FOREWORD

Greetings, Kia ora koutou

The obligation to ensure students, staff and visitors with disabilities, are provided with the opportunity to participate equitably in all aspects of the University community are embodied within legal frameworks\(^1\) and the Waikato University’s own internal policies and procedures. These require that we do not discriminate against students/staff or prospective students/staff on the grounds of disability and furthermore that we work towards the provision of resources to enable people with disabilities to have equitable access and opportunities.

The role of the Disability Support Service is to assist in creating a University environment that includes people with disabilities in all functions, systems and structures through the provision of information, support and resources. The primary, student-oriented, function of the Disability Support Service is to assist the University to remove any barriers to participation that may be experienced by students with disabilities and to ensure that individual learning requirements are being met.

To accomplish this goal, both physical and learning access must be provided. This means more than the removal of architectural barriers and the provision of equipment, access and auxiliary services. It means that reasonable accommodations must be made in the teaching process to ensure full educational opportunity and effective communication.

Applying this concept requires academic and administrative staff, wherever it is necessary, possible and reasonable to do so, to take disability into account and make appropriate adjustments to the learning environment.

The means of achieving this ideal are often not merely matters of judgement. They are matters of knowledge and understanding which staff that are inexperienced in working with people with disabilities may not have.

By facilitating heightened awareness of the barriers faced by people with disabilities and encouraging improved communication methods and teaching skills it is hoped that this training package will benefit all members of the university community, not just those with disabilities.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this package, I hope that you find it interesting, informative and most of all useful, in your day-to-day work with people with disabilities on campus.

Margaret Dobson
Disability Coordinator

IF YOU NEED HELP, WHO CAN HELP YOU?

The University of Waikato Disability Support Service provides specialist staff to coordinate support services for students with disabilities and provide a resource to staff within the institution.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICE CONTACTS

Margaret Dobson
Disability Coordinator

Shirley O’Sullivan
DSS Administrator

Donna Kenny
Student Adviser

Tania Turner
Student Adviser Maori Liaison

The Disability Support Service is based in the Student Services Building alongside the Health and Counselling Services.

Disability Support Service
Student & Academic Services
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton
New Zealand
Telephone 07 838 4719 or 07 838 4711
Facsimile 07 838 4282
Email: disability@waikato.ac.nz

\(^{1}\) The Human Rights Act (1993), and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (1978)
THE TRAINING PACKAGE

WHO IS THE PACKAGE FOR?
Although much of the material featured in the guide is directed toward teaching and classroom practice, administrative and other staff will find the information and strategies that are included of benefit in improving their interaction and communication with people with disabilities.

This package provides basic information to promote understanding of disability issues and encourage staff to create a non-disabling learning environment.

The training package has been designed to enable you to work at your own pace throughout the year. In addition to completing this manual it is recommended that you participate in a Disability Issues Workshop at some point during the year.

PURPOSE OF THE PACKAGE

The training package will enable you to:
- form an understanding of disability issues within the university context;
- understand the legislative requirements incumbent upon staff in providing service to students with disabilities;
- recognise direct and indirect discrimination and their effects;
- demonstrate an understanding of the principle of reasonable accommodation;
- demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles of equal educational opportunity and inclusive practice;
- demonstrate how services and facilities can be modified to make them more accessible for the whole community, including those people with a disability;
- increase participants’ awareness of how customer service skills can have an immediate and positive impact;
- participate in a face to face workshop exploring disability issues in education and gain an understanding of disability through experiential learning; and
- raise and clarify misconceptions regarding people with disabilities.

TRAINING PACKAGE OPTIONS

In order to maximise staff participation the package is flexible in its design. The training package includes:
- a training manual;
- an interactive web based training pack;
- an experiential workshop

It is strongly recommended that staff complete all three components of the training package. However, each part can be undertaken on a stand alone basis and a certificate will be issued to staff upon completion of each component.

TRAINING MANUAL

The Training Manual should take approximately 2 - 3 hours to complete.

The manual provides staff with a self-paced opportunity to learn about disability. The manual has been produced so it can stand alone or accompany the Web based training pack and/or Experiential Workshop depending on the time available for training.

The Training manual contains information, case studies and practical exercises designed to enhance your understanding of specific disabilities and disability issues, legislation, inclusive practices and providing customer service in a tertiary education setting.

Additional information and references to assist with the completion of the modules have been included in the Appendices Section at the end of the manual.

The training manual contains five modules, including activities and assessment components which may be completed individually or as a group. Every module has a learning outcome. These are:

Module 1 - Disability
Demonstrate an understanding of the physical and attitudinal barriers that people with disabilities may experience.

Module 2 - Language
Demonstrate appropriate use of language and develop some effective communication strategies for working with people with disabilities.

Module 3 - Legislation
Understand the impact of disability legislation and related legal requirements on the University community.
Module 4 – Customer Service
Develop the capacity to deliver good customer service to people with disabilities.

Module 5 - Inclusive Practices
Understand the concept of inclusion within tertiary education.

THE WEB BASED TRAINING PACK
This provides staff with an interactive multimedia learning component. Participants can work through the web package at their own speed and convenience. Participants will be required to complete an on-line evaluation and will be issued with a participation certificate.

The Web based training pack should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The Web based training pack includes:
- Internet links
- Slideshows
- Simulation exercises
- On-line test

EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP
This three-hour workshop explores disability issues within the physical environment and allows staff to enhance their understanding of the barriers people with disabilities experience in accessing education through simulation and facilitated learning.

The Experiential Workshop provides:
- Real-life scenarios depicting examples of good customer service within services provided by agencies.
- Simulation exercises.
- Group work on inventive problem solving

The scheduled Workshop dates for the rest of the year are:

Please contact the Disability Support Service to book and secure your place in a workshop.

The Disability Support Service also provides training specifically tailored for Departments, Schools and Faculties. Tailored training provides awareness, understanding and skills relevant to a particular group of staff.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some of the information in this guide has been reproduced from other publications with the permission of the owners. The University of Waikato would like to express its gratitude to these institutions for permission to use their material. Some changes have been made in the text and design.

Acknowledgement is made of information used from the following sources:

- “Inclusive Practice is Good Practice” The Tasmanian State Disability Liaison Officer Initiative, University of Tasmania.

- “Making a difference, Customer service for people with disabilities in local government agencies – Facilitators guide” Disability Services Commission, Western Australia (July 2000)

- “Opening all Options” A NSW Regional Disability Liaison Officer Initiative (1999)

- "Reasonable Accommodations, Strategies for Teaching University Students with Disabilities". This was compiled by the University of NSW, the University of Sydney, Macquarie University and the University of Technology, Sydney in 1991.


- “Students with Disabilities - A Resource Guide for Staff” James Cook University.

- “Students with Learning Disabilities - A guide for staff and students” The Australian National University Student Administration and Support Services (1995)

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MODULE 1 - DISABILITY

Learning Outcome
Demonstrate an understanding of the physical and attitudinal barriers that people with disabilities may experience.

INTRODUCTION
Although almost 20% of the New Zealand population identify as having a disability, they presently only represent 3.1% of the tertiary population. By comparison, students with disabilities comprise 3.8% of students enrolled at the University of Waikato. However, this small, but significant group is growing steadily, as educators, students and the community become more aware of the options available to people with disabilities.

WHAT IS A DISABILITY?

Disability is the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others due to physical and social barriers

(Disabled People’s International. 1994)

Some disabilities can affect a person’s capacity to communicate, interact with others, learn or get about independently. Disability can impact on a person’s employment, education, recreation, accommodation and leisure opportunities.

Disabilities can occur at any time in a person’s life. For some, the disability begins at birth. For others, it can be the result of a sporting, motor vehicle or other accidents. Other people acquire disabilities later in life, through various illnesses or ageing. Disabilities may be short or long-term and some are episodic. Many people may also have more than one disability.

While the degree and type of disability varies from person to person, people with disabilities may experience the following:

- loss of sight may mean people, even when wearing glasses, are unable to read an account, brochure or sign;
- loss of hearing may mean people find it difficult to hear in venues with background noise such as enclosed swimming pools, offices or sporting venues;
- speech difficulties may hinder a person’s ability to speak clearly;
- blackouts, seizures or ‘fits’ or loss of consciousness may occur during a lecture;
- comprehension difficulties may result in slowness at understanding written information or during conversations with staff;
- difficulty gripping or holding small objects, coins or cards;
- being unable to walk or stand for long periods;
- difficulty maintaining concentration in unfamiliar surroundings where bright lights and crowded environments may make someone with a disability disorientated and unsure; and
- difficulty reading signs or finding their way in unfamiliar places.

As a consequence, people with disabilities can face barriers every day when they are trying to access facilities or services. Activities such as paying accounts, visiting community facilities and participating in meetings or events can be major challenges when you have a disability.

