

**Students with Disabilities:
Code of Practice
for Australian
Tertiary Institutions**

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February 1998

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The work was also guided by an Advisory Committee that met by teleconference on several occasions during the period of consultation. We are grateful to this group for its willingness to offer constructive comment on work in progress.

Like others of its kind, this code of practice document is a strong reflection of current practices and aspirations in the field. While it seeks to outline current good practice against a backdrop of minimum standards and operational guidelines, the reality of rapid change will quickly outdate much of the material. Those who have worked in the area of disability in tertiary education for some time know how much progress has been made in the past decade, yet challenges remain to be addressed in creating a genuinely inclusive educational environment.

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February 1998

1. Context

1.1 Valuing diversity

Tertiary education institutions seek to reflect and shape community aspirations in providing social justice and equity to all members of society. They also seek to foster attitudes and provide services that enable students from diverse backgrounds to pursue their personal, academic and vocational objectives. Providing for diversity enriches educational practices for all students.

1.2 Policy environment

Tertiary education institutions operate in a context which requires that they provide educational opportunities for people with disabilities.

For universities, the Commonwealth Government's Higher Education Equity Plan that was outlined in *A Fair Chance for All* (1990) set a broad objective of ensuring that Australians from all groups of society, including those with a disability, had the opportunity to participate successfully in higher education. This policy is reaffirmed in the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) (1996) report, *Equality, Diversity and Excellence: Advancing the National Higher Education Framework*. The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee noted, in its *Guidelines Relating to Students with Disabilities* (1996, p. 1), that as "members of the Unified National system, public universities are required to report annually on their progress towards increased participation and improved educational outcomes for students with disabilities". Statistical reporting is a statutory requirement necessary for operating grant purposes under the *Higher Education Funding Act 1988*. In addition, a set of guidelines, *International Students with Disabilities*, was issued to university international offices in November 1996 by the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DEETYA).

The Australian Vocational Education and Training (VET) system has also undergone significant changes. Initiatives are designed to make training more responsive, relevant and client focused. A framework for a new national strategy was endorsed by Ministers in May 1997. To support these initiatives, Annual National Priorities have been set which include "the provision of greater opportunities and improved outcomes for under-represented clients" (Australian National Training

Authority, 1997, June). Guidelines have also been published on *Developing Standards under the Disability Discrimination Act for Student Services in Vocational Education and Training* (1997).

1.3 Legislative requirements

Tertiary education institutions are subject to the provisions of State and Commonwealth equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation. These legislative provisions make it unlawful for a tertiary education institution to discriminate against a person on the grounds of that person's disability. This includes both direct discrimination (eg. refusing to accept a person's application for admission or enrolment as a student because of a disability) and indirect discrimination where a condition or requirement is imposed which may be the same for everyone but unreasonably and disproportionately excludes or disadvantages a person with a disability. In developing good practices in this area, institutions need to be aware of other legislative provisions on such matters as vicarious liability, privacy, freedom of information, duty of care and workplace health and safety.

1.4 Disability in a social context

For many people with disabilities, gaining access to tertiary education creates opportunities to make productive contributions to the community. The costs involved in making reasonable adjustments to an inaccessible environment are balanced by the ultimate benefits to both the individual and the wider community. Gaining access to appropriate services is viewed as both a human and legal right, actively promoted by disability advocacy groups and individuals, and supported by the *United Nations Standard Rules for the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities* (1993). Within this rights-based approach, it is important that students with disabilities are invited to participate in discussions about their requirements, and that such discussions occur with openness and mutual respect. Both the long held assumptions about people with disabilities and customary procedures and programs in tertiary education institutions may be challenged in the process. The goal is to provide reasonable adjustments that enable students with disabilities to proceed equitably through their educational and training programs.

1.5 Quality teaching and learning

Tertiary education institutions seek to provide quality educational responses to all students. Disability is increasingly being viewed as one aspect of the diverse human condition rather than as a deficit to be compensated. Qualified students with disabilities are therefore expected to be part of the tertiary education environment. Quality approaches to teaching and learning provide for flexibility while demanding intellectual rigour, academic excellence and competence in achievement for all students.

1.6 Institutional initiatives

Many Australian tertiary education institutions have already recognised their responsibility to provide students with disabilities the opportunity to realise their individual capabilities, and have begun to develop and implement policies and procedures to this end. Several have now lodged Disability Action Plans with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and others have commenced this process. Such initiatives have been achieved with limited information on desirable national standards and guidelines. This document provides information and a framework within which institutions may develop and implement initiatives for continuous improvement in these areas.

2. Purpose and Use

2.1 Goals

This Code of Practice:

- a. establishes principles and guidelines for planning and delivery of services to students with disabilities across the tertiary education sector
- b. recommends national minimum standards of service and support
- c. identifies and documents examples of good practice in institutional responses to students with disabilities.

2.2 Scope

- a. The Code of Practice addresses everyone in tertiary education institutions and the training environment. It is set out to provide ease of access to those with an interest in particular aspects of the document: senior administrators, academic and general staff, students.

- b. Tertiary education institutions have responsibility under relevant legislation for programs offered on their premises or on their behalf by other providers. Institutions may have or may develop their own code of practice which amplifies issues in this document.

2.3 Terminology

- a. “Tertiary education institutions” has often been abbreviated to “institutions” for convenience throughout the document. The term “students who have a disability” has been interspersed with “students with disabilities” for ease of sentence construction.
- b. *Minimum standards* means minimum [at least] levels of performance that tertiary education institutions must observe; to achieve good practice, these may be enhanced through quality reviews.
- c. *Operating guidelines* provide suggestions for implementing minimum standards.
- d. *Good practice** in services involves:
 - a consumer focus, flexible and responsive to consumer needs
 - a commitment to quality and continuous improvement through ongoing monitoring of the internal and external environments
 - a commitment to implementing change in the institution and responding to the broader environment in which it operates
 - sharing experiences and building links with other institutions
 - development of an organisational environment characterised by cooperation, commitment, trust and loyalty.

*Adapted from Department of Family and Community Services (1995) — *Towards Best Practice in Community Services in Australia*.

- e. Examples of good practice that appear to meet the above criteria have been drawn from information supplied by institutions. There are undoubtedly many others that have not been identified. As it is recognised that examples of “best practice” may quickly become outdated or may apply in some situations rather than others, the term “good practice” has been adopted in this document. In most cases, good practice examples have been cited by name with contact details included. Space constraints limited opportunity to provide more detailed information. In some cases generic good

practice has been cited without reference to specific examples.

- f. Specific meanings given to other terms are listed under Key Terms in the Appendix.

3. General Principles

Institutional obligations

- 3.1 **Social and legislative responsibility**
Tertiary education institutions have a responsibility to provide the opportunity for students with disabilities to access and participate equitably in tertiary education and achieve their individual capabilities. Planning, commitment of resources and action over time are needed to discharge that responsibility.
- 3.2 **Senior management responsibility**
Through their chief executive officer, tertiary education institutions signal their commitment to equity initiatives for students who have a disability.

Rights and responsibilities

In an equitable educational context, both tertiary education institutions and students with disabilities share rights and responsibilities.

- 3.3 **Recognition by institutions**
In discharging its responsibilities to students with disabilities, the institution ensures:
- their right to privacy and confidentiality and treatment with equity and dignity
 - high standards of equity and social justice in providing equitable educational access
 - participation of students in decision making about policies, procedures and services designed to meet their collective and individual needs
 - parity of choice with other students of: institution, courses, subjects and modes of study
 - its policies and procedures anticipate the requirements of students who have a disability.

3.4 Recognition by students

Institutions have a right to expect that students with disabilities will make known their particular requirements in a timely manner so that appropriate services may be provided.

Policies and procedures

- 3.5 **Promulgate, evaluate, revise**
To maintain relevant, continuous improvement in services and facilities, tertiary education institutions promulgate policies and procedures inclusive of students with disabilities, and regularly evaluate and revise these and associated practices using consultative processes.
- 3.6 **Acknowledging multiple requirements**
Tertiary education institutions recognise that people with a disability may also experience additional barriers to access and participation arising from membership of other equity groups.
- 3.7 **Planning**
Tertiary education institutions embed within their strategic planning processes the development of ongoing institutional responses to the needs of people with disabilities.

