December 2009

This document explains how we plan to meet our statutory duties to promote disability equality.

Comments or queries about this report are welcomed and should be sent to the following address for the attention of the Equality and Diversity Officer.

The Equality & Diversity Office
Room 1  Gatehouse 1
The University of Chichester
College Lane
West Sussex
PO19 6PE

If you would like to receive the information in this scheme in an alternative format to meet your needs, please contact the Equality and Diversity office.
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Foreword

The University of Chichester is committed to building and maintaining an inclusive community and believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas and enriches campus life.

The University of Chichester recognises and values equality and diversity and is committed to ensuring an inclusive environment, not just with its employees and students, but in all existing and future relationships. In embracing diversity the University aims to reflect the community it serves and benefit from the wide range of skills, experiences and knowledge that a diverse community offers.

We support the work of the Office for Disability Issues and its vision that by 2025, disabled people in Britain should have the same opportunities and choices as non-disabled people to improve their quality of life and be respected and included as equal members of society.

The University’s Disability Equality Scheme (DES) 2010-11 is considered as an interim document whilst work is ongoing to produce a Single Equality Scheme, which will meet the needs of the University of Chichester in a climate of internal and external change. Integrating disability equality into the mainstream business planning process, the Equality and Diversity Committee set up the Disability Equality Group to focus primarily on monitoring and connecting the disability equality agenda to the framework of the University so that disability equality is not a token gesture, but of real value and benefit to the University and the community it serves.

Awareness of shifts in attitudes, education, political framework, legislation and demographics continue to be important considerations, but of critical importance to a worthwhile and effective scheme continues to be the involvement of disabled students, staff and other stakeholders in shaping action and priorities. In all its work the University is committed to “Do nothing about us, without us”.

Dr Andy Dixon
Chair of the Disability Equality Group
SECTION ONE

PROMOTING DISABILITY EQUALITY

1. The University of Chichester is committed to both its statutory duty, as detailed in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, and The Disability Rights Commission Code of Practice on the Disability Equality Duty (England and Wales). The University believes that through the creation and implementation of its Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and subsequent Single Equality Scheme (SES), it can move its work on disability equality further forward, working towards creating an inclusive environment for students, staff, visitors and other stakeholders that have a connection with the University of Chichester.

2. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a general and specific duty on public authorities, including Universities, to promote disability equality in policy-making, service delivery, regulation and employment.

   The General Duty requires that you have due regard to the need to:
   - Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
   - Eliminate unlawful disability discrimination
   - Eliminate unlawful disability harassment
   - Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
   - Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
   - Take steps to take account of disabled persons’ disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

   The Specific Duty requires the publication of a Disability Equality Scheme and report progress annually.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

3. This Scheme and the Single Equality Scheme should be considered to be responsive and evolving and any individual or group that has an interest in being involved or consulted on how the University is moving forward with disability equality are invited to contact the Equality & Diversity Office.

4. The DES is the framework through which the University will address its general duty thereby ensuring its compliance of the specific duty. The SES is being developed to further the work already undertaken and address the proposed legislative changes that are anticipated to receive Royal Assent in 2010.

5. The University supports the principle of “Do nothing about us, without us” and believes that by publishing a DES/SES which is detailed, open and transparent it will generate more involvement, but also clearly demonstrate and focus the University’s commitment to disability equality.

6. For the University, embedding and integrating equality and diversity will help to develop an inclusive environment. It will also strengthen our position through helping us to attract and retain quality staff, which will assist in the future admission of students and enhance the sustainability of the University.
APPRECIATION OF LANGUAGE

7. The University recognises that there are a number of reasons why many individuals would not consider themselves disabled. This could in part be due to their perception and understanding of what being “disabled” means. To ensure that the University addresses the wide variety of disabilities, as defined within the Act, it is intended to use the terms ‘disabled’, ‘impairment’ and ‘condition’. However only by obtaining a more accurate profile can we confidently understand the issues and therefore actions required to achieve the University’s commitment to disability equality. This is an issue that we will continue to raise awareness of and encourage disclosure.