The cause of disabilities can vary and as an individual ages the severity of the disability can also change.

Disabilities may be:

- genetically determined - the disability is inherited from parents or a genetic error occurs such as cystic fibrosis and muscular dystrophy;
- environmentally determined - a disability resulting from an infection such as meningitis, or an accident, injury or diabetes; and
- of unknown cause - when the precise origin of the disability is unknown.

Disabilities vary according to individual circumstances, however, a general summary of most common disabilities, their impact and strategies for support are included for your reference from the Disability Support Service or www.waikato.ac.nz/disability.

---


3 Number of tertiary students that identified they had a disability at the time of their enrolment - Ministry of Education SSG Report for 1999. However, in addition to these declared numbers there could be as many as 30-50% more students who enrol but choose not to disclose that they have a disability (often for fear of disadvantage).
DEFINING DISABILITY

Words matter. The words we use about people influence our attitudes and the attitudes of others, towards those people.

Words create images. Sometimes they create myths. This is certainly the case in the disability field which abounds with labels that stem from ignorance and suspicion.

Words change, both in meaning and in use. Take for example, cripple (from the old English crypel, meaning one who can only creep, or whose body and limbs are contracted). This word was once in common and respectable use. It appeared in the name of a national organisation CCS (formerly Crippled Childrens Society). Today its use for a person with a disability is regarded as unacceptable.

Stereotypes such as victim, sufferer and confined to a wheelchair - each conveying a negative connotation - are also being relegated to the cliche-heap.

In recent years the language of disability has moved away from the medical approach (which described the individual in terms of his or her functional impairments) to a social approach that reflects the relationship between the individual and his or her environment. This more enlightened approach recognises that a person with a disability is more likely to be handicapped by discriminatory or condescending attitudes encountered in society than by the disability itself.⁴

MODELS OF DISABILITY

PERSONAL TRAGEDY/ CHARITY MODEL
Disability is viewed as a tragic or miserable existence to which the only solution is to raise money or resources with the aim of reducing the “suffering” of people with disabilities.

People with disabilities are expected to passively and gratefully receive help. Charity providers decide what people with disabilities need. This approach focuses solely on the ‘effects of impairment’.

MEDICAL MODEL
Disability is located within the individual and is equivalent to “impairment”. The answer to disability is to “cure” the impaired individual. Success is measured by achievement of “normalcy”. People with disabilities are passive recipients of “experienced” professionals.

What is wrong with these models?
- They highlight only some of the things which disable a person in society. That is, they focus on the ‘effects of impairment’ without looking at the environmental or social barriers faced.
- People with disabilities are not empowered regarding their own lives.
- A non-existent ideal of ‘normalcy’ is aimed for.

A POSITIVE APPROACH

SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY
This is commonly accepted to be the preferred definition. The social model of disability states that it is barriers in our environment which disable people with impairments. I.e. an environment may be disabling or not disabling for a person with impairment, depending on support available or the barriers in place.

Within the social model of disability the terms impairment and disability are often used interchangeably, but they do not mean the same thing.

IMPAIRMENT IS:
A loss of use of a faculty or a part of the body. It includes a wide range of defective physical, sensory, cognitive and psychological structures of the body or mind. An impairment may be either temporary or permanent. (Consider for example a person whose limb has been amputated; the loss of the leg is the impairment).

DISABILITY IS:
The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by social, economic, political and environmental factors which take little or no account of people who have impairments, thus restricting/excluding them from full participation in their communities.

⁴ Words Matter – A guide to the Language of Disability, published by NZ Disabled, Auckland.
**What does this mean?**

It means that day-to-day problems faced by people with disabilities are identified as centering around the fact that society is organized to meet the needs of non-disabled people.

The social model does not dispute that there are “effects of impairment” which also impact on opportunities and access, but instead focuses on the barriers, which are created by our culture and the “way things are usually done”. It is these barriers that we need to remove.

People with disabilities are unnecessarily segregated because of a badly designed built environment, inaccessible transport, inaccessible information or discriminatory attitudes and practices. The Social Model states that integration is about removing these barriers, not “normalization”, cure or care. This model empowers people with disabilities. Individuals are no longer seen as lacking; our environment and society is!

**THE REALITY**

The fact is that the disability sector has never concerned itself with Julian because he has never been seen to be a person with a disability. Julian's full name is Julian Lloyd Webber and he is one of the world's most famous and accomplished cellists. Julian's obsession then is seen as little more than an eccentricity.

But if Julian was seen as a person with a disability, things would have been different. His obsession would have been something which had to be "fixed up": it would have been seen, in some way or another, as a function of his disability. It may have been seen as a feature of psychosis, as a manifestation of a personality disorder, or as some other form of behavioural problem. Whatever the diagnosis, it would have been "treated". But Julian was a prominent person, so his differences were accepted and accommodated for. There was no psychotherapy, no behavioural modification for Julian Lloyd Webber.

Julian's story is just one example of the many ways modern society responds differently to people who have or are seen to have a disability. In its own small way, it helps us understand why and how people with disabilities come to experience discrimination.

---

**DISABILITY - WHAT'S IN A LABEL?**

**HOW IT IS EXPERIENCED**

Julian is a man in his mid-40's who has a somewhat bizarre obsession. He is terrified of water coming into contact with his left hand. He is not scared of water in general; he does not even object to his right hand, or, indeed, his left arm, getting wet. But under no circumstances will he allow even a drop of water to touch his left hand.

In some ways Julian's obsession might seem trivial, but others think differently. The people Julian lives with resent the fact that he never washes the dishes; others are concerned about his hygiene because he refuses ever to wash that one hand. When he swims, he can only swim in a circle because he feels he has to hold his left arm above the water; to some people, this makes Julian look ridiculous.

Disability specialists and therapists would propose many solutions for Julian's "problem": behaviour modification programmes, medication which could be used, or counselling.

---

5 John Nothdurft and Frosty, Becoming Visible, Manakau Polytechnic
ACTIVITY 1

Which of the three models of disability (charity, medical, or social) are supported by the examples below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>MODEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising collection stand in the shape of a child with crutches</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>A policy document which states “Those suffering from hearing loss can achieve much with the aid of speech therapy and the avoidance of sign language”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Paralympics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An advertisement that shows a person with visual disability waiting for help at a roadside.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A commentator at a sporting event saying “Since he was struck down by multiple sclerosis he has bravely managed to remain involved in sport, despite the fact that he is now wheelchair bound”.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A television programme which has wheelchair users as “extras” without referring to their disabilities at all.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check your answers on the Answers page on Page 51
In your own words, write a short paragraph outlining the social model of disability. Why is this the preferred model?
BARRIERS

People with disabilities often experience many different disabling barriers in accessing education. These can include:

**ATTITUDES**
- from staff or from other students
- preconceptions about capabilities
- not being included
- inflexibility

**RESOURCES**
- financial
- personal
- educational
- facilities and equipment
- services

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading / writing / understanding printed material</th>
<th>May not be accessible due to vision/learning impairments. Impairment of hand functions. Deaf students for whom Sign Language is their first language.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communicating information verbally</td>
<td>Sign language user / auditory learning disability. Speech impairment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration of lectures</td>
<td>Illness or medication causes fatigue. May need to eat during lectures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload and Completion of assignments</td>
<td>Illness/impairment may impact upon ability to meet deadlines. May take longer to complete work or need rest breaks eg for Occupational Overuse Syndrome (OOS) May need to study part-time – more expensive to complete a qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory attendance.</td>
<td>May not be able to attend due to illness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical access</td>
<td>Long distances to travel (limited mobility or wheelchair). Appropriate parking. Toilet facilities. Noise distractions for hearing aid user.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evacuation procedures</td>
<td>Safety and speed of evacuation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field trips &amp; lab work</td>
<td>May be too tiring or not accessible by wheelchair. Reduced hand functions, standing, reaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note taking</td>
<td>Distracts from processing information. Cannot watch lecturer / interpreter and write at the same time.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Barriers are often hard to minimise as they are seen as “the way things are done”. Below is a list of some of the barriers students may experience. It is important to realise that in most cases these barriers can be removed or their impact minimised through the use of appropriate support services, equipment alternative arrangements and/or inclusive practices. More detailed information and strategies are available from the DSS Website.
ASSESSMENT 2

List some of the difficulties and barriers a person with a disability may experience at university (e.g. when attending a lecture, contacting a service or trying to get into a building).

Choose an environment that best suits your workplace or intended area of work. Begin when a person with a disability first contacts you. Finish the list when the person with a disability completes their course of study or concludes the business required.