An equitable learning environment

- 3.8 **Making reasonable adjustments**
Tertiary education institutions provide reasonable adjustments to enable students with disabilities to participate in their course of study on equal terms with other students. An equitable learning environment is created by taking into consideration all aspects of the learning process: students, teaching staff, physical aspects of the environment, the curriculum, delivery strategies, assessment strategies and access to support services.

4. Minimum Standards, Operating Guidelines, Good Practice Examples

This section recommends minimum standards, operating guidelines and good practice examples that inform equitable provision in tertiary education institutions for students who have a disability. General practices may be adapted to specific institutional contexts.

A. Institutional obligations

A1 Tertiary education institutions ensure that students with disabilities are treated in a non-discriminatory manner.

A2 All staff and organisational units exercise responsibility for equity provision.

A2.1 Institutions develop appropriate policies, services and facilities to enable students with disabilities to achieve equitable access to the life of the institution.

Inclusive Practices for People with Disabilities: Policy Statement. Contact: Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Business, Equity), Griffith University, Nathan Qld 4111. Phone: 07 3875 7180 Fax: 07 3875 7507

Policy on Academic Support for Students with Disabilities. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore NSW 2480. Phone: 02 6620 3943 Fax: 02 6622 4341 Online: <http://www.scu.edu.au/services/equity/pubpols/dispol.html>

Policy on Students with Disabilities. Contact: Equity Officer (Disabilities), Registrar's Office, Murdoch University, South Street, Murdoch WA 6150. Phone: 08 9360 6152 Fax: 08 9360 6502

TAFE NSW Education and Training Policy: Students with Disabilities. Contact: TAFE NSW VET Disabilities Services, Level 16, 1 Oxford St, Darlinghurst 2010. Phone: 02 9244 5092 TTY: 02 9244 5096/5082 Fax: 02 9244 5012

Queensland Vocational Education and Training Disability Policy and Implementation Strategy. Contact: Senior Executive Officer, Department of Training and Industrial Relations, Locked Mail Bag 527 GPO, Brisbane Qld 4001. Phone: 07 3247 5464 Fax: 07 3237 0377

A2.2 Tertiary education institutions nominate a senior executive officer with responsibility for the development and monitoring of initiatives related to adoption of this Code of Practice.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Business, Equity) at Griffith University and at The University of South Australia and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic) at QUT typically carry administrative oversight of equity initiatives.

A3 Institutions ensure their education and training programs are available and accessible to students who have a disability.

A4 Institutions create an inclusive environment that is free from harassment and discrimination by ensuring that staff and students are aware of equal opportunity rights and responsibilities under legislation.

A5 Institutions resource and provide relevant staff development.

A6 Institutions ensure that information made available to the student body is also made available in accessible formats as required.

A7 Orientation and induction programs for all new staff include specific training in working with people with disabilities.

A7.1 Specific training programs are provided for appropriate staff to give them the knowledge and skills they need to work effectively with students who have a disability.

A7.2 Training and development programs for academic and general staff and orientation and induction programs for new staff include, where relevant:

- a. awareness and understanding of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and other relevant legislation
- b. principles of equality of academic opportunity for people with disabilities
- c. general disability awareness (eg. attitudes, language, confidentiality) and associated cultural awareness
- d. implications of the institutional strategic plan
- e. implications of disability for learning and teaching strategies
- f. principles of an inclusive educational environment and benefits of curriculum adjustments for all students
- g. services available both within and external to the institution

- h. planning, implementing and evaluating change in working with students with disabilities.

Inclusive Practices: Optimum Outcomes — Disability Discrimination Law and Tertiary Education: A Training Package. Contact: Regional Disability Liaison Unit, Deakin University, 336 Glenferrie Rd, Malvern VIC 3144. Phone: 03 9244 5437 Fax: 03 9244 5104

Creative Teaching: Inclusive Learning (Parts 1-5) Videotape and discussion notes. Contact: Tertiary Initiatives for People with Disabilities (TIPD) Office, Queensland University of Technology, Carseldine Campus, Beams Road, Carseldine Qld 4034. Phone: 07 3864 4504 Fax: 07 3864 4509 e-mail: tipd@qut.edu.au

AccessAbility Kit — staff development program. Contact: Director, Centre for Deafness Studies and Research, Griffith University, Nathan Qld 4111. Phone/TTY: 07 3875 5654 Fax: 07 3875 5924

ResponseAbility — an accredited training program for all staff within an education/training institution that addresses the implications of the DDA, attitudes within the organisation, teaching strategies, communication, action plans and student panels. Contact: TAFE disability services personnel in your state or territory

Providing Access for Students with Disabilities — Compendium of information on the DDA, buildings access and auditing access to educational environments. Contact: TAFE NSW VET Disabilities Services, Level 16, 1 Oxford St, Darlinghurst NSW 2010. Phone: 02 9244 5092 TTY: 02 9244 5096/5082 Fax: 02 9244 5012

Griffith University Disability Training Program for general and academic staff. Contact: Disabilities Coordinator, Student Services, Griffith University Qld 4111. Phone: 07 3875 7280 Fax: 07 3875 5360

UniAbility: Students with Disabilities in Higher Education: A Resource Guide for Staff (academic and administrative). Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1777 Fax: 08 8302 1500

Learning Disabilities and Higher Education: Guidelines for Working Effectively with Students with Learning Disabilities (1993). Contact: Equal Opportunity Unit, Monash University, VIC 3168. Phone: 03 9905 5704 Fax: 03 9905 5517

- A7.3 People with disabilities are invited to be involved in the staff development process and are appropriately reimbursed.

- A7.4 As one criterion for appointment or advancement, institutions require applicants to demonstrate evidence of appropriate responses to students with disabilities.

Job advertisements specifically invite applications from suitably qualified people from targeted equity groups. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, Australian National University. Phone: 02 6249 5036 Fax: 02 6249 0559

LaTrobe University Council approved that, for appointment and promotion, staff are required to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of equal opportunity issues. Also applies to membership of selection panels. Issues are included in staff preservice orientation and ongoing training for existing staff. Contact: Manager, Equity and Access Unit, LaTrobe University, Bundoora, VIC 3083. Phone: 03 9479 1510 Fax: 03 9479 1246

ANTA Style Guide — *Segmenting for Success: Marketing to Women* includes a section on women with a disability. Contact: Women's Programs Unit, Western Australia Department of Training, 151 Royal Street, East Perth WA 6001. Phone: 08 9235 6222

B. Rights and responsibilities

Staff

- B1 All staff take responsibility to ensure equity for students with disabilities and discharge their duties in a non-discriminatory manner.**

Staff rights

- B1.1 Staff have a right to expect that students seeking reasonable adjustments to the learning program will be willing to discuss their specific requirements (with assistance if required) and share responsibility in negotiating solutions.

Staff responsibilities

- B1.2 Staff are encouraged to undertake development activities which ensure they become familiar with the general requirements of students who have a disability.
- B1.3 Staff are affirming of and value students and create a climate that encourages students to approach them to discuss issues impacting upon their studies that arise from their disabilities.

While many students with disabilities may work through a disability adviser to inform lecturers of their particular needs, others may approach lecturers directly. Nonetheless, lecturers can demonstrate their willingness to make adjustments for students by inviting them to discuss their particular requirements in private at a subsequent time.

Southern Cross University requires that any arrangements made for reasonable adjustments are formally notified to the Equity Officer as a process of quality assurance. Contact: Equity Officer, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore NSW 2480. Phone: 02 6620 3030 Fax: 02 6622 1789

Assessment procedures published in the University Calendar require lecturers to indicate, in or before the first week of classes, “how students with disabilities may apply for variations to assessment and teaching methods” (*Flinders University of South Australia Calendar, 1997, Vol 3, p. 24 Section 13.1*). Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, Flinders University of South Australia, GPO Box 2100, Adelaide SA 5001. Phone: 08 8201 2943 or 08 8201 3154

- B1.4 Teaching staff and trainers need to respond to the particular requirements of students who have a disability by making reasonable adjustments within a flexible curriculum.
- B1.5 Staff understand and constructively manage behaviour arising from disability which impacts upon others in the class.

