RE:　　　　**Library support to students with disabilities**

The level of service that the University Library provides to customers with disabilities across all Library sites is quite comprehensive & is outlined on our webpage. The service has been determined by discussion & consultation with the Customer Services Unit Manager, the DIG (Disability Interest Group members), & input from Martin Fathers (Manager of the University's Disability Liaison Unit) and recognition of the ALIA (Australian Library & Information Association) standards on library services for people with disabilities.

To maintain and co-ordinate services/equipment across sites, the internal Library group, the DIG (Disabilities Interest Group) was formed. This group is self-managing and reports to the Customer Services Unit Manager. Membership is one nominated person from each Library site. The group has met either monthly or every two months over the past 24 months. In 2002 the group has decided to cut down face-to-face meetings and meet only when necessary. The group has a Groupwise folder where current documentation is placed and communication is mainly via email now. Any concerns/problems is voiced via email.

The DIG members work collaboratively and have run in-service training sessions for information staff, developed specific flyers promoting information literacy classes, surveyed students with disabilities at RMIT on their needs (2001), liaise with Information Strategy Unit re: software/hardware needs etc. The group has a close relationship with the Disability Liaison Unit (City campus) and the head, Martin Fathers. A library representative, usually the Customer Services Unit Manager attended the Disability Advisory Committee Meetings, chaired by Martin, to get the bigger picture. A number of other senior University staff including PVC(IS) Bob Gray also attend this meeting. DIG members liaise with the Royal Institute of the Blind re: equipment/software needs and services and the State Library of Victoria.

Recently the DIG members discussed the difficulties of keeping up with software/hardware issues and lack of time of individual members to maintain standards. I can also report that the issue of software and hardware for students with disabilities was also taken up with the ITTC (IT Technical Committee) this year.

The Library has an understanding of some of the issues & would welcome the opportunity to particpate in the forum should the University agree.