List the difficulties for **one** of the following groups:

- people who are deaf or who have a hearing impairment;
- people who are blind or who have a vision impairment;
- people who use wheelchairs or have other mobility disabilities; or
- people with intellectual disabilities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACTIVITY</th>
<th>DIFFICULTY EXPERIENCED</th>
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</table>

Detach this assessment page, combine with Cumulative Assessment on page 53 and send to:

Disability Co-ordinator
Disability Support Service
Student Services Building
DISABLING MYTHS

INTRODUCTION
As nearly one in five people living in New Zealand have a disability, the chances are very high that you will have contact with at least one person with a disability every day.

Students don’t want to be singled out, over protected or discriminated against. They just want a ‘fair go’ and access to services which will enable this. Attitudes towards people who have disabilities are often based on misinformation. Revising our perceptions and attitudes is the first step in including all students. It is useful to compare some common myths about the education, training and employment of people with disabilities with the reality.

COMMON MYTHS
Myth: Equal opportunity means that everyone should be treated the same - so students with disabilities are not entitled to support services.

Reality: Equal opportunity means all people should be treated in a way that enables them to achieve their potential. Provision of support services assists students with such tasks as reading and processing information, conducting library research, preparing assignments, photocopying and performing manual procedures.

Myth: Students with disabilities are more likely to drop out of courses than other students, even when given support.

Reality: Students may withdraw from study or training courses for the same range of reasons as other students, but they are no more likely to do so. Indeed, recent statistics from research conducted by the University of Tasmania, demonstrates that students who have access to required services, are less likely to withdraw than students who do not have a disability.

Myth: Students with disabilities are too time consuming and their needs are too difficult to cater for in a university, institution or training environment.

Reality: Students are highly motivated to attend tertiary education and training and overcome any barriers they may encounter during their participation. They are usually very well organised and experienced in finding solutions to problems which may initially appear daunting to staff.

Myth: Science, medical, technological, business and applied science courses are not suitable for students with disabilities.

Reality: This statement stems from preconceived ideas about people’s capabilities, accommodating their course needs and future employment options. Students have the same right as others to aim for careers consistent with their goals, interests and abilities and should not be denied opportunities because of such preconceptions.

Myth: Students with disabilities create substantial costs through the need to provide extra equipment and additional staff time.

Reality: Not all students will require assistive equipment or additional learning support staff. Site modifications, if necessary are often simple and low cost (eg: a student with paraplegia used a window-washer’s belt hooked to the chemistry work bench to allow her to stand with both hands free). Support personnel, such as tutors and note takers, can in some cases assist the student independently of teaching staff.

Myth: People with disabilities will be less attractive to employers because they will be less efficient, less reliable or unsafe employees.

Reality: A number of research studies indicate that this is untrue. People with disabilities value their work role, have fewer injuries and many are more efficient and lose fewer work days than people working with them who do not have a disability.

Myth: Students with disabilities are better off if they study through external courses.

Reality: Confinement to external study alone can restrict opportunities for interaction in a stimulating social, intellectual and learning climate. Many students with disabilities want to study on-campus - they should have that option.

---

6 Access, New Zealand CCS, May/June 1997, Wyatt & Wilson Print Ltd., Wellington

7 “Inclusive Practice is Good Practice” The Tasmanian State Disability Liaison Officer Initiative, University of Tasmania
**ACTIVITY 2**

Either using the library, or an internet search, research achievements made by people with disabilities. Write down the names of three people and their achievements.

Remember – everyone, regardless of disability has diverse abilities and skills. You may wish to choose an individual who is not ‘famous’ but has been successful in some area of life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDIVIDUAL</th>
<th>DISABILITY</th>
<th>ACHIEVEMENT</th>
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</table>
| e.g. Albert Einstein | Learning Disability | • Developed the theory of relativity, that matter and energy--all the "stuff" in the universe--actually mould the shape of space and the flow of time.  
• Developed the theory of light, the idea that light exists as tiny packets, or particles, that we now call photons.  
• Explained the phenomenon of Brownian motion, which proves that atoms actually exist.  
• Proved that energy and matter are linked in the most famous relationship in physics: E=mc². (The energy content of a body is equal to the mass of the body times the speed of light squared). |
|             |            |             |
DISPELLING DISABLING MYTHS

The first step in teaching students with disabilities seems obvious: treat them, simply, as students.

They are motivated to attend university for the same reasons as others and they bring with them the same range of intelligence and academic skills.

Revising our perceptions and attitudes is the first step in accommodating students who present themselves, learn or perform in ways that are different from others.

It is vital to remember that their similarities with others are much more significant: we are dealing, first and foremost, with students.

Acknowledgments:


“Inclusive Practice is Good Practice” The Tasmanian State Disability Liaison Officer Initiative, University of Tasmania

“Reasonable Accommodations, Strategies for Teaching University Students with Disabilities”. This was compiled by the University of NSW, the University of Sydney, Macquarie University and the University of Technology, Sydney in 1991.

“Making a difference, Customer service for people with disabilities in local government agencies – Facilitators guide” Disability Services Commission, Western Australia (July 2000)

ACTIVITY 3

Write down some of the negative attitudes students with disabilities might experience from staff and students.

_______________________________________
_______________________________________
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Attitudinal Change

"I went to an experiential seminar about working with people who have disabilities. We picked our 'disabilities' out of a hat and it was no great surprise when I drew my worst fear – quadriplegia.

Whilst in this role for one hour, I was left facing a blank wall, had coffee spilt on me, had an incredibly itchy face... and worse still, my colleagues suddenly started talking to me as a 'case' and not as me!

This gave me time to think about one of my students who is in a wheelchair and I realised how thoughtless we can be. I rang him that night and we talked about the workshop and the revelations it had brought my way."

University lecturer.
MODULE 2 – LANGUAGE COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Learning Outcome
Demonstrate appropriate use of language and develop some effective communication strategies for working with people with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION
Language both shapes and reflects social reality. Discriminatory language is therefore both a symptom of, and a contributor to, the unequal social status of women, people with a disability and people from various ethnic and racial backgrounds.

For many years now New Zealand society has come to consider that it is desirable to include all groups within society in the social, political, educational and other experiences of this country. This has been further endorsed through the introduction of laws and regulations which proscribe the use of certain language and behaviours. These encourage us to change those parts of our language, the use of which excludes those who are not of the same gender, race, or cultural background, etc.

This section aims to encourage staff at the University of Waikato to think critically about the language they use and provides practical guidelines on how to avoid using discriminatory language.

It is, however, difficult to be too prescriptive about the way language is used. It is important to relate our analysis of and reaction to, language to the particular contexts in which it is used. There may well be a place for otherwise unacceptable language in reported speech, creative writing or examples used for analytical purposes. There are special contexts, including teaching and performance, in which language, which would elsewhere be offensive, may be appropriately employed. These guidelines are not intended to stifle such usage.

SOME MAJOR FORMS OF DISCRIMINATORY LANGUAGE
Language is a major vehicle for the expression of prejudice or discrimination. Some of the major forms of discriminatory language are:

STEREOTYPING
A stereotype is a generalised and relatively fixed image of a person or persons belonging to a particular group. This image is formed by isolating or exaggerating certain features; physical, intellectual, cultural, occupational, personal and so on, which seem to characterise the group.

Stereotypes are discriminatory in that they take away a person's individuality. Although they may reflect elements of truth, these are usually misinterpreted or inaccurate owing to oversimplification. The status of minority groups in society is often adversely influenced by stereotypes of them.

The portrayal of people with a disability as helpless, mindless, suffering beings deserving the sympathy and attention of the non-disabled is one of many powerful stereotypes which has led and continues to lead to discriminatory treatment of people with a disability. People with a disability should be portrayed in a positive manner.

Common stereotype perceptions of people with disabilities include:
- Tragedy – “victim” or “sufferer”
- Worthy of sympathy and charity
- Either hero or burden on society

DISABILITY AND 'HUMOUR'
Discriminatory 'jokes' about people with a disability are offensive to many people, and should be avoided.
DEPERSONALISING OR IMPERSONAL REFERENCE

Often people with a disability are referred to collectively as the disabled, the handicapped, the mentally retarded, the blind, the deaf, or paraplegics, spastics, epileptics, etc. These terms have the affect of depersonalising the description of people and equating the person with the disability. These impersonal references to people with a disability should be avoided.

EXTRA VISIBILITY OR EMPHASIS ON DIFFERENCE

In many contexts it is unnecessary to mention a person’s sex, race, ethnic background or disability. Yet, for members of minority groups these characteristics are often mentioned. This type of detailed specification may result in overemphasis on a particular characteristic, thus creating the impression that the person referred to is somehow different.

DEROGATORY LABELLING

The discriminatory nature of derogatory labels used to describe members of minority groups is often obvious. However, in the case of people with a disability, labels such as ‘cripple’, ‘Mongoloid’, ‘deaf and dumb’, or ‘retarded’ are still commonly used and should be avoided.