Students

Student rights

- B1.6 Students have a right to expect that:
- they will be treated with dignity and respect
 - the institution will establish an inclusive educational environment
 - they can undertake their studies free from discrimination and harassment
 - staff will anticipate their need for reasonable adjustment, invite them to discuss their requirements, and treat the request promptly and seriously
 - their views will be sought in the development and review of institutional policies, procedures and practices affecting their lives at the tertiary institution
 - where required, they may be assisted by independent advocates

- staff will be given appropriate training to become familiar with good practices for meeting the requirements of the students
- they will be given the opportunity to develop skills which will enable them to obtain maximum benefit from available services.

Developing a Presence in the Presence of Others — pilot program for students. Contact: Regional Disability Liaison Unit, Deakin University, 336 Glenferrie Road, Malvern VIC 3144. Phone: 03 9244 5437 Fax: 03 9244 5104

Masterkey Program — program for all students in the equity target groups consists of a week-long orientation program with workshops on topics such as note-taking, assignment writing, introduction to computers; and peer tutoring for specified subjects. Contact: Masterkey Project Officer, Student Services Office, Nathan Campus, Griffith University Qld 4111. Phone: 07 3875 7470

Student Support Program — three-week program for all students in the target equity groups including library orientation and research, note-taking skills, assignment writing. Contact: Student Support Program Coordinator, School of Social Science, Queensland University of Technology, Beams Road, Carseldine Qld 4034. Phone: 07 3864 4537 Fax: 07 3864 4995

Student responsibilities

- B1.7 Students, and where applicable, prospective students with disabilities, have a responsibility to provide information which assists institutions in the timely planning and implementation of appropriate services by:
- making early contact with disability service providers in the institution/s of their choice
 - notifying and verifying their requirements to the extent necessary to ensure an appropriate institutional response
 - being proactive in advising institutions of the difficulties they encounter in accessing aspects of the life of the institution and how to overcome those difficulties.

This process may be assisted through disabilities access rooms, disability representative position/s on student representative council, mentor programs and support groups. Contact: Special Projects Counsellor, Student Affairs and Services, University of Western Sydney (Nepean), PO Box 10, Kingswood NSW 2747. Phone: 02 9852 5997 Fax: 02 9852 5996 TTY: 02 9852 5998

Contact: Equity and Student Support, Southern Cross University, PO Box 157, Lismore NSW 2480.
Phone: 02 6620 3030 Fax: 02 6622 1789

- d. ensuring that specialised services provided are utilised in a fair and effective manner

For example, respecting the efforts of others, observing conditions placed on adjustments made, advising absences to obviate unnecessary attendance of service personnel such as interpreters.

C. Policy development and implementation

Institutional policy

- C1 All institutional policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and modified to embed good practice for inclusive education of students with disabilities.**

C1.1 The membership of groups which review institutional policies and practices includes students who have a disability and specialist service providers.

C1.2 Institutional policies provide procedures for identifying the essential components and learning outcomes of courses and their implications for students with disabilities.

Grievance procedures

- C2 Tertiary education institutions adopt grievance procedures for students which encompass the requirements of students who have a disability. Such procedures are communicated to students with disabilities in an appropriate manner and format.**

C2.1 Grievance procedures for all students are reviewed to ensure that students with disabilities are treated in a non-discriminatory manner, and:

- can have their complaints resolved in a timely manner
- can receive reasonable assistance from the institution to facilitate such processes
- at the student's request, can be accompanied by an independent expert or friend to support their case.

Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedure.
Contact: Equity Officer (Disabilities), Registrar's Office, Murdoch University, South Street, Murdoch WA 6150. Phone: 08 9360 6152 Fax: 08 9360 6502

Hobart TAFE Discrimination Procedure. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, TAFE Tasmania, 75 Campbell St, Hobart Tas 7000.
Phone: 03 6233 7347 Fax: 03 6233 7830

- C2.2 Students are made aware that, should a grievance be unresolved, they may use the provisions of the Commonwealth *Disability Discrimination Act* or relevant state legislation.

Disability policy development and implementation

- C3 Disability policies and procedures are developed to articulate the principles of equity which guide the interaction between the institution and its staff and students.**

- C4 Disability policy implementation, evaluation and review encompass all institutional activities and are monitored at an appropriately high level of administration.**

Supporting Students with Disabilities on Small University Campuses—a report produced for the Victorian Cooperative Projects Higher Education Students with Disabilities Committee. Online: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/extern/rdlu/small.pdf> or Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, Australian Catholic University, 1200 Mair Street, Ballarat, Vic 3350. Phone: 03 5337 3173 Fax: 03 5337 3105

- C4.1 Institutional policies for students with disabilities:
- vest responsibility in a high-level institution/organisation-wide representative committee to advise on policy review and development, and progress towards equal educational opportunity
 - ensure staff are provided with the support and development necessary to enable them to meet the requirements of students with disabilities
 - address the institution's development of:
 - promotional/publicity, transition, admission and enrolment procedures
 - learning, teaching, assessment and research practices
 - harassment and grievance procedures
 - reinforce the institution's commitment to:
 - using appropriate language in reference to disabilities and people with disabilities

- ii) participation of students with disabilities in the administrative, academic, ceremonial, social and physical environment of the institution
 - iii) consultation with students with varying disabilities and relevant community-based groups representing people with disabilities
- e. provide for the equitable access of all people with a disability to institutional facilities, whether students, staff or members of the public.

Policy examples are listed in section A2.1

University of South Australia Disability Action Plan (February 1996). Contact: Equal Opportunity Unit, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1700 Fax: 08 8302 1500

D. Planning

D1 In consultation with students who have a disability, and in the context of wider institutional developments, strategic planning is undertaken to develop an inclusive educational environment for students with disabilities so that they have the opportunity for comprehensive participation in the life of the institution.

- D1.1 Strategic planning for students with disabilities occurs as part of the annual Educational Profiles process within the institution and covers:
- a. an analysis of present performance
 - b. an evaluation of services provided and required
 - c. targets for future performance
 - d. strategies for achieving targets
 - e. commitment of resources to support the strategies.
- D1.2 Progress in meeting targets is reviewed and reported annually. Such reporting includes information on progress in meeting targets for access, participation, success and retention concerning students who have a disability.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. (1995). *Disability Discrimination Act Action Plans: A Guide for the Tertiary Education Sector*. Sydney: Author.

Structured focus groups are held for students with disabilities to evaluate current services and develop ideas for future services and programs. Contact: Special Projects Coordinator, Student Services Division, University of Western Sydney Macarthur, PO Box 555, Campbelltown, NSW 2550. Phone: 02 4620 3191 Fax: 02 4628 5697

Access to buildings and facilities

D2 Institutions commit to effective building design that ensures equal amenity for people with disabilities.

Some institutions have at various times committed a proportion of funds each year to improve access and mobility provisions. Contact: University of New England Facilities Management Services, Armidale NSW 2351. Phone: 02 6773 2659 Fax: 02 6773 3198

D3 In the design, construction or refurbishment of buildings, furnishings and grounds, consultations are held with experts in planning physical facilities for people with a disability.

- D3.1 In the design or refurbishment of buildings, tertiary education institutions pay explicit attention to access and use by people with different disabilities.

Building Code of Australia. Contact: CCH Australia Ltd, GPO Box 4072, Sydney 2001. Phone: 1300 300 224

Regulation Document Proposing an Amendment to the Building Code of Australia RD 97/01: Provisions for People with Disabilities. Available online — <http://www.dist.gov.au/abcb/rd9701/index.html> Contact: Australian Building Codes Board, Level 4, 33 Allara Street, Canberra ACT 2600. Phone: 02 6217 7240 Fax: 02 6213 7287

Programs for liaison with buildings and grounds, property and planning departments. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, University of Melbourne, Parkville VIC 3052. Phone: 03 9344 6553 Fax: 03 9344 5323

Contact: Special Needs Equity Support and Welfare, Student Services, University of Technology Sydney, PO Box 123, Broadway NSW 2007. Phone: 02 9330 1177 Fax: 02 9330 1172

- D3.2 Input is invited from building users who have varying disabilities as well as from disability access consultants.

D4 Conformity with current design standards is required in the planning of capital works.