8. Appendix 1 details all acronyms used within this document.

OUR COMMITMENT TO THE SCHEME

9. Our commitment to the Scheme underlies our belief that:

- Discrimination in all forms based on a person’s disability is unjust and unfair and is a waste of human resources and a denial of opportunity for self fulfilment
- Creating a culture in which raising awareness helps to eradicate misconceptions will help to build an inclusive environment
- Staff and students are entitled to dignity and respect in the workplace and learning environment
- To ensure equality of opportunity we must recognise that a person with a disability is an individual and therefore will have differing needs and support
- The Social Model of disability is relevant to the work to ensure an effective scheme

The University is resolute in that:

- Bullying, harassment and victimisation directly related to a person’s disability will not be tolerated
- Good practice in disability equality will be expected from external organisations with which the University has partnership arrangements or service contracts
- Whatever it does the University will ensure it complies with its duties within SENDA 2001 and the DDA 2005.

Aims – Students

10. The University of Chichester aims to:

- Create an environment in which disabled students can benefit from the same opportunities as non-disabled students
- Ensure a student’s disability does not disadvantage them from gaining achievement of qualification that a non-disabled student would achieve
- Give students information, advice and guidance on whether they could receive additional support
- Provide a support mechanism within the University to ensure that disabled students have an equal opportunity to benefit from the student experience as non-disabled students
- Be pro-active in creating an environment that is positive towards students with disabilities, ensuring all forms of discrimination are not tolerated.
Aims – Staff
11. The University of Chichester aims to:
   • Build a workforce that reflects the community it serves in terms of disability, taking proactive steps to attract disabled persons to the University
   • Work with employees to try to retain their skills and experience within the University if they either become disabled or their progressive condition worsens
   • Ensure that staff with disabilities are given an equal opportunity to personal development and promotion opportunities as their non-disabled colleagues
   • Create an environment in which any stigma of disability is removed, that no-one is fearful about declaring a disability, and that all forms of discrimination are eliminated
   • Raise awareness of disability to assist in creating a positive attitude amongst all staff to persons with disabilities.

Aims – Other Stakeholders
12. The University considers visitors, partnerships, collaborative groups, external agencies and all organisations, bodies, and individuals with an interest in the activities of the University to be its Stakeholders.

13. The University of Chichester aims to:
   • Ensure disabled visitors are not discriminated against by any member of staff or student
   • Ensure that throughout the process of visiting the University, disabled visitors leave with a positive experience of the University in respect to disability equality
   • Work with its stakeholders to raise awareness of the University’s standing on equality and diversity; working to ensure any disparity in approach to equality diversity is acceptable to the University.

ACCESSIBILITY
14. The University recognises that there are accessibility issues across its campuses, but is committed to undertaking whatever it can reasonably do to ensure that all property used by the University is accessible to disabled staff, students and visitors. It further aims to work towards a vision that all its facilities and equipment meets the needs of its disabled students, staff and visitors. When considering adjustments the University ensures that it complies with health and safety legislation and legislation pertaining to its historic buildings.

15. The accessibility of the curriculum is more than enabling physical access to facilities, field trips and placements. Through its learning and teaching strategy to ensuring that its curriculum content, learning and teaching and assessment strategies enable all students to achieve their potential.

16. Formed in 1994 The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is an international consortium; its primary goal to build consensus around web technologies and in so doing create web standards and guidelines. W3C is committed to lead on improving web accessibility for people with disabilities.
17. The Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) develops this work, involving different stakeholders in web accessibility including industry, disability organisations, government and accessibility research organisations. WAI guidelines are considered the international standard for Web accessibility. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) comprises 14 guidelines split into 65 separate checkpoints and focuses on the production of web pages. The checkpoints are classified into three priority levels. Priority 1 is where a web content developer must satisfy the checkpoint, as it is a basic requirement for some groups to be able to use Web documents.