IMPOSED LABELLING

A characteristic often shared by minority groups is their lack of power to define themselves. Often the names and labels by which they are known, whether derogatory or not, have been imposed on them. Imposed labelling may be inaccurate and may also be alienating for the groups it supposedly describes.

Language is not fixed and static, but constantly evolving and changing as society’s attitudes and practices change. Be aware of the development of new forms of expression that seek to describe our diverse society in non-discriminatory ways.

REPRESENTATION OF PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY IN CASE MATERIALS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

It is important to extend the non-discriminatory portrayal of people with a disability to their presentation in case materials and illustrations. For example, people with a disability should not be excluded from illustrations unrelated to the topic of disability, nor should they be portrayed as oddities or as objects of curiosity.

APPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

People with disabilities prefer that you focus on their individuality, not their disability. Positive portrayal of people with a disability is mainly a matter of presenting them as individuals with a variety of qualities. It does not mean that a person’s disability should be hidden, ignored or seen as irrelevant. However, it should not be the focus of description unless of course, it is the topic about which you are writing or speaking.

Your language should reflect a positive, straightforward and sensitive attitude towards people with disabilities.

Inappropriate language can cause offence to anyone in the community. The use of derogatory words, which focus only on one aspect of a person, such as their gender, cultural background or sexual orientation, can be rude and offensive. The same can be said for people with disabilities.

The following terms are generally preferred:

- a person with a disability
- student with a disability

as they recognise that the disability is only one characteristic of the person or persons and avoid objectification.

The term ‘disabled people’ is often used, but note that this term still defines people as ‘disabled’ first, and ‘people’ second.
The terms ‘victim’ or ‘sufferer’ to refer to a person who has or has had a disease or disability should not be used.

The term ‘handicapped’ has fallen into disuse and should be avoided. The terms ‘able-bodied’, ‘physically challenged’, ‘differently abled’ and ‘sufferer’ are also strongly discouraged.

“Finally Captain Hook, sir, would you prefer to be called deformed, crippled or physically challenged?”

A knowledge of commonly used terms is helpful when interacting with people with disabilities. If it is appropriate to refer to a person's disability, choose the correct terminology for the specific disability. For example:

People who are:
- blind or vision impaired;
- deaf or hearing impaired;
- intellectually impaired;
- mobility impaired.

People with or who have:
- cerebral palsy;
- mental illness;
- paraplegia;
- epilepsy;
- learning disability;
- speech impairment.

ACTIVITY 4

Identify three derogatory names you may have heard used which describe people with disabilities.

Identify the preferred term alongside these names.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEROGATORY NAME</th>
<th>PREFERRED TERM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As individuals we have programmed reactions to differences. It is quite natural to be uncomfortable when encountering something outside of our usual sphere of interaction. Derogatory terms tend to grow when we are trying to reject things that invade our comfort zone. A much more positive standpoint is to widen our comfort zone to include differences we may encounter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE</th>
<th>CORRECT TERM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disabled people/ the handicapped</td>
<td>People with disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People with disabilities experience the same range of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>emotions, needs, interests and ambitions as anyone else in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the community. Always remember they are people first.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blind</td>
<td>Person who is blind or has a vision impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People with significant vision loss can be totally blind or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>have low vision. When a person has less than 10 per cent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vision they are classified as legally blind. As people age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>they are more likely to have vision impairments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaf and Dumb</td>
<td>Person who is deaf or has a hearing impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Historically, these two terms were used together but today</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>it would be highly offensive if used to describe a person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>who is deaf and is unable to speak.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spastic</td>
<td>Person with cerebral palsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The condition of cerebral palsy is usually caused by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>birth trauma, either during or shortly after birth. The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>damaged nerve fibres cause the muscles to spasm, hence the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>jerky movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An epileptic</td>
<td>A person with epilepsy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow learner/retarded</td>
<td>Person with an intellectual disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This term was used to describe a person with an intellectual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>disability. People with intellectual disabilities may also</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>have physical disabilities. For many people with intellectual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>disabilities the cause is unknown.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confined to a wheelchair</td>
<td>Person using a wheelchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A person who has a mobility disability and needs to use a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wheelchair can be referred to as a person using a wheelchair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or a wheelchair user. Avoid terms that define the disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>as a limitation, such as ‘confined to a wheelchair’, or ‘</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wheelchair-bound’. For the user, a wheelchair is an aid to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>freedom, not a means of confinement. Remember people who use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wheelchairs all have quite different capabilities so they may</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>require varying levels of customer service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled toilets</td>
<td>Accessible toilets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The toilets are not disabled but have features that make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>them accessible to people with disabilities. All accessible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>toilets must meet the New Zealand Building Code and Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled parking</td>
<td>Accessible parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accessible car parking offers people with disabilities close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>proximity to an entrance and space to transfer in and out of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>their vehicle and wheelchair. Accessible parking needs to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>comply with the New Zealand Building Code and Approved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Documents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SUMMARY

Here are some guidelines and suggestions for preferred language for everyday use. Please consider them when you are talking or writing about people with disabilities. Please also keep in mind that people with disabilities are individuals and as such what is appropriate in language usage will be various, diverse and ever changing. Where possible ask the person what words you should use to refer to their disability.

• Remember the person first - disability second.
• Be aware of the language you use – replace with neutral language that is more inclusive. ie. “they” instead of “he” or “his”.
• Don’t make assumptions about an individual’s capabilities.
• Don’t judge by appearances.
• Be comfortable - to make others comfortable.
• Move at the same pace as the person with a disability
• Don’t hurry the student with a disability - it can create unnecessary anxiety
• Respect the individual’s right to refuse help.
• Don’t be condescending or gush pity.
• Respect the student’s right to privacy - invite the student to meet in your office if there is an issue to discuss (they may want to bring a support person).
• If you have a query related to the individual’s disability it is more appropriate to ask directly than avoid the issue.
• Recognise barriers to diversity and difference and seek to find relevant information and support (you don’t need to be an expert in everything!)

Acknowledgments:


“Reasonable Accommodations, Strategies for Teaching University Students with Disabilities”. This was compiled by the University of NSW, the University of Sydney, Macquarie University and the University of Technology, Sydney in 1991.

“Making a difference, Customer service for people with disabilities in local government agencies – Facilitators guide” Disability Services Commission, Western Australia (July 2000)

“Students with Disabilities - A Resource Guide for Staff” James Cook University.

8 Department of Labour 1988
9 Diana Murray, Disability Information for AIT Staff, 1992, Auckland Institute of Technology.
INTRODUCTION

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably than other members of the community. It can also happen when the community places expectations or criteria on people with disabilities, which are not placed on others. It is sometimes difficult to identify but occurs within society because of community intolerance, prejudice or lack of awareness and understanding.

Changing community attitudes, the increase in numbers of people with disabilities and the movement of people with disabilities into the community have helped increase the understanding and acceptance of people with different needs. This is reflected in legislation which protects the rights of people with disabilities to participate in all aspects of community life.

In New Zealand, legislation has required the community to re-examine services and facilities to ensure equity for people with disabilities.

Discrimination can be quite obvious but it also occurs in less obvious and subtle ways. For example, a seemingly neutral practice or policy can actually have an adverse impact on people with disabilities. This is covered by the legislation and is called indirect discrimination.

WHAT THE LAW SAYS...

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) is the basis of New Zealand’s human rights law and states specifically that “everyone has the right to education...higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit”. In New Zealand in 1993, the existing Human Rights Act was amended to include specific reference to disability as grounds for unlawful discrimination.

“The principles of anti-discrimination are now law - they are not simply esoteric rhetoric: there can be very severe penalties for ignoring those principles and students can and do take legal action to remedy this when it occurs. Finding solutions to potentially discriminatory practices warrants a collaborative problem solving approach where students and education providers work together to generate the answers which work for that student”.


10 Reasonable Accommodations, Victoria University of Wellington.
DEFINITIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Write a short paragraph on why you agree or disagree with one of the following definitions. Paragraph should reflect your views on what human rights are.

• Human rights are fundamental to our nature; without them, we cannot live as human beings.

• Human rights are those conditions of life that allow us to develop fully, use our human qualities of intelligence and conscience, and satisfy our spiritual needs.

• Human rights are based on people’s increasing demand for a life in which the inherent dignity of each human being will receive respect and protection --- an idea that reaches beyond the comforts and conveniences that science and technology can provide.

• To deny people their human rights is to set the stage for political and social unrest, wars and hostility between and within nations.

Detach this assessment page and send with your Cumulative Assessment Form on Page 53 to: Disability Co-ordinator Disability Support Service Student Services Building
THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

“Human rights law exists to protect the most vulnerable people in our society.”

“Human rights law is there to stop people doing bad things to others.”

The obligation to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities is enshrined within university policy commitments and legal responsibilities.