D4.1 Although conformity with relevant Australian Standards is essential, these standards may not be sufficient to provide the level of access and amenity required in tertiary education settings for students who have a disability. Consulting with students who have a disability and other access experts assists in this process.

Access: Facility Management Action Plan Manual — a guide for designing and renovating university buildings incorporating the Building Code and DDA requirements. Contact: Buildings and Grounds Division, Deakin University, Geelong Vic 3217. Phone: 0352 271 308 Fax: 0352 272 166

Kelly, B., Deshon, J.P., Jones, R.E., & Fisher, K.D. (1996). *Disability Discrimination Act 1992: Providing Equity Access to Tertiary Institutions. A manual to assist higher education institutions in developing Action Plans*. Contact: Barry Kelly, 100 Plantain Road, Shailer Park Qld 4128. Phone: 07 3801 3173 Fax: 07 3808 1986 e-mail: b.kelly@gmg.com.au

Science Laboratory Access Manual: A Guide to Designing a Laboratory for Access for People with Disabilities — Available online: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/extern/rdlu/lab.pdf>

D4.2 Regular audits of campus facilities are conducted to identify problems with access and use which are experienced by people with a disability.

AccessAbility Kit. See A7.2h. Audit of TAFE Queensland Institute facilities by Total Asset Management Unit, TAFE Queensland. Contact: TAFE Queensland Social Justice Network. Phone: 07 3844 0268 Fax: 07 3846 5810

D4.3 Institutions develop a schedule of improvements in access to buildings that do not meet required standards, as recommended in a DDA Action Plan. Such a schedule is implemented flexibly, based on emerging needs.

UniAbility: Disability Action Plan Guidelines. Contact: Equal Opportunity Unit, University of South Australian, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1700 Fax: 08 8302 1500

D4.4 Key features of access such as location of lifts, telephones, toilets, routes and entrances are clearly signed and identified on campus maps. Such maps are available in accessible formats.

Tactile campus map (part of ANU). Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, Australian National University, ACT 0200. Phone: 02 6249 5036 Fax: 02 6249 5582

D4.5 People with disabilities are advised where relevant of changes that may affect access during work on buildings and grounds.

D4.6 Meeting notices clearly indicate accessible parking and accessible routes to the location.

D4.7 Appropriate procedures for fire alert and evacuation, health, safety and security are developed taking account of people with a disability.

D4.8 Institutions that provide transport for students (eg. between campuses) take into account the need for such transport to be made accessible to people with disabilities.

D4.9 Suitable spaces are made available for accessible parking bays and accessible taxi drop-off and pick-up points.

D4.10 Suitable arrangements are made for graduation ceremonies and similar corporate events to ensure access with equal amenity for people with a disability.

Invitation requests information re need for such adjustments as signing interpreters and wheelchair access.

A decision by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (Case No 97/4) under the DDA has implications for all tertiary institutions to ensure graduation facilities are accessible and provide equal amenity for students with a disability. Available online: <http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/other/hreoc/disabil/kinsela.htm>

D4.11 Access by members of the public with a disability to such venues as libraries, concert halls, recreational and classroom facilities needs to be provided.

E. Student recruitment

E1 In student recruitment initiatives, institutions:

- a. make explicit reference to opportunities for people with disabilities to enter tertiary education at all course levels**
- b. provide information that makes potential students with disabilities aware of a range of pathways into tertiary study**
- c. make available promotional and information material in accessible formats and implement an appropriate system for its dissemination.**

- E1.1 Institutions develop and implement strategies for increasing the awareness of tertiary education possibilities among people with disabilities.

Initiatives targeting students in senior secondary schools:

Smoothing the Pathway. Contact: Disability Adviser, University of Tasmania, PO Box 1214, Launceston, Tas 7250. Phone: 03 6324 3782 Fax: 03 6324 3788

Unitaste Vacation School for school students with disabilities in Years 10 and 11, and *Consider It and Plan for It* — guides for secondary school students considering university study, and *The University Option* (videotape). Contact: TIPD Office, Queensland University of Technology, Carseldine Campus, Beams Road, Carseldine Qld 4034. Phone: 07 3864 4504 Fax: 07 3864 4509 e-mail: tipd@qut.edu.au

UniAbility: A Resource and Planning Guide for People with a Disability Considering University Study.

Contact: Equal Opportunity Unit, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1700 Fax: 08 8302 1500

Unlock Your Future — information brochures targeting mature age and school students with disabilities and medical conditions, parents of school students and community organisations. Produced by Post Secondary Education Disability Network WA. Contact: Counsellor (Disabilities), Curtin University of Technology, GPO Box U1987, Perth WA 6001. Phone: 08 9266 7850 Fax: 08 9266 3052

- E1.2 Institutions clearly identify in their recruitment material any procedures involving special entry or special consideration to admit students who have a disability.

- E1.3 Institutions make students aware of any professional/vocational requirements associated with a course prior to commencement.

- E1.4 Institutions encourage and assist prospective students with disabilities to identify their specific service requirements to the institution at an early stage prior to application for admission.

Choosing Courses and Subjects at University: A Guide for Students Who Have a Disability. Contact: Equal Opportunity Unit, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1700 Fax: 08 8302 1500

Resource Book — produced by Post Secondary Education Disability Network WA (print and audio formats). Contact: Counsellor (Disabilities), Curtin University of Technology. Phone: 08 9266 7850 Fax: 08 9266 3052

A Guide for Students with Disabilities — TAFE NSW VET Disabilities Services, Level 16, 1 Oxford St, Darlinghurst NSW 2010. Phone: 02 9244 5092 TTY: 02 9244 5096/5082 Fax: 02 9244 5012

F. Selection, admission and enrolment

Selection and admission

- F1 In the processes of student selection, institutions assess the academic competence of applicants with a disability on the same grounds as are used for other applicants, except where special entry and/or special consideration for students with disabilities are requested by the student and supporting evidence is provided.**

- F1.1 In the selection process, special consideration in cases of demonstrated educational disadvantage related to disability may be initiated by the institution or requested by the applicant.

A New Direction in Life — The Flinders University Foundation Course.

Selection is made on equity criteria for those who have been denied access to university studies because they have not had the opportunity to complete the senior secondary school assessment at an appropriate standard. Contact: Access and Equity Unit, Flinders University of South Australia, GPO Box 2100, Adelaide SA 5001. Phone: 06 201 5172 or 06 201 2305

Targeted Access Program (TAP) — for students who have been under a long-term disadvantage. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, University of Melbourne, Old Geology South, The University of Melbourne Parkville Vic 3052. Phone: 03 9344 6553 Fax: 03 9344 5323

Lighthouse Scheme — provides special consideration for students with a disability entering Macquarie University. Contact: Disability Services Coordinator, University Counselling & Health Services, Macquarie University, NSW 2109. Phone: 02 9850 7497 Fax: 02 9850 7750

Uni Quest — alternative entry program for mature age students who have been educationally disadvantaged. Contact: Equity Officer (Disabilities), Registrar's Office, Murdoch University, South Street, Murdoch WA 6150. Phone: 08 9360 6152 Fax: 08 9360 6502

Tertiary Options Project (TOP) — access program focusing on Year 12 students who are having difficulty completing their final year due to social, family, financial or health and disability problems. Contact: Equity Officer (Disabilities), Registrar's Office, Murdoch University, South Street, Murdoch WA 6150. Phone: 08 9360 6152 Fax: 08 9360 6502

F1.2 If necessary, institutions use methods appropriate to applicants with a disability in measuring their academic competence.

F1.3 Institutions ensure that selection and admission procedures make reasonable adjustments for students who have a disability, including provision of information in accessible formats.

F1.4 Institutions ensure that non-discriminatory procedures are used in selection procedures based on interview and/or audition and that these procedures are clearly identified in information to students.

Queensland College of Art provides Auslan interpreters. Contact: Deaf Student Support Program, Centre for Deafness Studies and Research, Griffith University Qld 4111. Phone/TTY: 07 3875 5654 Fax: 07 3875 5924

F2 Institutions provide review procedures to ensure that selection criteria are appropriate to the courses to which they are applied and do not discriminate against applicants with disabilities.