18. The University is committed to ensuring compliance to Priority 1 items of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

**PROCUREMENT & PARTNERSHIPS**

19. The University, whenever possible, will enter into contracts and Partnerships with organisations and individuals who agree to adhere to the principles of the general duty of the DDA 2005. Any form of discrimination that takes place by a contractor or partner and that is brought to the attention of the University will be dealt with appropriately.

**SECTION TWO**

**LEGAL CONTEXT**

20. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) was introduced in 1995 after persistent lobbying by disabled people and their representative organisations for comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation. Since 1997 social exclusion has been an explicit focus of Government policy and “lack of participation in the labour market is generally considered a key indicator of social exclusion”.

21. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act came into force in 2001 (known as SENDA or DDA Part IV) which encompassed the education sector in promoting equality for disabled people. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA 2005) makes substantial amendments to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995; building on amendments already made to that Act by other legislation since 1999 and placed a specific duty on the public sector, including Universities, to publish a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) by 4th December 2006. The Duty further requires Universities to revise and publish a new DES by 4th December 2009.

22. In the Queen’s speech in December 2008 it was announced that an Equality Bill would replace all existing equality legislation, with the aim of it receiving Royal Assent in April 2010 and to come into force in April 2011.

23. In 2008 following an organisational review, the University saw a radical change to its organisational structure which meant that parts of the Disability Equality Scheme, Gender Equality Scheme and Race Equality Policy were no longer relevant. The equality and diversity framework of the University was reviewed to ensure it was robust and fit with the new structure, I was agreed to move forward and set out the University’s equality agenda in a Single Equality Scheme to incorporate all equality strands.

24. Whilst this work is completed, this interim DES will demonstrate how the University intends to deliver its general duty in terms of both its education and employment responsibilities. It is the University of Chichester’s intention that work to integrate and embed disability is neither seen as, or is a paper exercise, but one that can demonstrate real value and benefits.
25. The University recognises that in order for such a plan to be truly effective, it must involve people with disabilities and this is also enforced in the requirements of the scheme. The requirements further state that the DES should include details of how the University will gather and use information, what actions it intends to implement as a result of the information and how it will conduct future impact assessments. An annual report is required to be published. All such details are included in this scheme.

**THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY**

26. The University continues to support the social model, which looks at the way in which the lives of disabled people are affected by the barriers that society imposes, rather than the medical model which focuses on “intervention” to “fix” the individual. Pages 17-19 of the University’s DES 2006-2009 should be referred to for a more detailed definition of the Social and Medical models.

**VISION**

27. The University is committed to the spirit of the DES, embedding the principles of the scheme into its foundation through its values, corporate plan, strategy, development programmes and Faculty and Department plans. The University’s Equality & Diversity Policy outlines our commitments and accepted values, and supports our vision of “a university with a sustainable future of managed expansion that inspires and enables growing numbers of people of all ages to exceed their expectations, fulfils its staff and delights its partners; a University of which we can all be proud”.

**VALUES**

28. The University has an Ethical Policy Framework as “Ethics goes beyond an institution’s legal responsibilities and therefore embodies the values and principles of the institution”. The document is posted on the University’s intranet site. The Ethical Policy Framework clearly defines the University’s values in which it believes in “harnessing the intelligence, skills and enthusiasm of its staff and students to develop life-long reflective learners who make a positive contribution to society” and in which it respects “human dignity”. The Framework also states the University’s commitment to equality of opportunity and the recruitment and promotion of staff “on the basis of their suitability for the job without discrimination”. The policy makes clear that “the University will not tolerate sexual, physical or mental harassment (including bullying) of its staff or students”.

29. The Ethical Policy Framework addresses all its stakeholders, such as the community in which it is located and in which the University “strives to make a positive contribution to the sustainable development”, and will favour suppliers “demonstrating socially and environmentally responsible behaviour and high standards of ethical business conduct”.

