

Middlesex University

Board of Governors

Disability Equality Scheme 2009-2012

Reason for the Scheme

The Scheme sets out how Middlesex University will fulfil its statutory responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (the Act). It also confirms the University's commitment to use best practice to maintain an institutional culture which fosters equality, celebrates diversity and promotes these values externally. This will provide a way to meet our obligations to proactively promote equality for all disabled people.

Links with the Middlesex Corporate Plan

This scheme has been produced in line with the University's Corporate Plan 2008-13 to support the achievement of the priorities and objectives. Where there is a link between a priority and disability equality this has been identified in the Scheme's Action Plan.

The University has four corporate priorities which have a relationship with the Scheme;

- Enhance the quality of academic provision
 - The University seeks to provide the best academic provision for its students therefore from the perspective of disability equality we aim to ensure that disabled students have access to and benefit from enhancement of our academic provision.
- Improve student satisfaction
 - The University wants all its students to have an excellent learning experience and the Scheme aims to support this for disabled students during their time at the University.
- Income growth across all areas
 - The University wants to maximise its various income streams and the Scheme aims to ensure that the potential of disabled people is maximised to enable their full contribution to income growth.
- Improved productivity
 - The University needs to effectively manage its resources; the Scheme supports this in conjunction with ensuring that disabled staff and student receive the appropriate support to enable them to improve their own performance and outputs.

Middlesex University is committed to meeting the requirements of the general duty and the specific duties.

The Board of Governors fully accepts its legal responsibility to eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of disability, promote equality of opportunity and promote equality in all aspects of its activities as an employer and provider of Higher Education. The Vice-Chancellor, acting on behalf of the Board of Governors, will take all reasonable and practicable steps to ensure compliance with the policy.

Non-compliance with the University's Disability Equality Scheme could lead to an individual and the University being in breach of the law. The University will take action if there is any attempt by its students, staff or other service providers to discriminate against the people whom the Act protects. Similarly, it will take action if there is any obstruction of the institution's efforts to meet its obligations under the Act.

Background

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (the Act) placed new duties on public authorities in matters of disability equality. Among these duties is the requirement to establish and maintain a Disability Equality Scheme.

The original Scheme was developed during 2005/06 and the revised Scheme will be submitted to the Board of Governors for approval in November 2009. It will be reviewed again in 2012, or earlier if this is deemed necessary, in the light of advice from staff and students, information derived from the University's monitoring of the policy and action plan, and advice from bodies such as the Equality and Human rights Commission and the Equality Challenge Unit.

The Scheme and Action Plan have been developed in consultation and partnership the Disability Equality Group a group of senior staff, Trade Union and Student Union representatives and the Disability Equality Scheme Working Group, following wide consultation within the University. These groups include representatives with responsibility for implementing the action plan and with key responsibilities in terms of maintaining commitment to and promotion of a proactive approach to disability equality and in tackling discrimination on the grounds of disability.

Organisational Context

Middlesex University continues to be committed to building a fair and equitable environment in which unlawful or unfair discrimination is not tolerated. The University is committed to promoting equality for disabled people and equality of opportunity for all in order to eliminate unlawful or unfair discrimination. We positively value and celebrate the diversity of all our staff and students. Middlesex University also recognises that it has an important part to play in helping to create a fair and just society.

Our aim to be an increasingly global university and we remain one of the most popular UK Universities for international students. We are fully committed to achieving the best possible success and employability of our students by offering outstanding student support, highly effective teaching and learning strategies and practical links with employers. We believe passionately in offering higher education to all who will benefit from it

The University has a number of policies and procedures which contribute to achieving these aims. These include;

- The University's Corporate Plan
- University's Ethos and Goals;
- Equal Opportunities Policy (which contains the code of practice on disability and other forms of harassment);
- Recruitment and selection;
- Grievance and complaints procedures;
- Regulations governing student complaints, academic appeals procedure, learning and teaching strategy, strategy for widening participation.

To support equality impact assessment there are systematic reviews of all the University's policies and procedures. As part of this ongoing programme of policy review, the University will ensure that all its policies and procedures meet the requirements of the General and Specific duties of the Act.