F2.1 If the application of a student is rejected on the grounds of disability preventing that student meeting the essential components of a course and the student appeals, the committee hearing such an appeal draws upon independent expert advice on the disability.

F2.2 The above procedure may also be used if a student notifies of disability after admission or incurs a disability during the course.

F2.3 An analysis of the essential components of a course may be required in individual cases where a student with a disability applies for a course that leads to a registered or licensed occupation.

Regard needs to be given to:

- a. relevant legislation covering disability discrimination in employment (eg. DDA Section 19) and education (DDA Section 21)
- b. duty of care to students, staff and future clients
- c. provision of confidentiality protocols among students, staff and outside agencies

d. occupational health and safety issues in such settings as workshops, dark rooms, laboratories, field trips or professional practice placements

e. opportunities for students to complete a course even though they may not be eligible for registration because they cannot meet the inherent requirements for registration.

Students need to seek advice from appropriate registration boards before they apply for admission and complete formal enrolment. Institutions may also need to examine the nature of their course links with accrediting bodies.

F2.4 Institutions address the reasonableness of adjustments that would enable students with disabilities to take traditionally full-time programs in alternative, flexible delivery modes.

F2.5 Institutions implement, or link to, bridging programs that assist students with disabilities to make the transition to tertiary study.

Adult Tertiary Preparation Program. Contact: Course Coordinator, Brisbane Institute of TAFE (Ithaca Campus), Locked Bag 10, Kelvin Grove DC Qld 4059. Phone: 07 3259 9074 Fax: 07 3259 9155

Enrolment processes

F3 Institutions ensure that course and career advisory services take account of the particular needs of students with disabilities in their subject selection.

F3.1 Institutions ensure that handbooks and other advisory materials are available in accessible formats and that course advisory officers have appropriate training to fulfil this task.

Choosing Courses and Subjects at University: A Guide for Students Who Have a Disability. Contact: Equal Opportunity Unit, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1700 Fax: 08 8302 1500

F4 In the process of enrolling students who have a disability, institutions:

a. modify, where necessary, the enrolment form and the process of its completion

b. clearly indicate the reasons for collecting information about disability

c. store data identifying disability in a confidential manner

d. ensure data on disability do not appear on academic records and graduation documentation

e. ensure that information regarding the availability of appropriate services is available.

F4.1 Institutions ensure that students with disabilities are advised of services available within the institution to assist them.

Guides produced by university cooperative projects in each state:

The U Book: A Self Help Guide to University for Students With Disabilities. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, Macquarie University NSW 2109. Phone: 02 9850 7920 Fax: 02 9850 7750

UniAbility: Survival Guide for Students With Disabilities. Contact: Equal Opportunity Unit, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1700 Fax: 08 8302 1500

Resource Book — See E1.4.

Information Booklet for Students with Disabilities. Contact: Disabilities Coordinator, Student Services, Griffith University, Nathan Qld 4111. Phone: 07 3875 7280 Fax: 07 3875 5360

Surviving First Semester — a one-day orientation on support programs such as Equity, Counselling, Academic Services Unit and foundation courses, program structure. Contact: Equity Officer (Disabilities), Registrar's Office, Murdoch University, South Street, Murdoch WA 6150. Phone: 08 9360 6152 Fax: 08 9360 6502

Individual Orientation for Students with Learning Difficulties/Attention Deficit Disorder — run by the Learning Skills Counsellor. Accommodations needed during the semester are arranged by the Special Needs Coordinator (eg. notetakers, assistive technologies). Contact: Special Needs Equity Support & Welfare Student Services, University of Technology Sydney, PO Box 123, Broadway NSW 2007. Phone: 02 9330 1177 Fax: 02 9330 1172

Peer Mentor Program — new students are contacted by second or third year students with disabilities, leading to the development of support groups for students with specific disabilities. Contact: Special Projects Coordinator, Student Services Division, University of Western Sydney Macarthur, PO Box 555 Campbelltown, NSW 2550. Phone: 02 4620 3191 Fax: 02 4628 5697

F5 Institutions that enrol fee-paying students with disabilities are required to provide appropriate services, as for other students with disabilities.

F5.1 The funding of specialist services for fee-paying students with disabilities may not be drawn from the Commonwealth operating grants to institutions.

F5.2 Because an additional charge on students with disabilities or on disability-related services is likely to be viewed as discriminatory under the legislation, institutions take steps to ensure that adequate funds are generated in the fee structure or through other non-operating grant sources to provide such services.

International Students with Disabilities — DEETYA advice to university international offices in November 1996. Contact: Educational Developments and International Section, Higher Education Division, DEETYA. Phone: 02 6240 9338 Fax: 02 6240 9780

Withdrawal

F6 In cases where students are forced to withdraw from subjects or courses after scheduled closing dates because of illness or deterioration of a disabling condition, institutions permit withdrawal from enrolment without academic and financial penalty.

F6.1 Policy and procedures related to the appropriate refund of fees in such circumstances are established and made known to all students. Fees that are likely to be encompassed in this provision include student services fees, tutorial and tuition fees, visiting student fees and continuing education course fees. HECS charges already paid may be refunded and those deferred may be waived.

Notification and verification of disability

F7 Institutions provide frequent opportunities through different processes for students to discuss both the likely impact of disability on their studies and the appropriate adjustments required.

F7.1 Universities have a statutory responsibility to report statistics on access, participation, success and retention of students with disabilities and develop appropriate processes to fulfil this requirement.

F7.2 To encourage notification, institutions clearly advise:

- a. the reasons for notification and the purposes for which such information is intended, including the institution's duty of care to the student and to others
- b. that the information provided will not be used in a discriminatory manner, contrary to legislative provisions, in determining the outcomes of application for admission or access to reasonable adjustments
- c. who will have access to the information and the basis on which such access is granted; ie. that the information provided will be treated confidentially and passed to other relevant persons only with the student's consent
- d. that student permission will be sought for any additional purposes subsequently identified for which that information may be used (eg. request to approach them to participate in research studies)
- e. the type of verification including documentation, if any, that is required to support the request for reasonable adjustment
- f. the responsibility of students to notify relevant information in order to gain timely access to services.

▮ *Unlock Your Future* (videotape) See E1.1

F7.3 As part of the enrolment process, institutions invite students with disabilities to notify designated personnel of their particular requirements for accessing education programs and related institutional activities.

While awareness of the need for adjustments may not arise at the commencement of a course, early notification is desirable once the need is known. Students are advised that delay in making their requirements known may result in services not being available on time.

Depending on the situation, notification to the lecturer may be sufficient. In other situations, it may be necessary to notify the disability adviser or administration. Notification of disability is usually required if students seek reasonable adjustments to their educational program. By developing and promoting a wider range of general services to all students that encompass some aspects previously considered as specialised services, institutions can reduce the need for some students to notify that they have a disability and the costs of associated specialised services. For example, making lecture notes available promptly on a website may reduce but not totally eliminate the need for notetakers and photocopying the content of overhead transparencies.

F7.4 To demonstrate their willingness to discuss reasonable adjustments, teaching staff invite students at the commencement of each semester to approach them privately if they have particular requirements arising from disability.

F7.5 Staff monitor student progress and approach those whose performance they believe may be affected by a disability.

F8 Institutions require students where necessary to demonstrate or supply certification of the functional implications of their disability as a basis for requesting reasonable adjustments.

F8.1 Institutions state the appropriate nature of the required verification, having consideration for the costs involved in obtaining this information.

Students can usually demonstrate well-established and known disabilities. Students may also be able to present recent documentation from appropriate professionals, including school records. Documentation may also be obtained from appropriately qualified persons within the institution, such as in study skills or counselling sections, from appropriately qualified professionals or agencies in the community, or from cooperative services developed by institutions in the region.

F8.2 Institutions implement procedures to ensure that verification documentation is sought only where needed, that verification processes are equitable, and that relevant information is subsequently disseminated with student permission to staff who need it, to ensure students are not required to repeat their verification of particular needs from lecturer to lecturer and from year to year.

Assessments to identify learning disability are undertaken by postgraduate psychology students under supervision, with recommended strategies and accommodations for staff and students. A letter detailing accommodations for a student is circulated, with the student's permission, to staff on a need to know basis. Contact: Disability Adviser, University of Tasmania, PO Box 1214 Launceston TAS 7250. Phone: 03 6324 3782 Fax: 03 6324 3788

G. Teaching and learning

G1 To ensure academic programs are accessible to students who have a disability, staff implement appropriate teaching and learning strategies.