The Human Rights Act (1993) provides protection against discrimination on the grounds of disability. This protection includes both direct and indirect forms of discrimination.

AREAS OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

- Education and training --- going to school or any tertiary institution.
- Employment --- getting a job, being fired
- Provision of goods and services --- buying clothes or applying for insurance.
- Access to public places, vehicles and facilities --- going to the movies, a restaurant or a swimming pool.
- Accommodation --- finding a place to live.

The Human Rights Act makes it unlawful for a University:

a) To refuse or fail to admit a person as a pupil or student: or
b) To admit a person as a pupil or a student on less favourable terms and conditions than would otherwise be made available; or
c) To deny or restrict access to any benefits or services provided by the establishment; or
d) To exclude a person as a pupil or a student or subject him or her to any other detriment... by reason of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination.

GROUNDs OF UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

- Sex
- Marital Status
- Religious belief
- Ethical belief
- Race, colour, national or ethnic origins
- Age
- Employment status
- Family status
- Political opinion
- Sexual orientation
- Disability

The definition of disability is intentionally broad and includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disabilities and the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing illness (eg HIV).

Discrimination is prohibited against:

- people who currently have a disability
- people who previously had, but no longer have, a disability (e.g. a past history of severe asthma which is now under control)
- people for whom a disability may exist in future (e.g. being a member of a family that has a history of disease)
- people to whom a disability is imputed (e.g. assuming that a homosexual man who becomes ill must have AIDS).

DIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination is about unfairness. The Human Rights Act makes some of that unfair behaviour unlawful.

Unlawful discrimination means treating people with a disability unfairly or less favourably than people without a disability would be treated under the same or similar circumstances.

EXAMPLES OF UNLAWFUL DIRECT DISCRIMINATION

- A Deaf person being refused entry to a University course because they are deaf.
- A staff member who needed a leg brace was told she looked “unsightly”.
- A student with a vision impairment was not allowed to undertake laboratory work because “she might trip over a cord”.
- A 19 year old student was not accepted on a course because she was unlikely to be employed in the industry because of her disability.
UNLAWFUL INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION

Unlawful indirect discrimination happens when systems and processes (ways of doing things) have the effect of excluding people who are protected by the Human Rights Act.

INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION HAS TWO ASPECTS:
• Where there is a condition or requirement imposed (eg in the format of assessment in a subject) which may be the same for everyone but which unfairly excludes or disadvantages people with disabilities in a manner that is unreasonable.
• When a person treats another unfavourably on the basis of a characteristic that appertains generally to people who have such an impairment, or on the basis of a presumed characteristic that is generally imputed to people who have such an impairment. (eg. a lecturer refuses to allow a student with a visual disability to undertake laboratory work because of concerns that blind people are a safety risk).

EXAMPLES OF UNLAWFUL INDIRECT DISCRIMINATION:
• Non essential course pre-requisites.
• A job description says that a driver’s licence is necessary when it is not.
• Inaccessible public buildings.
• Questions on forms that could lead to discrimination.
• Inaccessible fieldtrip or placement.

It is also unlawful for a person who is a staff member of an educational institution to:
• harass a student on the basis of disability;
• victimise (threaten or treat unfavourably) a student with a disability who has lodged a complaint under human rights legislation; and/or
• discriminate against people because of their association with a student with a disability.

HIDDEN DISCRIMINATION

Some of the hidden ways people with disabilities experience discrimination are:

Discrimination in policy decisions
• Policy decisions are often made in ways that do not accommodate people with disabilities.
• It is useful to check whether a policy unfavourably affects a person with a disability in a way that it does not affect people without disabilities.

Accepting the "done thing"
• Discrimination is often disguised as simply "normal practice".
• It is useful to check whether the practice would be likely to be acceptable for people who do not have a disability.

Different expectations
• Placing expectations or criteria on people with disabilities which are not placed on others.
• It’s useful to check what expectations or assumptions might be contributing to a person with a disability being excluded and questioning whether or not these are reasonable.

Looking beyond the superficial excuses
• Disability will often not be overtly given as the reason for excluding someone. Discrimination on the grounds of disability might not even be conscious. It's useful to check whether a person's disability might in fact be an issue, even when this is not obvious or stated.

In practical terms this means that education and training providers:

"must ensure that a person with a disability is not discriminated against and must make changes to any practices or procedures that deliberately or inadvertently discriminate. The principle of adjustments and accommodations also applies to teaching, learning and assessment." (Source: RDLU Information Series, 1998)

Examples of changes:
• physical alterations to buildings;
• provision of services eg. notetakers, readers, sign interpreters; and
• provision of information in accessible formats.
WHAT IS REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION?

Reasonable accommodation is meeting the needs of a person without causing:

- unreasonable disruption
- undue hardship
- risk to health and safety

Some staff are concerned that the involvement of students with disabilities in their class somehow increases their risk of being sued for negligence. This fear appears based on an incorrect assumption that the safety record of people with disabilities is poorer than for other people.

"It is not possible to generalise that the mere presence of a disability poses an insuperable safety hazard, any more than it is valid to assume that the absence of disability means a person will employ safe procedures." (UniAbility, 1993)

Staff are most commonly concerned about safety issues in regard to practical and laboratory work. Barrett Swanson and Steere\(^\text{11}\) have suggested a series of useful guidelines to assist teachers working with students with disabilities in these settings. (Contact the Disability Support Service to access this information).

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

In the tertiary education sector, academic ability is the primary basis for participation and students with disabilities are expected to meet the normal admission and academic standards. However, particular adjustments may be required to ensure that such students are provided with equal opportunities to achieve their academic potential. This means that reasonable accommodations must be made in the teaching process.

There are numerous practical ways in which students with disabilities can be assisted, such as: the provision of lecture notes and reading lists ahead of time, permitting lectures to be taped, or arranging for notes to be brailled.

These provisions do not advantage students with disabilities - they simply enable such students to be as up-to-date with course material as other students.

Support Services, technology and a conscious commitment to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities can and are making a huge difference.

In addition to the support tutors and individual departments are able to make, there are a wide range of other supports available to students. These include:

- Reader-Writer for tests/exams.
- Notetaker (to take notes in class on behalf of the student).
- Dictaphone.
- Learning assistance.
- Support staffing to assist students with their research needs.
- Access to Speech Recognition software.
- Alternative print formats of course material via Transcription Services.
- Special / alternative arrangements in test/exam.
- Access to information (eg tests/exam scripts) in alternative formats (Braille, audio, electronic or enlarged print).
- Access to CCTV (text magnifier).
- Access to Screen Magnifier software.
- Access to Scanner & Screen-Reader software.
- Access to Interpreter Funding for deaf students who use NZ Sign Language.

\(^{11}\) Barrett Swanson A. & Steere N. Safety considerations for physically handicapped individuals in the chemistry laboratory. Journal of Chemical Education, vol 58, no 3, March 1981
ACTIVITY 6

For each of the following examples decide whether there is discrimination involved. For each question tick yes or no then check your answers with the answers provided on page 51.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IS THIS DISCRIMINATION?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Deaf person is refused entry into a film and media course because they can not “hear the dialogue”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student who lives with OOS is refused extra time allowances for examinations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A person with a visual disability has no access to course books in an alternative format (eg electronic or Braille)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Library is not accessible for a student using a large motorized wheelchair.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student was not accepted on a course because she was unlikely to be employed in the industry due to her age and disability.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lecturer refuses to allow a student with a visual disability to undertake laboratory work because of concerns that blind people are safety risks.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University sign states “No Dogs Allowed”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man denied entry into a teacher education programme because the School thinks he has a mental health issue.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CHECKLIST - IS THE BEHAVIOUR…**

- **DIRECT** or **INDIRECT**?

- **Does it involve a GROUND?**
  - Sex, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religious/ethical belief, race, age, political opinion, employment/family status.

- **Does it involve an AREA?**
  - Employment, accommodation, education, goods and services, access to public places.

- **Has REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION been made?**

- **Does it involve an EXCEPTION?**
  - Undue Hardship
  - Health & Safety Risk
  - Measure to Ensure Equality
  - Specific Exemption*

Check your answers on the Answers page on Page 51
ACTIVITY 7

What services and support do you consider are appropriate for a student with one of the following temporary impairments?

- Broken arm
- Torn Achilles tendon
- Temporary deafness due to overexposure to noise

1. Accessible Parking

2. Use of Support Staff

3. Access to lecture notes

4. Special Equipment
e.g. Seating, Dictaphones, FM systems

5. Extension for assignment/ extra time in tests/exams

Check your answers on the Answers page on Page 51
RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

**STUDENTS RIGHTS INCLUDE:**
- an opportunity to participate in courses/activities.
- access to information.
- access to support services.

**STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:**
- identification and access to support services.
- provision of documentation and requests for support and/or alternative arrangements.
- participation in the process of identifying inclusive strategies.
- meeting academic standards.

**THE UNIVERSITY AND/OR STAFF HAVE THE RIGHT TO:**
- determine academic standards.
- Identify essential course skills and competencies.
- evaluate student performance.
- require supporting documentation.

**UNIVERSITY AND STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- communication with students.
- provision of accessible information/services.
- fair and appropriate assessment.
- implementation of inclusive practices.
- respecting the rights of others and not treating them unfairly.

**WHAT DOES THE COMMISSION DO?**
- promotes observance of and respect for human rights
- advises the government, its departments and agencies and non-governmental organisations
- makes public statements
- prepares guidelines
- enquires into issues
- accepts and investigates, conciliates and sometimes litigates complaints
- operates a public information service

**COMPLAINTS PROCESS**

Complainant contacts Human Rights Act Helpdesk.

If complaint is within jurisdiction, Complaints Officer contacts complainant and respondent.

**CONCILIATION**
- Meetings, letters, phone calls

**INVESTIGATION**
- Information gathered, report written

Successful settlement
- Not settled

Successful settlement
- Matter closed

Complaints Review Tribunal

**WHAT IS THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION?**
The Human Rights Commission is New Zealand's national institution for the protection and promotion of human rights. It is a publicly funded organisation set up to administer the Human Rights Act, 1993.
SUMMARY

THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT 1993

- Extended to include protection for people with disabilities 1 February 1994.

- Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably.

- "Disability" very broad coverage including HIV virus and hidden disabilities.

- Act applies to all public arenas - not private.

- Educational institutions must be seen to "reasonably accommodate" students’ requirements.

- If people believe that they are being discriminated against, they can lodge a formal complaint and seek legal action to rectify the situation. The Human Rights Commission will investigate claims within their jurisdiction.

REMEMBER IT’S UP TO YOU ...

"While the Human Rights Act 1993, like any other piece of legislation, cannot single-handedly revolutionise the world, it is, nevertheless, concerned as much with these far-reaching issues of social change as it is with individual complaints of discrimination made under the Act.

Social change can never happen in isolation, with the passing of law, the winning of a battle, or the passion of a single belief. It comes slowly, strengthened and spurred on by public support, the general and growing unwillingness to allow injustice to continue.

It is the responsibility of every one of us to ensure that the process of social change is promoted, through challenging and changing our own and others values and assumptions that work to perpetuate discrimination and injustice".

ACTIVITY 8

CONTACTING THE COMMISSION

Visit the Human Rights Commission at their WWW site link on the Interactive Web Module OR by going directly to the URL www.hrc.co.nz then answer the following questions:

1. What is the Human Rights Helpdesks toll free telephone number?

   __ __ __ __ - __ __ __ - __ __ __

2. What is the Vision Statement of the Human Rights Commission?

Check your answers on the Answers page on Page 52

REMEMBER...
An injury to one is an injury for all.
A win for one is a win for all
OTHER LEGISLATION

NZ Building Act 1991
The Building Act is also relevant as it sets out the minimum access requirements for buildings.

The Act applies to most new buildings and also to the major refurbishments of existing buildings.

- The NZ Building Act requires that access and facilities be provided without exception in all new buildings;
- And as nearly as is reasonably practical as if a new building, in any alterations to existing buildings.
- Even the Building Industry Authority (which alone has the power to waive provision of access), can never issue an exemption for a new building that has been identified by S47A as being required to provide access.

Specifications within the code cover issues such as width of doorways, height and shape of handrails, space to manoeuvre in bathrooms, gradient of ramps and provision of accessible car parking.

The Building Act requires that if a building is altered or undergoes a change of use, access and facilities for people with disabilities must be upgraded as nearly as is reasonably practicable to new building standards. Whilst this wording can be seen as imprecise, in practice it is administered successfully by the territorial local authorities, who have the power under the Act to make decisions as to what is reasonably practicable when application is made to them for a building consent. Additionally, the Building Industry Authority itself has made a number of formal determination decisions which form a useful resource to guide territorial local authorities and designers and provide an indication to the disability groups of the Authority’s commitment to accessibility.

Accessibility in new buildings is a relatively simple matter, incorporating well-known principles. Extending these same principles to existing buildings is much more difficult, but dealing with existing buildings successfully is vital if the disability legislation is to be effective. Upgrading of access in existing buildings is reliant on a good practical knowledge of disability.

Education Amendment Act 1989
The Education Act 1989 requires the University to produce an Annual Report which provides:

- An account of the extent to which the Council has eliminated unnecessary barriers to the progress of students; and
- An account of the extent to which the Council has avoided the creation of unnecessary barriers to the progress of students; and
- An account of the extent to which the Council has developed programmes to attract students from groups in the community -
  (i) Under represented in the institution’s student body; or
  (ii) Disadvantaged in terms of their ability to attend the institution.12

At the University of Waikato, senior Faculty/School/Division Managers are responsible for ensuring the production an annual EEdO programme and report which evaluates progress towards the achievement of the objectives set out in the programme. These reports contribute to the preparation of the University wide report.

The Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994
The purpose of the Act is expressed as being “to promote and protect the rights of health consumers and disability services consumers, and, to that end, to facilitate the fair, simple, speedy, and efficient resolution of complaints relating to infringements of those rights” (s6). This objective is achieved through the implementation of a Code of Rights, the establishment of a complaints process to ensure enforcement of those rights and the ongoing education of providers and consumers.13

The Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers’ Rights (1996) confers a number of rights on all consumers of health and disability services in New Zealand and places corresponding obligations on providers of those services.

Application of the Code is very wide and extends to any person or organisation providing a disability service. It extends to goods, services and facilities provided to people with disabilities for their care or support or to promote their independence.

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12 Education Act 1989 Section 220.
13 http://www.hdc.org.nz
The Code details ten rights of consumers and the duties of providers. The ten rights are:

1. the right to be treated with respect
2. the right to freedom from discrimination, coercion, harassment, and exploitation
3. the right to dignity and independence
4. the right to services of an appropriate standard
5. the right to effective communication
6. the right to be fully informed
7. the right to make an informed choice and give informed consent
8. the right to support
9. rights in respect of teaching or research
10. the right to complain

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

COMMITMENT TO EQUITY
There are many ways in which the University of Waikato states its commitment to equity, these include:

- Charter Goals and Statements of Objectives
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Disability Policy
- Staff (Equal Opportunity - Human Resources & Pro VC Staff & Students, Disability Support Service, University Harassment Co-ordinator)
- Scholarships, targeted groups i.e. Maori, women, disability, childcare and poverty.

WHAT IS EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Equal Educational Opportunity is about establishing measures to ensure equality

It is not about preferencing one group to the detriment of others

DISABILITY POLICY
The University of Waikato has adopted a Policy for Students with Disabilities, which defines the key organisational objectives for ensuring that equal opportunity is achieved within our campus community.

A copy of the Disability Policy is attached (Appendix 1). Please read this document.

Acknowledgments:

“Inclusive Practice is Good Practice” The Tasmanian State Disability Liaison Officer Initiative, University of Tasmania.

“Making a difference, Customer service for people with disabilities in local government agencies – Facilitators guide” Disability Services Commission, Western Australia (July 2000)

“Students with Disabilities - A Resource Guide for Staff” James Cook University.
Assessment 5

What are the main principles of The University of Waikato’s Disability Policy?

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

Detach this assessment page and send with your Cumulative Assessment Form on Page 53 to:
Disability Co-ordinator
Disability Support Service
Student Services Building
MODULE 4
CUSTOMER SERVICE

Learning Outcome
Develop the capacity to deliver good customer service to people with disabilities.

INTRODUCTION
Everyone wants to feel welcome and important whether they are paying fees, requesting information or receiving educational or support services.

All people with or without disabilities want good service, respect, satisfaction and a friendly face.

All people are individuals with different needs, regardless of whether they have a disability or not.

There are many types of disability and each person with a disability is unique. However, there are some common concerns that people with disabilities have identified. The following section provides some tips for providing service to:

• people with physical disabilities;
• people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment;
• people who are blind or have a vision impairment; and
• people with other disabilities.

Customer Service for People with Physical Disabilities
You may not be able to improve the level of access in your work environment immediately, but there are many services you can improve so a person with a disability feels comfortable in your agency.

• You may have an accessible toilet or changeroom. Check to ensure it is not used for storage, is unlocked and the pathway to it is wide and clear of obstructions.
• High counters make it difficult for some people to communicate or provide payment.
• If a person using a wheelchair is filling out a form (or making a payment by cheque or credit card), you could offer a hard surface so they can write or sign for payment. (e.g. Clipboard or separate table).
• Try to move so you are on the same side of the counter as the person with a disability and ensure that EFTPOS facilities can be reached by customers using wheelchairs.
• When responding to a telephone enquiry or providing information about facilities for a person with a physical disability, ask whether additional information is required, such as the most accessible path of travel from the accessible car park bay to the front door.
• Offer material to be viewed at a realistic level in a one to one situation
• Don’t talk down to a person in a wheelchair - get down to their level, eg: pull up a chair for yourself
• Consider the accessibility of study related venues on and off campus.