The University's Equal Opportunities Policy states: "The achievement of equal opportunities is central to the University's Mission. As a provider of higher education our aim is to foster and develop a wide range of skills and experience which cannot be found within any single group of students or staff. In pursuit of our aims, we seek to create a community in which diversity is valued and which both reflects and services the needs of the broader community in which we operate".

The University has also adopted the definition of disability as stated in the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005. This is that 'a person has a disability if he or she has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'.

The Vice-Chancellor has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that complaints are investigated and reported where appropriate to the Board of Governors.

Where are we now?

Staff Profile

The table below shows the disability profile of all staff employed by the University as at 30 June, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 and the numbers employed at 30 June 2009.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
All Staff										1856
Disability	2.5%	2.4%	2.0%	1.7%	5.3%	4.6%	4.4%	4.6%	3.9%	73
Senior Managers										168
Disability	3.5%	4.2%	3.8%	3.1%	4.8%	4.4%	4.0%	3.5%	3.6%	6
Academics										728
Disability	2.4%	2.4%	1.7%	1.5%	4.4%	4.3%	4.1%	4.5%	4.0%	29
APT&C										928
Disability	2.2%	1.8%	1.5%	1.4%	5.3%	4.3%	4.2%	4.4%	3.5%	32
Manual										32
Disability	4.2%	4.5%	5.6%	5.5%	12.6%	17.5%	16.6%	16.7%	18.8%	6

Obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act, 2005, places a positive duty on all public authorities, including Higher Education Institutions, to promote equality between disabled and other persons. This duty means that in all its identified relevant functions, the University must have due regard to the need to;

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Acts;
- eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;
- encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

Specific Duties have also been placed on Further and Higher Education Institutions, in order to help them meet the General Duty. Under the Specific Duties Middlesex University will have to:

- publish a Disability Equality Scheme demonstrating how we intend to fulfil its general and specific duties;
- involve disabled people in the development of the Scheme;
- include a statement in the Disability Equality Scheme which covers:
 - the way in which disabled people have been involved in the development of the Scheme;
 - the University's methods for impact assessment
 - steps which the University will take towards fulfilling its general duty (the "action plan")
 - the University's arrangements for gathering information in relation to employment, and, where appropriate, its delivery of education and its functions
 - the University's arrangements for putting the information gathered to use, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and in preparing subsequent Disability Equality Schemes
- the University must, within three years of the Scheme being published, take the steps set out in its action plan (unless it is unreasonable or

impracticable for it to do so) and put into effect the arrangements for gathering and making use of information; the University must publish a report containing a summary of the steps taken under the action plan, the results of its information gathering and the use to which it has put the information.

Implementation of the Scheme

The Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan provides an overview of the high level actions that are needed however in order to make a reality of the Scheme the following will be required;

- the responsible person in the Scheme's Action Plan must ensure that appropriate actions are planned, implemented, evaluated and reviewed.
- a further sub-set of actions specific to the individual actions identified in the Scheme's Action Plan will need to be developed. These further actions can be part of the school or service operational plan or in a separate equality and diversity plan.
- other more specific actions may be required at school and service level to fulfil our duties and integrated into their action plans.

Management and Accountability

The Board of Governors is responsible for approval of the Scheme and for ensuring that the University complies with the appropriate disability legislation. As part of the annual review of equality and diversity they will receive an update on the progress of the Scheme and its Action Plan.

The Vice Chancellor and Executive of the University will ensure, through their leadership that;

- the University complies with all Disability legislation
- the Scheme and its Action Plan are implemented and
- evaluation and review of the operation of the Scheme and its Action Plan takes place

Deans of School and Heads of Service are responsible for ensuring that the General and Specific duties are undertaken in their areas of responsibility. Where they have specific actions in the Scheme's Action Plan they need to ensure that appropriate planning, implementation and evaluation is undertaken to the deadlines set in the Action Plan. This may entail the establishment of further actions to be undertaken in their areas of responsibility.

All staff need to be fully aware of the contents and requirements of the Scheme not only to implement the Action Plan but also to ensure that disability equality is proactively promoted across all areas of the University.