G1.1 In developing teaching and learning strategies that are appropriate for students with disabilities, staff:

a. identify and remove barriers that limit the participation of students with disabilities

UniAbility: Where There's a Will There's a Way — Supporting Students with Disabilities. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8302 1777 Fax: 08 8302 1500

Reasonable Accommodations: Strategies for Teaching Students with Disabilities — produced by Post Secondary Education Disability Network WA. Contact: Counsellor (Disabilities), Curtin University of Technology. Phone: 08 9266 7850 Fax: 08 9266 3052 or Contact: Tertiary Initiatives for People with Disabilities. Phone/TTY: 07 3864 4504 Fax: 07 3864 4509 e-mail: tipd@qut.edu.au

Succeeding with a Psychiatric Disability in the University Environment — package produced by QUT Counselling Services and TIPD. Contact: Tertiary Initiatives for People with Disabilities Phone/TTY: 07 3864 4504 Fax: 07 3864 4509 e-mail: tipd@qut.edu.au

b. develop flexible delivery and assessment practices

c. make available study materials in ample time for their conversion to accessible formats (eg. captioning of videos; braille and/or audiotaping of texts; transcription of audiotapes; enlarging print material; tactile drawings of diagrams; conversion to plain English)

Alternative Format Print Service. Contact: Disability Adviser, Student Support Services, The University of Queensland, Brisbane Q 4072. Phone 07 3365 1508 Fax: 07 3365 1702

Transcription Service — audiotapes are converted to electronic data or hard copy. Contact: Disability Officer, University Support Centre, University of Western Australia, Perth WA 6907. Phone: 08 9380 2423 Fax: 08 9380 1119

d. ensure access to technologically based information sources (eg. library catalogue; CD ROM; Internet)

World Wide Web Access: Disability Discrimination Act Advisory Notes — Guidelines produced by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission <http://www.austlii.edu.au/hreoc/disabil/webguide.htm>

e. organise access to appropriate assistive technology and services (eg. scanners, voice synthesisers, braille embossers and voice activated computers).

Scribing: The Manual — produced by Post Secondary Education Disability Network WA (print and audio formats). Contact: Disability Officer, University Support Centre, University of Western Australia, Perth WA 6907. Phone: 08 9380 2423 Fax: 08 9380 1119

Multimedia Centre — teaching and learning strategies for disadvantaged groups and people with disabilities across all areas of vocational education and training. Contact: North Coast Institute of TAFE, Taree Campus, PO Box 669, Taree NSW 2430.

Unlock Your Future (videotape) See E1.1

G1.2 Staff facilitate equitable access, participation and outcomes for students with disabilities by taking into account the varying ways in which students learn and demonstrate their competence.

Access to educational programs is enhanced by the flexible use of varied instructional approaches that incorporate an understanding of different teaching and learning styles. Such approaches take into account the fact that all students vary in the ways that they learn best. They have personal preferences for how they receive information and express their learning through a range of modalities (eg. listening, looking, reading, writing, speaking, handling); settings (eg. large and small groups, study groups, individual study, classes, library, workshops, field trips); conditions (eg. noisy, quiet, bright and low light); times (eg. morning, afternoon, evening) and through the pace at which they study. Such dynamics of learning vary from individual to individual.

G1.3 Academic staff are proactive in dealing with the educational needs of students who have a disability.

Staff invite students to approach them if they have particular learning requirements that can be met through reasonable adjustments. Staff also anticipate such requirements in all aspects of the learning program (eg. ensuring access to field trip and industry sites; ensuring audiovisual resources are accessible to students with sensory impairment; ensuring printed material is expressed clearly for students with intellectual or learning disabilities; ensuring field/industry placements are appropriate for students with a psychiatric disability). Staff check their perceptions of student requirements with the students.

Reasonable adjustment processes

G2 To ensure programs are accessible to students who have a disability, institutions make reasonable adjustments to course content, delivery and assessment methods without compromising the standards or essential components of programs.

G2.1 In establishing reasonable adjustments, institutions:

- a. vary the educational process when students are able to demonstrate that they are disadvantaged as a result of disability
- b. minimise the disadvantage resulting from disability without creating a competitive advantage in relation to other students
- c. are satisfied that the essential components and rigour of the program are maintained.

A student's preference for a particular adjustment should be considered but a suitable alternative may be negotiated.

G2.2 Institutions exhaust all avenues of providing reasonable adjustment for students with disabilities before refusing such adjustments on the grounds of unjustifiable hardship.

G2.3 Should disability occur once the student begins studies, institutions ensure processes are in place to assist the student in making educational adjustments arising from the disability.

G2.4 Academic staff make reasonable adjustments in ways that respect student dignity and privacy.

This includes seeking advice from the student with a disability about how much information needs to be shared with other class members and how adjustments are best made without drawing undue attention to the disability.

G2.5 Reasonable adjustments are embedded where possible in the development of flexible curricula that take account of student choice and preferred styles of learning.

Academic assessment practices

G3 Institutions implement policies and practices that address reasonable adjustments to academic assessment provisions for students with disabilities.

G3.1 Staff make reasonable adjustments to assessment by varying:

- a. procedures for conducting the assessment

Additional time in examinations or extended deadline for assignments; use of a separate venue or alternative date or time of examination.

- b. the method of assessment

Assignments instead of examination; short-answer examination instead of multiple choice examination; different styles of assessment which vary question and response modalities (eg. audiotaped or videotaped instead of written answers).

Special Examinations and Alternative Arrangements, particularly for students with disabilities — staff handbook on the use of scribes; additional time and the use of computers. Contact: Disability Adviser, Registrar's Division, Australian National University GPO Box 4, Canberra 2601. Phone: 02 6249 5036 Fax: 02 6249 5582

Alternative Assessment for Students with Disabilities — information booklet. Contact: Disabilities Coordinator, Student Services, Griffith University, Nathan Qld 4111. Phone: 07 3875 7280 Fax: 07 3875 5360

Managing Oral Examinations — produced by Post Secondary Education Disability Network WA (print and audio formats). Contact: Counsellor (Disabilities), Curtin University of Technology. Phone: 08 9266 7850 Fax: 08 9266 3052

Managing Oral Examinations for Students with Disabilities: A Guide for Staff and Students. Contact: Disability Adviser, Registrar's Division, Australian National University GPO Box 4, Canberra 2601. Phone: 02 6249 5036 Fax: 02 6249 5582

Examination Procedural Variation. Contact: Disability Adviser, Student Support Services, The University of Queensland, Brisbane Q 4072. Phone: 07 3365 1508 Fax: 07 3365 1702

A Guide to Alternative Assessment for Students with Disabilities in TAFE. Contact: Western Australia Dept of Training, Disability Services Unit, c/- AMTC, Locked Bag 8, East Perth WA 6892. Phone: 08 9235 6509

- G3.2 Steps are taken to ensure that the provision of reasonable adjustments does not compromise the integrity of the assessment process.