Bad Practice
Inappropriate Behaviour
• Talking down; assuming people are stupid or ignoring them altogether.
• Assuming people want or need charity.
• Using emphasised or loud speech.
• Giving little eye contact, or staring.
• Allowing too little or too much personal space.
• Doing everything for people, treating them as children or victims.
• Assuming you know what people need without asking.
• Not allowing enough time for communication.

Good Practice
Appropriate Behaviour
• Acknowledging people as equal human beings
• Respecting people: assuming they are in control of their lives and can make decisions and don’t need pity
• Speaking normally: same lip movements, pitch and volume; a little slower for people with a hearing impairment
• Allowing the same, not greater or less personal space. Wheelchairs should be considered part of the person
• Being perceptive about problems but not making assumptions and not taking charge. Asking first "Is there any way I can help?"
• Allowing enough time for communication
Customer service for people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment

- It helps if you face a person who is deaf or has a hearing impairment. Speak clearly and not too quickly. Don't continue talking if your back is turned, eg: writing on black board.
- Avoid any hand movements which may obscure your mouth as this makes lip-reading difficult.
- There is no need to shout or to speak in a disjointed manner to customers who are deaf or have hearing impairments. It can draw unnecessary attention to them and be a cause of embarrassment.
- Written messages and gestures play an important role when communicating with someone who is deaf or has a hearing impairment. If you have any doubts about whether you and your customer understand each other, do not hesitate to write your message down.
- People who have hearing impairment often find it difficult to hear conversations where there is background noise and music.
- Ask if they have specific seating requirements. They may need to sit close to the sound system or within an audio loop area. An audio loop is an assistive hearing device for people who use hearing aids.
- Video's may need to be transcribed first or subtitles added.
- Note-takers can be organised by the Disability Support Service for classes.
- Interpreters may also be available in some situations for deaf students.
- If using an interpreter/support person – talk to the student not through the support staff.

Customer service for people who are blind or have a vision impairment

- Say who you are. Give your name and what your role or the subject you are teaching is.
- Discuss with the student what their requirements are and make sure that the necessary arrangements are made early.
- Remember that people with vision impairments use their other senses very well, so don't make the mistake of shouting at them.
- Try to give clear visual descriptions of and verbal clues about the physical environment through the use of descriptive language, for example, the layout of an office or where you have placed information for them to take away.
- If using OHP's try to give visual descriptions and have an enlarged photocopy available for them in class. Give the student a copy to take away or arrange for material to be available in alternate formats.
- If handing out printed material make sure it is a clean and clear copy.
- Ask a person who is blind if he or she requires assistance. If you are asked to act as a guide, offer your arm. Never push from behind or lead a person who is blind by the hand.
- As you guide a person who is blind, describe the environment and the oncoming terrain, for example, identify when you are approaching steps, lifts or escalators and if they are going up or down.
- Some people who have a vision impairment use guide dogs. Health regulations stipulate that guide dogs are allowed in all premises.
- Never touch or feed a guide dog as it distracts the dog while it is working.

Customer service for people with other disabilities

People with a wide variety of disabilities including intellectual, cognitive and psychiatric disabilities may have difficulty when it comes to asking for, and understanding information. If you are experiencing difficulties talking to someone with this type of disability, the following may be useful.

- Customers with disabilities affecting their communication and thought processes may have difficulty understanding complex information. Try to keep the communication friendly, positive and uncomplicated.
- Try to avoid confusion. Use plain English and ask clear and uncomplicated questions.
- Sometimes, people with these types of disabilities may be accompanied by a carer who is there to provide assistance but not do all the talking. So, talk in the first instance to the person with a disability, not the carer.
- Be aware of body language as people with disabilities may convey messages in a non-verbal way.
- In a busy environment a person with this type of disability may get disorientated, confused or agitated. If you can, talk in a quiet place away from distractions.
- Be patient and be prepared to repeat information. Avoid finishing their sentences for them.
- Use drawings, gestures, signs and other communication aids as appropriate.
- Make sure the person with a disability really understands you by asking follow-up questions.
SUMMARY

COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES
You have a vital role to play in assisting people with disabilities to access education. All people with or without disabilities need good, friendly service, respect, comfort and satisfaction.

By adopting a positive attitude and treating all people with respect, you will be making a difference to the quality of service the university provides to all members of the community.

Some people with disabilities have specific communication or access requirements.

There are some general principles which can be applied to all people with disabilities and you may find the following points useful to remember:

• be friendly, smile and make eye contact with people with disabilities;
• speak directly to the person with disabilities rather than talking to them through their companion;
• ask if any assistance is required; people with disabilities have quite different capabilities and like to be as independent as possible;
• try to provide up-to-date and accurate information when asked about accessible facilities such as parking, telephones and toilets;
• encourage better communication between staff and consumers by making sure all areas specifically designed for customer information and complaints are accessible to people with disabilities; and
• be flexible; if the system does not fit the requirements of a person with a disability, adapt the system to meet individual needs.

Acknowledgments:

“Making a difference, Customer service for people with disabilities in local government agencies – Facilitators guide” Disability Services Commission, Western Australia (July 2000)

“Students with Disabilities - A Resource Guide for Staff” James Cook University.
ACTIVITY 9

CASE STUDY

Mick Brown is a student with hearing loss. He is currently studying Management at Waikato. New Zealand Sign Language is Mick’s first language and he sometimes finds it difficult to grasp concepts in his second language, English.

Registration and other arrangements such as financial information, the library, overheads, Power Point presentations and examinations are all provided in English, either spoken or written. Mick does lip read, but as most lip-reading is only about 40% accurate he misses a lot of information.

What strategies would you employ to help Mick to better access information in future?

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Check your answers on the Answers page on Page 52
**MODULE 5**  
**INCLUSIVE PRACTICES**

**Learning Outcome**  
Understand the concept of inclusion within tertiary education.

**INTRODUCTION**

This section encourages examination of work practices and challenges the reader to work in a more inclusive way. The focus is primarily on students with disabilities, but development of more inclusive policies and practices will benefit all students.

The Fact Sheets available from Disability Support Service staff or website provide detailed information, guidelines, examples of good inclusive practice, case studies and practical strategies relating to:

- physical access
- access to information/study materials
- assistive technology
- curriculum adjustment
- inclusive assessment

**WHAT IS INCLUSION?**

Inclusion in education is about all students having the right to belong. The fundamental principle is the valuing of diversity within the human community.

“Ordinary people in ordinary places, doing ordinary things.”

Inclusion is the practice of developing a barrier free environment so that all students have access to learning. This takes into account the diversity of student needs, their individual learning styles and the use of a variety of teaching methods appropriate to the group.

Inclusion is not about focusing on individual impairment, but about creating an environment where access is built into systems. In an ideal inclusive model individual students would not be singled out for ‘special accommodations’ but full access would be built into the framework of teaching.

**WHY DEVELOP INCLUSIVE PRACTICES**

The Human Rights Act tells us that appropriate adjustments to the learning environment have to be made to lessen the impact of the disability. This applies not only to physical access barriers and the provision of support services, but also to teaching and learning strategies, assessment methods and administrative policies.

By reworking the way you educate / deliver / administer to become more “inclusive” you may discover that you do not have to make major changes to the way you currently operate.

**ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING!**

You can’t be all things to all students, however, by adopting inclusive practices there will in fact be less demand made on your time and resources by the individual. Some students will have individual requirements. Where this is so, the best solutions for maximising participation come about when the students and staff work together to develop creative alternatives.

Where students have succeeded it has usually been because staff have been prepared to give the student ‘a fair go’, treating the person as an individual and not pre-judging their abilities.

Flexibility is the best tool for inclusive practice and a closed mind is the greatest barrier. Some of the factors that can get in the way are:

- lack of experience of disability;
- fear of upsetting or offending someone;
- assuming that we can’t improve our current practice; and
- myths.
THE KEYS TO INCLUSIVE PRACTICE ARE:

• Flexibility
• Imagination
• Innovation
• Patience
• Communication
• Common Sense
• Awareness
  o that adjustments made to afford inclusion are a right not a favour.
  o that access involves more than physical access. Information needs to be made available in accessible formats.
  o that consultation with students facilitates appropriate provision.

It is important to distinguish between the more subtle effects of conditions and apathetic behaviour. Effects of medication may cause chronic weakness, drowsiness, fatigue and memory problems. These difficulties need not preclude students from success in the long run.