Funding

There is no discrete funding stream for the implementation of the Scheme therefore the costs of implementation of the Scheme will need to come from existing operational budgets.

Promotion of Disability Equality

To promote disability equality, Middlesex University will undertake a programme of continuous action which will include:

- on-going operation of fair policies, procedures and practices;
- training to ensure that all staff and students understand their responsibilities in relation to the University's Disability Equality and Equal Opportunities Policies and Action Plans;
- the continued operation of a team of harassment advisors and contacts, to assist staff or students who feel they have been subjected to any form of harassment;
- equality auditing of regulations, policies and procedures;
- consultation with all staff and students on the University's commitment to achieving real disability equality.

Assessing the Impact of our Policies / Projects

The Equal Opportunities Committee and its sub-groups will advise senior management on areas of priority for equality impact assessment. Human Resource Services and Registry will provide data to inform the equality impact assessment process.

The University will continue to undertake equality impact assessment of its policies or projects, including the Disability Equality Scheme. An equalities impact assessment involves gathering and using evidence to make a judgement about how a particular policy / project will or may affect different groups of people. The aim of the assessments will be to evidence the impact, whether positive, neutral or negative, on staff, students and where appropriate bodies or people external to the University. More details about equality impact assessments are available on the Equality and Diversity website <http://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/service/hr/qualoops/index.htm>

The first part of the process will be an initial investigation by the staff responsible for the policy or project to assess if the policy / project is equality relevant, for example will the policy have an impact on disabled people? If there is no equality relevance the equality impact assessment can end and decisions recorded.

However if there is an equality relevance there will be a need to analyse available data and identify any gaps in data. The analysis of the data is the second part of the process and will inform a decision on what impact the policy / project will have. The third stage of the process will be to decide if

there is any adverse impact on different groups of people e.g. disabled people. If there is not any adverse impact the equality impact assessment can end at this point and the results can be published.

The fourth part of the process will be implemented only if there is an identified adverse impact. This element will entail an exploration of any steps that could be taken to mitigate the adverse impact and consideration of other methods of achieving the aims of the policy / project that will eliminate or reduce the adverse impact. This could be achieved through changes to the policy / project or through changes to the method of implementation of the policy / project.

Following on from the mitigation stage the fifth part of the process will be a consultation exercise should be undertaken to ascertain how the policy / project could or will affect individuals. The consultation will be undertaken using the concepts of proportionality and relevance. This means that the amount of consultation will be in proportion to the equality relevance of the particular policy / project.

The penultimate part of the equality impact assessment will be to publish the outcomes and findings of the process. This will involve the production of a report that summarises the equality impact assessment process including how decisions were reached and what justifications were used in the process if the policy / project was either changed or not.

The final part of the equality impact assessment will be post-implementation through the review and monitoring of a policy / project on a regular basis to ensure we do not encounter any development of adverse impact.

To help in these equality assessments, the University will use the statutory code of practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission. To help it answer these questions, the University will:

- collect and analyse relevant monitoring and other data;
- consult with disabled staff and disabled students to find out their needs and opinions in relation to the University's main activities and functions;
- carry out appropriate surveys.

The University will also integrate equality impact assessment into its project management processes as part of the balanced scorecard methodology.

Monitoring Effectiveness

The University will monitor:

- student access, admissions, participation, assessment and progress;
- student support and guidance;
- student behaviour and discipline;

- staff recruitment, selection, promotion;
- staff training and career development;
- staff discipline and dismissal.

The University will use this data to analyse and assess its performance and effectiveness and to establish how it can improve its performance in these areas. The University will use the guidance and questions in the statutory code of practice produced by the Disability Rights Commission to aid the fulfilment of its duties and obligations contained in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

Development of the DES

The University has used a wide range of processes, techniques and formats to consult as widely as possible on its Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan. The University has consulted with Governors, Executive Briefing Group, Trades Unions and Students Union, and as many disabled staff and disabled students as possible. In addition the University has also consulted with its partners and contractors, including, local disability groups and potential students for example participants on programmes such as Widening Participation. The University will continue to consult in the development of new policies to aid the assessment of impact on disabled people.