H. Service provision

General services

- H1 Institutions regularly review services to all students, ensuring that they meet the particular requirements of students with varying disabilities to achieve equitable educational opportunity.**
- H2 Provision of appropriate services to students with disabilities is the responsibility of all relevant organisational areas within the institution. Particular advice and/or services may be provided by a unit or individual with specialist expertise.**

- H2.1 Institutions ensure that action is taken to enhance awareness of, and increasingly embed responsibility for, the particular requirements of students with disabilities, across all general services offered.**

Academic Liaison Officers Network — established across all faculties to coordinate support services for students. Contact: Special Needs Equity Support and Welfare Student Services, University of Technology Sydney, PO Box 123, Broadway NSW 2007. Phone: 02 9330 1177 Fax: 02 330 1172

Faculty Disability Liaison Officers [DLO] — academic or general staff members act as a valuable backup and resource for the DLO. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, Geology South, The University of Melbourne, Parkville Vic 3052. Phone: 03 9344 6553 Fax: 03 9344 5323

Disability Contact Officer Manual and Training — Contact: Disability Adviser, Student Support Services, The University of Queensland, Brisbane Qld 4072. Phone: 07 3365 1508 Fax: 07 3365 1702

Faculty/Departmental Provision of Support: — three faculties within the Adelaide Institute of TAFE have undertaken to be inclusive, caring and largely responsible for their own students' participation, accessibility and performance. Contact: Educational Manager (Disability Services), Student Services Unit, Adelaide Institute of TAFE; 120 Currie Street, Adelaide SA 5000. Phone: 08 8207 8201 Fax: 08 8207 8207

- H2.2 Providers of services to all students ensure that:**

- their location is physically accessible for those with sensory and mobility impairments
- appropriate communication access is available (eg. internal telephone/ TTY; facsimile, signing interpreters)
- information on the accessibility of services is made available to all staff and students with disabilities in accessible formats
- their staff are able to respond appropriately to the requirements of students with disabilities and call on specialist advice as required

Disability Support Web Page: University of Western Australia. Available online:
<http://www.general.uwa.edu.au/support/disability/index.html>

- H3 Institutions that enrol students with disabilities in open learning, distance education or flexible delivery modes are responsible for providing appropriate disability related services to those students.**

H3.1 Tertiary education institutions pursue cooperative links with other educational institutions in their region and with community service providers to enhance access to highly specialised services and to share developments.

Reciprocal library service provision agreement between institutions: Librarians of Curtin University of Technology, Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University and the University of Western Australia provide reciprocal services to students with disabilities. Contact: Disability Officer, Curtin University of Technology. Phone: 08 9266 7850 Fax: 08 9266 3052

Specialist services

H4 Institutions continuously review and evaluate all specialist services to students to ensure the services meet the particular requirements of students with varying disabilities.

H4.1 Specialist services and programs for students with disabilities:

- a. employ staff with relevant qualifications to implement the aims of the service
- b. widely publicise the existence and extent of their services

Posters advertising disability services. Contact: Disability Resources Officer, James Cook University, Douglas, Qld 4811. Phone 07 4781 5152 Fax: 07 4781 5240

- c. are easily identifiable, fully accessible and centrally located
- d. are appropriately placed within the organisational structure of the institution to reflect the philosophy of services to people with a disability as an issue of educational equity
- e. ensure that support personnel (eg. interpreters, academic participation assistants, notetakers, specialist tutors) have appropriate skills/ qualifications, adopt a professional attitude and receive adequate training and appropriate remuneration

Notetaking Service — Senior students who have already passed the subject concerned are used as notetakers, are provided with notetaker training at the beginning of the year and paid for their services. Contact: Disability Liaison Officer, University of Melbourne, Old Geology South, The University of Melbourne, Parkville VIC 3052. Phone: 03 9344 6553 Fax: 03 9344 5323

Griffith University Notetaking Network — A free six-hour notetaking course is provided annually to over 300 participants who are graded to act as notetakers for fellow students. Remuneration is by way of an honorarium for taking notes in subjects for which students are enrolled and an hourly rate in subjects for which they are not enrolled. Certificates and references are also provided. Contact: Disabilities Coordinator, Student Services, Griffith University, Qld 4111. Phone: 07 3875 7280 Fax: 07 3875 5360

Participation Assistance Program. Contact: Disability Adviser, Student Support Services, The University of Queensland, Brisbane Q 4072. Phone: 07 3365 1508 Fax: 07 3365 1702

Deaf student support program. Contact: Centre for Deafness Studies and Research, Griffith University (Mt Gravatt Campus), Nathan Qld 4111. Phone/TTY: 07 3875 5654 Fax: 07 3875 5924, or Contact: Disability Liaison Unit, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, PO Box 2476V, Melbourne VIC 3001. Phone: 03 9660 1089 Fax: 03 9660 1091 TTY: 03 9660 3673

- f. ensure that students are involved in identification of need for such personnel, their selection and training, and the evaluation of their services; and grievance procedures are developed to manage dissatisfaction with such services (eg. eligibility for service, allocation of services, incompatibility in the consumer-assistant match)

Structured Focus Groups — for students with disabilities to evaluate current services, determine future student needs and share information and ideas such as assessment, examinations, discrimination, physical access and disability awareness amongst both academics and students; ideas for future services, programs, policies and procedure. Contact: Special Projects Coordinator, Student Services Division, University of Western Sydney Macarthur, PO Box 555, Campbelltown, NSW 2550. Phone: 02 4620 3191 Fax: 02 4628 5697

- g. liaise with other educational sectors to foster sharing of resources and expertise, and with community groups that may provide adjunct services, including the ongoing development and supply of appropriately trained support personnel (eg. sign language interpreters)
- h. evaluate the effect of a student's disability on academic performance and participation in campus life, and organise provision of adequate and appropriate services to ensure equitable access.

Library assistance cards — students can ask library staff to provide assistance with finding and transporting research materials. Contact: Disability Adviser, University of Tasmania, PO Box 1214, Launceston Tas 7250. Phone: 03 6324 3782 Fax: 03 6324 3788

Use It Card — allows access to many library services such as photocopying, equipment, resource room access, library assistant, proxy borrowing card, loan renewals by telephone Contact: Disability Officer, University Support Centre, University of Western Australia, Perth WA 6907. Phone: 08 9380 2423 Fax: 08 9380 1119

- i. provide advocacy regarding the needs of students with disabilities so that the campus community becomes sufficiently aware of, and sensitive to, the circumstances of students with disabilities and thus becomes appropriately responsive to them
- j. undertake regular systematic assessments of the academic, ceremonial, social and physical requirements of students with disabilities as well as the attitudinal and physical environment of the campus in order to improve current service provisions and recommend services for future development
- k. encourage development, by other sections of the institution, of programs and facilities to ensure not only equal access for students with disabilities but also coordination rather than duplication of services
- l. play a major role in ensuring that the members of the institution as a whole are knowledgeable about, and comply with, the institution's policies, and legislative and government requirements in respect of equitable access for students who have a disability
- m. oversee the development of resource rooms for students in which specific equipment is located, and procedures for the purchase and loan of such equipment.

Specific equipment area, often located in the library — this area contains equipment suitable for students who have a disability (eg. computers with large print and speech programs, dictaphones, ergonomic chairs and desks). Contact: Disability Services Coordinator, University Counselling and Health Services, Macquarie University, NSW 2109. Phone: 02 9850 7497 Fax: 02 9850 7750

Contact: Head, Student Welfare Services, The University of Sydney, Cumberland Campus, PO Box 170, Lidcombe NSW 2141. Phone: 02 9351 9638 Fax: 02 9351 9635

Electronic Access Centre — specially equipped rooms in the library. Contact: Disability Officers, QUT, GPO Box 2434, Brisbane Qld 4001. Phone: 07 3864 4834 or 07 3864 4539 or 07 3864 2383 Fax: 07 3864 4835 or 07 3864 4110

Disabilities Access Room — specially equipped rooms in the library for students with a disability. Contact: Special Projects Coordinator, University of Western Sydney Macarthur, PO Box 555, Campbelltown NSW 2560. Phone: 02 4620 3191 Fax: 02 4628 5697

- n. encourage the establishment of student self-help groups that are resourced and managed under the auspices of the student organisation, and recognised as a consumer voice within the institution.

Disability Action Group of University of Southern Queensland — lobby group and informal peer support network. Contact: Disability Officer, Student Services, University of Southern Queensland, PO Box Darling Heights, Toowoomba Qld 4350. Phone: 076 312 848 Fax: 076 312 880

Macquarie University Association for Students with Disabilities [MASD] — student advocacy group and representation on university committees. Contact: Disability Services Coordinator, University Counselling and Health Services, Macquarie University, NSW 2109. Phone: 02 9840 7497 Fax: 02 9850 7750

- o. ensure, where relevant, that students who may require attendant care are aware of services available in the community.

H4.2 Tertiary education institutions examine and implement, where necessary, programs that assist graduates with disabilities to make the transition to higher studies or employment. Careers staff may also assist students in finding vacation employment or work experience while they are undertaking their course.

