralympic Gold Medallist (from London 2012 and Rio 2016) and QUB Honorary Graduate, Michael McKillop marked International Day for Persons with a Disability (3rd December 2016) and the start of the Students’ Union Disability Awareness Week (Monday 5th – Friday 9th December 2016).</p> <p>Event was supported by key stakeholders including: Disability Action NI, The Orchardville Society and the Cedar Foundation.</p>	<p>Keynote address by Michael McKillop, Paralympic Gold Medallist to QUB students and staff.</p> <p>Examples of the activities planned included Sign Language 101 (1 hour taster sessions), Wheelchair Basketball Taster Sessions at the PEC, a Disability Round Table (staff and students open discussion forum) and a Film Screening in Bar Sub at the Union.</p>	<p>This week long programme of events attracted very positive media coverage; all those attending were encouraged to openly demonstrate their commitment to supporting Disability Awareness Week using the #DisableTheLabel hashtag. Feedback from those attending the sessions was very positive.</p>

3. Please outline what action measures have been partly achieved as follows:

20	Develop a guide that will support staff, students, and visitors with a disability to access the University and its facilities	Produce guidance on facilities for persons with a disability in consultation with staff and student representatives in Queen’s and external bodies.	We started work on developing a business case for the implementation of “Disabled Go” mobile/tablet application and website project.
32	Monitor and report on the successful implementation of the University’s Disability Action Plan	Survey the membership of Senate in relation to the number of persons with a disability prior to reconstitution (1 January 2018) and post reconstitution to assess the impact of the new welcoming statement.	The Registrar’s Office are currently undertaking this.
36	Increase staff awareness of the disability duties and matters relating to disability	Review the online Equality and Diversity training (DiversityNow) to ensure that it accurately addresses the disability duties and raises awareness of disability related issues.	This is ongoing.

4. Please outline what action measures have not been achieved and the reasons why.

# 20: DisabledGo – website and mobile app – campus accessibility guide – requires business case support and funding approval.
#36: DiversityNow – elearning package – will be reviewed 2018.

5. What monitoring tools have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

(a) Qualitative

The University continually seeks feedback from students and staff who attend disability events or who engage with the University for advice and support. The gathering of qualitative evidence is very useful in understanding the background, or contextual issues around disability issues in the workplace, helps us to understand the barriers people face, and to develop innovative solutions to assist students and staff. We monitor this information to help us tailor our services, to develop action plans and to help inform our statutory reports.

(b) Quantitative

An bi-annual review of staff Equality Monitoring data is carried out. This is analysed to identify emerging patterns and trends and to help inform the development of new interventions and positive action measures. Progress against the measures is monitored by the University’s Diversity and Inclusion Unit who provide the University Operating Board with an Annual Progress Report.



6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any revisions to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any additional steps to meet the disability duties which were not outlined in your original disability action plan / any other changes?

If yes please outline below:

**Additional Action Measures that were undertaken that went beyond the 39 items listed in the 2016-2017 Disability Action Plan:**

Additional 1	We developed and hosted a positive outreach event "Behind the Scenes at Queen's" aimed at people with disabilities.	Organisations who engaged with the University on this open morning included Mencap, Belfast Works, Now Group, Belfast City Council, USEL, Bryson Group, NIHE, Clanrye Group, and Action on Hearing Loss.	<a href="#">Click here for photos and article about the event.</a> Feedback from the 21 participants was very positive and included the following comments: <b>"It is more than just a job, it's the whole experience."</b> <b>"This has made me realise the extent of employment and various trades that I would not have thought of"</b> <b>"It's given me a better idea of what to expect when working here and given a better idea of how to apply for positions and the help you can get doing that!"</b> <b>"I appreciated the informality and approachability of staff"</b> <b>"It was overall a delightful experience"</b>
Additional 2	We produced clear information on our website about the University's Disability Action Plan; and we developed 5 staff profiles featuring colleagues with disabilities and long term conditions.	This information was shared online during the summer of 2017.	<a href="#">Click here to open the web link</a> This was done to promote positive images and profile stories of disabled staff and the support we provide to them.
Additional 3	We produced a new Equality and Diversity video; sharing this with staff and have used it as part of our staff induction process.	This new video contains positive communications about our commitment to supporting staff/students with disabilities.	<a href="#">Click here to watch the video.</a> This video is hosted externally on You Tube to demonstrate the University's commitment to Equality and Diversity issues.
Additional 4	We hosted information online about Member Services available from Employers for Disability NI.	April 2017	<a href="#">Click here for website article.</a> This additional information was made available so that staff, managers and HRBPs could access an external professional disability support service, advice and training support.

7. Do you intend to make any further revisions to your plan in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

The Disability Action Plan is a live, iterative document. The University continues to monitor and review progress, and to develop new positive action measures. This process is due to commence again in early 2018.

<sup>i</sup> **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

<sup>ii</sup> **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.