Publication of the Scheme, and the Results of Assessment and Monitoring

The Scheme and Action plan will be publicised in the following ways:

- placed on the Intranet, Internet and 24-7 (Student Intranet);
- placed in all areas of the University where it can be picked up by staff and students;
- publicised in all relevant newsletters;
- publicised by global emails to all staff and students, sent to local community groups, and to the University's partners and contractors.

The results of monitoring, equality impact assessment processes, and any resultant actions will be published. This will be done through the following:

- Annual Review of Equality and Diversity at Middlesex;
- Annual Review of equality auditing and resultant action plans;
- Specific items placed in relevant internal and external media.

MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

BOARD OF GOVERNORS

DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY AND ACTION PLAN 2009-12

Action	Nature of Action	Overall Responsibility	Delivery Agent(s)	Start Dates	Review Dates	Link to MU Priority
1. Excellence in Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Research						
1.1	Schools will continue to review their curriculum offer and learning materials at under- graduate, post-graduate and research levels to establish the extent to which they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote disability equality and equality of opportunity for all; • promote good relations between disabled people and other groups; • respond to disability diversity. 	Deans of Schools	Associate Deans -Learning and Quality Enhancement and Centre for Learning and Quality Enhancement, and Associate Deans - Research	2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision

1.2	That the delivery of the Learning Framework ensures subjects and programmes include consideration of disability equality issues and where appropriate support the promotion of disability equality	Deputy Vice-Chancellor	Associate Deans - Learning and Quality Enhancement and Centre for Learning and Quality Enhancement	2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improving student satisfaction
1.3	That no student or staff member is disadvantaged in undertaking research by virtue of their condition or impairment	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research	Associate Deans - Research	2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improving student satisfaction
1.4	Report on the attainment of students with an analysis of the results going to Academic Board. There will be a focus on data in relation to the disability of students	Academic Registrar	Registry / Academic Board	2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision Improving student satisfaction
1.5	In depth analysis of student attainment and provision of an annual report	Academic Registrar	Teaching and Learning Committee and Equal Opportunities Committee	2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision Improving student satisfaction

2. Governance, Management and Monitoring						
2.1	Obtain approval from Board of Governors to implement the revised Disability Equality Scheme	Vice-Chancellor	Equalities and Diversity Manager	Nov 2009	N/A	
2.2	To be responsible for fulfilment of the general and specific duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005	Vice-Chancellor Deans of School and Heads of Service	Schools and Services	Dec 2009 onwards	Annual Review	Enhance the quality of academic provision
2.3	Provide equality and diversity monitoring data on all aspects of the University's recruitment and selection process.	Director Human Resource Services	Management Information Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision
2.4	Review work undertaken with partner institutions and community organisations within the UK complies with the University's Disability Equality Scheme and Equal Opportunities Policies	Deputy Vice-Chancellor		Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision
2.5	Undertake Equality Impact Assessment of policies and	Vice-Chancellor	Managers with responsibility for	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually	Enhance the quality of

	projects using process outlined in the Disability Equality Scheme		policy or project		thereafter	academic provision
2.6	Continue to utilise the Disability Equality Group as a body to assess and prioritise the policies and projects for Equality Impact Assessment	Equalities and Diversity Manager	Equalities and Diversity Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity
2.7	Provide equality and diversity monitoring data on all aspects of the workforce employed at the University including complaints, disciplinary cases, redundancy and dismissals.	Director Human Resource Services	Human Resource Services Managers	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity
2.8	Provide equality and diversity monitoring data on all aspects of the student population at the University	Academic Registrar	Statistical Digest Team	Dec 2009 onwards	Jan 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision
2.9	To ensure HR systems and procedures in operation across schools comply with the University Equal Opportunities policies and Disability Equality Scheme. Identify and specify any additional standards which are needed	Directors of Resources	School / Campus based HR administrative staff	On-going	July 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity

2.10	Review of HR recruitment systems and procedures in operation across the University	Director of Human Resources	Equalities & Diversity Manager and HRS Business Partners	2009 on-going	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity
2.11	Maintain the set of minimum standards to ensure tendering, selection and monitoring processes comply with the University's Equal Opportunities Policy and Disability Equality Scheme	Director Estates and Facilities Management	Major Project Programme Director	On-going	July 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity
2.12	Analysis of relevant disability monitoring data, both quantitative and qualitative relating to students and staff	Director Human Resource Services Academic Registrar	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity
2.13	Report on outcomes of disability monitoring to the Equal Opportunities Committee and the Board of Governors, as well as to staff and students	Director Human Resource Services Academic Registrar	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	Annually	Improved productivity
2.14	Ensure that equality and diversity continue to be an integral part of the University's operation	Director of Corporate Services	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	June 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity

2.15	Ensure that all University the development, improvement and maintenance of physical / infrastructural estates and facilities complies with Disability legislation	Director of Corporate Services	Director Estates and Director of Projects	Dec 2009 onwards	June 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision Improving student satisfaction
2.15	Provide support, assistance and assessment for disabled students and staff to include the provision of all Learning Resources services including ICT software	Academic Registrar Head of Learning Resources	Disability Support Service and Learning Resources Managers	Dec 2009 onwards	On-going	Enhance the quality of academic provision
3. Developmental and Training Activities						
3.1	That student induction will include equality and diversity aspects to inform students of University policies and provide information on where students can obtain help and support on these matters	Directors of Resources	Campus administrative staff	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Enhance the quality of academic provision
3.2	Continue to offer a programme of essential training for all staff on equal opportunities including the promotion of disability equality	Staff Development Manager	Staff Development Team	2009 onwards	Nov 2009 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity

3.3	Establish monitoring of participation by disabled staff of development and training activities	Staff Development Manager	Staff Development Team	Dec 2009	Annually	Improved productivity
4. Communications, Marketing and Community Links						
4.1	Establish and maintain links with a broad range of local community groups, private sector organisations and local authorities.	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	Annually from Nov 2010	Improved productivity
4.2	Promote diversity at Middlesex University and with our doorstep communities through creation of a viable dialogue that may include consultation and the sharing and development of good practice on disability equality and diversity issues.	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	July 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity
4.3	Continue to ensure that images which reflect the diversity of the University staff and students and its multi-cultural environment will be represented across all University publications.	Director of Communications	Corporate Communications Team	Dec 2009 onwards	On-going with annual review	Improving student satisfaction

4.4	Continue to identify and promulgate information, news items, success stories concerning disability equality across the University via media such as Middlesex World, the Intranet and the student website, 24-7	Director of Communications	Corporate Communications Team	Dec 2009 onwards	On-going with annual review	Improving student satisfaction
4.5	Ensure that taken as a whole the University's marketing publications and events are representative of our diverse student population including disability.	Director of Marketing	Marketing Team	Dec 2009 onwards	On-going with annual review	Improving student satisfaction
4.6	Ensure that the University's Websites are accessible to all staff and students comply with Disability legislation and best practice	Director of Marketing	Web Team	Dec 2009 onwards	On-going with annual review	Improving student satisfaction
4.7	Ensure that the University's ICT systems such as OASIS, MISIS, Oracle HR & Finance, email and timetabling are accessible to all staff, and students (where appropriate) comply with Disability legislation and best practice	Head of CCSS	Applications / Infrastructure / Operations Group Managers	Dec 2009 onwards	On-going with annual review	Enhance the quality of academic provision Improving student satisfaction

4.8	Ensure that the School's ICT systems are accessible to all staff and students and comply with Disability legislation and best practice	Deans of School		Dec 2009 onwards	On-going with annual review	Enhance the quality of academic provision Improving student satisfaction
5. Organisational Behaviours						
5.1	Continue to support harassment advisors, who will assist staff or students who feel they have been subjected to bullying or harassment.	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improved productivity
5.2	Disseminate the appropriate University policies and procedures to all staff and students through; 24-7- the student internet, articles in Middlesex World and any other appropriate media	Equalities & Diversity Manager	Equalities & Diversity Manager and Corporate Communications Team	Dec 2009 onwards	Nov 2010 and annually thereafter	Improving student satisfaction Improved productivity