Education to Employment Package for Students and Graduates with Disabilities. Online: http://www.nepean.uws.edu.au/sserv/ed_emp/text_version/index.html

Gateways: Promoting Post-Secondary Education, Training and Employment. Newsletter and Internet initiative of the Tasmanian State Disability Liaison Officer and DASU Tasmania. Contact: State Disability Liaison Officer, University of Tasmania, GPO Box 252, Hobart Tas 7001. Phone: 03 6226 2381 Fax: 03 6226 2059. Available online: <http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/gateways/gateways.htm>

Transition to Employment: A Guide for Graduates with a Disability and Benefits of Hiring a Graduate with a Disability — brochures.

Contact: Tertiary Initiatives for People with Disabilities, QUT, Beams Rd, Carseldine Qld 4034. Phone/TTY: 07 3864 4504

Fax: 07 3864 4509

e-mail: tipd@qut.edu.au. Available online:

<http://www.jcu.edu.au/disability/tipd/tipdhome.html>

Appendix – Key Terms

For the purpose of this Code, unless the contrary intention appears, the following definitions or explanations of key terms apply:

access: entry to tertiary education; or ability to join and participate in all relevant facets of life in tertiary education institutions — eg. access to: buildings; courses; educational materials and relevant social/cultural information; recreational facilities and programs; ceremonial events; communication facilities such as telephones, TTYs and computer laboratories; fieldwork and excursions; careers advice and vacation employment.

accessible formats: providing information in plain English and in a range of media — eg. print and large print; braille; audio tape; captioned videotapes; computer disks or CD ROM formatted for specific equipment or software such as voice synthesisers and zoom text.

accommodation: as used in reasonable accommodation (see **reasonable adjustment**) — alteration to usual mode of practice to enable/ensure access.

assistive technology: computerised equipment or software designed or modified to enable people with disabilities to meet their information/communication/mobility needs.

complaints: expressions of dissatisfaction about a problem or instance causing discontent relating to some aspect of the institution's response to students who have a disability.

confidentiality: information concerning disabilities is not communicated to others without the approval of the individual concerned.

Disability Action Plans: The Human Relations and Equal Opportunity Commission (1995) recommends that tertiary education institutions develop action plans, which may be registered with the Commission, to minimise discrimination, to avoid complaints and to encourage broader participation of people with disabilities in the sector. It suggests that proactive responses promoted through such plans can boost the reputation of the institution and maintain high levels of demand from students who come to learn of such standing. Not least is the expectation that the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act* are met. It is suggested that action plans include six broad components: (a) a review of the institution's current activities; (b) progress towards devising policies and programs for people with disabilities; (c) goals and targets for improving responses to people with disabilities; (d) evaluation strategies; (e) allocation of responsibility; (f) communication of policies and programs to consumers.

disability: defined by the *Disability Discrimination Act* [DDA] "in relation to a person means:

- a. total or partial loss of the person's bodily or mental functions; or
 - b. total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
 - c. the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
 - d. the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
 - e. the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person's body; or
 - f. a disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction; or
 - g. a disorder, illness or disease that affects a person's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;
- and includes a disability that
- h. presently exists; or
 - i. previously existed but no longer exists; or
 - j. may exist in the future; or
 - k. is imputed to a person".

Commonly used descriptions of disability such as physical, sensory, intellectual, psychiatric, and learning are included under this definition.

discrimination (as described by *FlexAbility*, 1992, p. 51):

Discrimination means treating a person with a disability less favourably than a person without a disability would be treated under similar circumstances

Discrimination also exists where there is a condition or requirement imposed which may be the same for everyone but unfairly excludes or disadvantages a person with a disability (for example, requiring someone who cannot speak to undertake an oral examination).

Different treatment of people with disabilities is not unlawful where it is reasonably intended to ensure they have equal opportunities or to meet their special needs.

distance education: studying educational programs at a distance from the host institution, usually through one or more processes of external notes, telecommunications and intensive study schools.

duty of care: responsibility of the service provider to provide care and a safe environment for all service users.

equitable learning environment: reasonable adjustments have been made to enable student with disabilities to participate in a course and compete on equal terms with other students.

equity: principles that ensure fairness to people with disabilities in providing the opportunity for them to access, participate in and successfully complete studies in tertiary education.

equity target groups: groups identified as disadvantaged in gaining access to higher education in *A Fair Chance for All* — Discussion Paper (DEET, 1990) which sets national equity objectives and targets for each of these groups to assist institutions in making equity objectives a central concern of higher education management planning and review. Six equity target groups were identified:

- people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- women in non-traditional courses and postgraduate study (particularly in research)
- people from non-English speaking backgrounds
- people with disabilities
- people from rural and isolated areas.

essential components: those elements in a program of study that must be successfully completed by students; reasonable adjustments may need to be provided to accomplish the outcomes

flexible delivery: adoption of a range of teaching strategies in a variety of learning environments to cater for differences in learning styles, learning interests and needs, and variations in learning opportunities (from *FlexAbility*, 1992)

good practice: exemplary policies and procedures which promote an inclusive educational environment.

inclusive educational/learning environment: one in which diversity among students is valued and procedures are implemented to facilitate equitable access, participation and outcomes for all students; includes classroom and wider institutional life as well as workplace training environments.

institutions: abbreviated form for tertiary education institutions.

minimum standards: minimum levels of performance that tertiary education institutions must at least observe; to achieve good practice, these may be enhanced through quality reviews.

open learning: flexibility in access to educational courses for students such as in commencement times, modes of study, choice of topics and input into course curriculum, choice of timing and manner of assessment, and use of communication technology.

prospective student means a person who may seek to become a student or whom the institution deems to be a potential student.

reasonable adjustment: making alterations to educational programs, procedures and facilities that are deemed to be sensible, fair and equitable for students with disabilities to access the educational program; the term has many shades of meaning and interpretation in the context of disability discrimination legislation; sometimes referred to as reasonable accommodations and reasonable alterations.

resolved: the settlement or conclusion of a complaint or dispute, and each of the parties is notified of the outcome.

services: see specialist services.

social justice: in the tertiary education institution setting means that the goals of equality of access, opportunity and outcome are achieved.

specialist services: specific facilities, equipment, programs, personnel, or arrangements offered or provided by tertiary education institutions to assist students who have disabilities to gain equal access to the educational environment.

staff: everyone employed by the tertiary education institution.

student: a person who is enrolled, or otherwise permitted by tertiary institutions to participate in any educational activity, of any duration, by on-campus, distance education, open learning modes and on-the-job training including apprentices and trainees.

teaching staff: such staff as lecturers; tutors; teachers; instructors; workplace trainers, assessors and mentors.

tertiary education institutions: universities or publicly funded technical and further education institutes; also referred to as institutions.

unjustifiable hardship: as indicated in the DDA 1992, a determination is made of “all relevant circumstances for each individual case, including:

- (a) the nature of the benefit or detriment likely to accrue or be suffered by any persons concerned; and
- (b) the effect of the disability of a person concerned; and
- (c) the financial circumstances and the estimated amount of expenditure required by the person claiming unjustifiable hardship; and
- (d) in the case of the provision of services, or the making available of facilities—an action plan given to the Commission”.

If a complaint about disability discrimination proceeds to a hearing, the onus is on the tertiary education institution to establish that the adjustment required poses unjustifiable hardship.

vicarious liability: involves acts of discrimination where the discrimination is by an employee or agent of a tertiary education institution and the employee or agent was acting at the time within the scope of his or her authority. Where circumstances meet these criteria, it is no excuse for a tertiary education institution to argue that the employee or agent was not hired or engaged to commit acts of discrimination (if the person does so within the scope of his or her work, the institution is liable); or that the institution did not know the discrimination was occurring (ignorance is not excuse). There is a defence for vicarious liability where the tertiary education institution took reasonable precautions to deal with the unlawful conduct and exercised due diligence to deal with the unlawful conduct. In such a situation the staff member or agent actually doing the discriminating may be personally liable.

The Education and Student Services Committee of the National TAFE Chief Executives Committee. (1992). *FlexAbility: A strategic framework for people with disabilities in TAFE 1994-96*. Brisbane: Department of Employment, Vocational Education, Training and Industrial Relations.

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Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission. (1994). *Disability Discrimination Act Employment Manual*. Sydney: Author.

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Available online:
http://www.qut.edu.au/pubs/disabilities/national_code/code.html