**UNIVERSITY’S CORPORATE PLAN**

30. The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for the strategic plan and is committed to support disability equality within the University of Chichester. A copy of the strategic plan is available on request to the Company Secretary.

31. An external member of the Board of Governors sits on the Equality and Diversity Committee and the Committee reports to the Board of Governors on activity and progress.
32. Acknowledging that the success of the University’s corporate plan will depend to a large degree upon the capability and desire of its staff; the University weaves disability equality through its Faculty and Department Delivery Plans, Human Resource Strategy and Staff Development Programme. In so doing it aims to:

- Continue to disseminate and “mainstream” the key diversity policies at all levels through consultation, communication, publicity and training
- Develop the University’s equality impact assessment model, including external monitoring
- Develop the Diversity Training Programme for managers, staff, students, contractors and collaborative partners
- Benchmark with other institutions and local employers to identify and adopt good practice whenever appropriate
- Embed further the principles of equality and diversity into the culture of the University.

SECTION THREE

DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY’S DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

33. The DES requires commitment from the leaders of organisations, “….Strong clear and consistent leadership is the key…” and that “the Disability Equality Scheme demonstrates commitment at the very highest level of the authority”.

34. The Disability Equality Group was established to focus on disability equality across the University and reports to the Equality and Diversity Committee which is Chaired by the Pro Vice-Chancellor and reports directly to Vice-Chancellor’s Group and the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors has overarching responsibility for the implementation and progression of the DES and the SES. The University’s Equality & Diversity Officer, acts as facilitator to assist in the publication of the University’s first DES and ensures that the development of the scheme continues within the spirit of the DRC’s ethos; working towards creating an inclusive environment.

35. Membership of the DEG comprises representatives from the Disability and Academic Skills Service (DASS), Staff, Students and Students’ Union, Unions (Academic and Support) and External Organisations/Individuals and Specialists with expert knowledge. Over 50pc of members must meet the DDA definition of disability and should represent a broad range of disabilities. DEG members cascade information to and from colleagues and their networks to ensure University wide coverage.

36. As an interim measure the DES is informed by the DEG, DASS, Equality & Diversity Officer, Student Support Services, Widening Participation team, quantitative data and the strategic plans and focus of the University.

37. Whilst the University believes that it will be beneficial to adopt a Single Equality Scheme, it is committed to ensuring that the work to address disability equality is not diluted as a result. The Disability Equality Group has responsibility for the disability section within the University’ Single Equality Scheme.
38. An equality and diversity survey targeted to staff and students will be circulated in March 2010 and includes a section written by the DEG. Further meetings on a one-to-one or Forum basis will be undertaken. Questionnaires targeted to external groups will be produced and with quantitative data collated will help inform the disability focus of the SES. Questionnaires will be available to complete online or in hard copy.

39. A communication plan to encourage completion of the questionnaire has been produced. The Equality tab of the University's intranet is used to promote disability matters and an article was placed in Able magazine, Education and Employment Supplement, a lifestyle magazine for disabled people inviting individuals to be involved in the work of the DEG or comment on the DES and SES.

40. The University appreciates that the DES/SES requires the involvement of disabled persons; however it recognises that non-disabled persons could offer valuable knowledge and/or expertise, either as a result of their profession, or having a family member, friend or colleague who is disabled. To bring about effective change it is also important that there is understanding and buy-in to why there is a need for organisational change to ensure disability equality. Therefore the University will welcome feedback to the DES/SES from non-disabled staff and students.

41. The SES will be subject to approval through the University’s Governance structure.

SECTION FOUR

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

42. The University’s 2009 Equality and Diversity Annual Report published in December 2009 provide quantitative data of progress since the DES was first introduced. The Report also focuses on key pieces of work that the University have or are implementing in the area of disability equality. The Report can be downloaded at www.chi.ac.uk/aboutus/equalityanddiversity

The University's previous annual reports highlighting progress and areas of focus are also available to download from the above link.

SECTION FIVE

ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

43. The Single Equality Scheme will detail the University’s key objectives, however in the interim the key areas for focus over the next 12 months are detailed below. Responsibilities are detailed in the University’s Strategic Plan, Equality & Diversity Policy, Faculty and Department Delivery Plans, Learning and Teaching Strategy, HR Strategy, Academic Regulations and integrated throughout University policies and procedures.

• Contribute to a Student and Staff Survey, establishing Forums or one-to-one discussions where required
• Undertake an Accessibility Audit
• Ensure regeneration of BRC takes into account accessibility issues
• Implement initiative to increase staff disability disclosure
• Retention of Disability Symbol
• Review risk management plans for all disabled staff
• Involve and consult External stakeholders in the work of the SES
• Action to ensure QAA monitoring meets with code of practice to support disabled students
• Publish a minimum of two press releases

SECTION SIX

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT
44. The University appreciates the importance of impact assessment to examine current or intended policies, practices, provision and criteria for their impact. It further recognises that it is a useful business evaluation tool which helps to inform corporate strategy, review and streamline policies and procedures, supports treating staff fairly, and increases trust and effectiveness of, and satisfaction with services; the aim being to identify adverse outcomes.

45. Since the first DES, the University has invested in a software programme to assist staff in undertaking equality impact assessment. The programme incorporates online training, accessible 24/7 and is due to roll-out in 2010.

46. In order for staff to confidently complete the screening template and undertake a full equality impact assessment, knowledge of equality and diversity issues is essential. The University has invested in a general online equality and diversity training programme, in addition to the mandatory and optional equality and diversity workshop sessions it offers.

47. Full details of the process for conducting, monitoring and reporting on equality impact assessment is available to view by clicking on the equality tab of Portia, the University’s intranet site.

MONITORING, PUBLISHING AND REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS
48. The DES and SES will be available for review by the Governors, Staff, Students and Unions via the intranet, and sent to interested parties for their feedback.

49. The DES and SES will be placed on the University’s Intranet and Internet sites.

50. The DEG will meet at least twice yearly to ensure that progress is being made against the scheme. Using methods set out in Section 3 there will be ongoing involvement with disabled staff, students and other interested groups/individuals to identify the effectiveness of the University’s Scheme, what is working well, where improvements can be made and further priorities for action.

51. Reference to the Scheme will be included in the Staff Handbook, Staff induction materials, Equality & Diversity Policy, Student Charter and Handbook and other appropriate policies and statements.
SECTION SEVEN

RESOURCE AND COST

52. Once the findings of the accessibility audit are known a more accurate forecast will be made. The University has adopted a central budget system to ascertain the cost of reasonable adjustments. In 2010 the University will invest in an equality impact assessment software programme which in future years will incur a lower annual maintenance fee. The University has an extensive equality and diversity staff development programme which is included within the overall staff development budget.
## Appendix 1  Acronyms

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<tr>
<td>BRC</td>
<td>Bognor Regis Campus</td>
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<td>DASS</td>
<td>University’s Disability and Academic Skills Service</td>
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<td>DDA</td>
<td>Disability Discrimination Act</td>
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<td>DED</td>
<td>Disability Equality Duty</td>
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<td>DES</td>
<td>Disability Equality Scheme</td>
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<td>DLF</td>
<td>Disability Living Foundation</td>
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<td>DRC</td>
<td>Disability Rights Commission (no longer operational)</td>
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<td>DSA</td>
<td>Disabled Student Allowance</td>
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<td>ECU</td>
<td>Equality Challenge Unit</td>
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<td>Labour Force Survey</td>
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<td>Learning Resources Centre</td>
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<td>Learning &amp; Skills Council</td>
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<td>SENDA</td>
<td>Special Educational Needs and Disability Act</td>
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<td>SES</td>
<td>Single Equality Scheme</td>
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<td>SIPSE</td>
<td>Social Inclusion Partnership for the South East</td>
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<td>UCU</td>
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<td>World Wide Web Consortium</td>
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