A student using a wheelchair or other equipment may have difficulty getting to lectures on time. Others may have periodic or irregular difficulties, as a result either of their disability or side effects of medication. Understanding the reasons for late or irregular attendance and being flexible in applying attendance rules would be helpful.

HOW CAN I MAKE MY PRACTICES MORE INCLUSIVE?

Focus on inclusive strategies for all students, then on any individual requirements.

"The establishment of good communication is the foundation to student success" (Hodge & Preston-Sabin, 1997)

In communicating with students, consider:

• the way in which the disability affects capacity to participate;
• is the condition permanent or temporary?
• are symptoms constant or do they fluctuate?
  - are there periods of latency?

ACTIVITY 10

Identify three aspects of your work which you feel are inclusive.
(For instance, lecture notes provided in various formats).

FACTORS TO CONSIDER

• Students may have needs which are not visibly obvious such as hearing, vision, learning or psychiatric disability.
• Students with similar disabilities may require different adjustments.
• Students who have recently acquired a disability through illness or accident may not be fully aware of the consequences of their disability in relation to their study.
• Many students choose not to disclose their disability because they fear being stigmatised or because they are unaware of the support services available. Displaying a positive approach to inclusion by extending an early invitation to students to discuss their needs with you, may alleviate the students concerns about disclosure.
WHAT MAKES AN INCLUSIVE UNIVERSITY?

Creating an inclusive learning environment involves giving consideration to the following:

1. **Physical Access**

2. **Accessible Learning**
   - Access to the Curriculum
   - Access to Information & Study Material
   - Inclusive Assessment

3. **What alternatives Exist?**
   - Accessible Format Information & Study Materials.
   - Use of Support Staff.
   - Assistive Technology

**PHYSICAL ACCESS**

Universities are required by law to provide physical access for people with disabilities to their buildings and facilities. In practical terms this means that a student or staff member with a disability could lodge a complaint if for example: they were unable to access a classroom because it is located on the second floor of a building which has no lift, or if the presence of heavy doors prevented their access to the library.

Try to think of access more broadly than ramps, lifts and toilets. Examples of some other factors requiring consideration include:

- signage, eg. for a person with a vision impairment using facilities within a building;
- facilities such as vending machines or counters within buildings;
- visual indicators of emergency situations such as evacuations;
- switches and lighting;
- parking facilities for vehicles used by people with a disability; and
- hearing augmentation systems in auditoriums.

Sometimes we don’t see ourselves as individually having a role to play in addressing these barriers, but we all share responsibility and there are a range of strategies we can adopt to improve access in our own immediate working environment.

**CONSIDER:**

- how accessible your office/classroom/lecture theatre/ laboratory/workshop is;
- physical adjustments that could be made to the facility and equipment;
- seating arrangements which maximise all students' ability to see and hear;
- what your attitude could be if you are requested to move your class to another venue which is accessible; and
- what provisions would need to be made on required field trips/practicals/workshops.

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNISE THAT:**

- students who have a sensory disability, use a wheelchair or experience other forms of mobility impairment can have different needs;
- whilst some access problems are complex, steps can be taken to creatively develop solutions in partnership with students. Not all solutions will be high tech or involve a great deal of time and money; and
- improving access will benefit not just the individual but many other students and staff, both present and future.

**THE PROCESS OF MEETING ACCESS REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MADE EASIER BY:**

- consulting with students and others well before they commence a course, as early notification allows time for preparation;
- investigating the possible use of existing expertise available within your organisation (eg maintenance or engineering staff are usually adept at determining, in partnership with the student, modifications which can be applied in a cost effective and timely manner); and
- advocating, on an ongoing basis, for access issues to be addressed in the development of new facilities or modification of existing ones.

The Fact Sheets available from Disability Support Service staff or website, provide specific information regarding physical access and details personnel who can assist you with further information and advice.

REMEMBER...

Disability should not be a barrier to learning!
ACCESSIBLE LEARNING
There are a number of practical ways in which students can be assisted, such as giving class notes and handouts ahead of time and permitting lectures to be taped. This practice, if implemented, may be of benefit to all students. Sometimes students with disabilities will need more time to complete tasks, assignments and/or examinations.

PRIOR TO STUDENT COMMENCING COURSE:
• When collating/preparing course materials, lecture notes etc., always attempt to do so in electronic format.
• Where possible, negotiate with students directly regarding their needs and consult others, eg disability services staff.
• Make required book lists and course materials available to allow students to begin their reading and preparation early. Extra time to read material is often important.
• Provide students with chapter outlines, task analyses or study guides that cue them to key points in their reading.
• If students need existing hard copy materials in accessible formats eg on disk or tape, this needs to be organised early as the process takes some time.
• Orientation to the department/laboratory/ and equipment before classes start can minimise students’ anxiety.

DURING THE COURSE:
• Use a variety of teaching methods and presentation styles.
• Stay on the topic; demonstrate; use concrete examples.
• Write key points and assignments on the board and/or on handouts.
• Ensure that there is effective communication between yourself and the students. This may mean reading aloud material that is written on the blackboard or overhead transparencies.
• Use plain English and minimise the complexity of communications.
• Rephrase information if students do not understand.
• Arrange seating thoughtfully and face toward the class whilst speaking.
• In laboratory or workshop situations, the labelling of equipment, tools and materials is helpful.
• Some flexibility with assignment deadlines, assessment practices and extra reading time may be appropriate and will ensure students are not disadvantaged because of their disability.
• Ask if assistance is required, don’t assume it is, but be alert to the student’s needs.

Good Practice Example
An email sent from a University Lecturer to a student who has a visual impairment:

Dear Roberta,

I will be your new theory lecturer this semester, so I just wanted to make contact with you to let you know this. Please feel free to e-mail any time if you need help with anything in theory, or if there are things I’m not doing helpfully enough for you in class!

As well as a final exam for theory, I will give two written tests, one on Aug 14 and the next one on Sept 11. We should meet at some point so you could let me know how to administer these, and other homework assignments.

I have scheduled office hours for Tuesdays 9-11am and Fridays 10-11am, or by appointment if these times don’t suit, so you can come and talk with me outside of class if necessary during the semester. My office is room 109, and I have a mailbox on the 2nd floor for messages and homework.

I look forward to meeting you next week.
Dr Maria Grenfell

ACTIVITY 11
Contact your departmental administrator or contact person (with responsibility for students with disabilities). Investigate the following:

1. If a student needs a separate room to sit a test or examination do you know there is a room available?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Is there someone who could supervise/invigilate a separate test/examination in your department?
   - Yes
   - No

3. If a student requires ergonomic furniture or special equipment do you know if it is available and how to access it in your department?
   - Yes
   - No
ACCESS TO THE CURRICULUM

Many lecturers feel hesitant about instigating or agreeing to adjustments being made to course curriculum. Concerns appear founded in a belief that course standards may be compromised and in turn, the students’ ability to attain professional registration/industry requirements may be impeded. Curriculum adjustment is not about ‘watering down’ training or academic requirements and standards or making the course ‘easier’ for some students. Curriculum adjustments should not compromise the required skills or knowledge for a particular course.

CURRICULUM ADJUSTMENT IS ABOUT:
• examining content and/or delivery processes to find alternative ways for students to achieve equivalent learning outcomes/essential competencies/academic standards;
• providing a way to minimise the impact of students’ disabilities upon their performance without compromising course standards; and
• challenging existing practices and procedures in order to develop more inclusive ways of designing and delivering curriculum.

Good Practice Example

A situation occurred where the course required that a student perform practical experiments. The outcomes rather than the manual skills were deemed to be the essential course requirements. A student who had insufficient manual dexterity and fine motor control to do the experiments was instead able to work with a ‘buddy’ to observe and record the results.

There are a number of ways in which courses can be made more inclusive. Increasingly, teachers are successfully utilising technology to build in flexibility to the courses they design and deliver. The emergence of choices in:
• mode of learning (eg. external studies, "open learning", mixed mode, "on-line learning" or "flexible delivery"); and
• more considered attention to course scheduling (eg. part-time attendance being made more convenient, availability of "summer schools", mid year entry to some University courses) have proved beneficial for all students.

INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT

It is a legislative requirement that, wherever it is necessary and reasonable to do so, teaching staff take into account a student’s disability, and make appropriate adjustments to assessment procedures to reduce the impact of the disability.

Determining the reasonableness of modifications to assessment is an obvious area of concern for staff. In circumstances where the student’s disability does not affect their cognitive abilities, adjustments can be readily agreed upon and implemented (eg provision of assessment materials in Braille or on tape to a student who has a visual impairment with additional time being granted to complete the assessment).

The process may appear more difficult in a situation where the student’s cognitive abilities have been affected due to the effects of:
• a learning disability;
• acquired brain injury;
• psychiatric disability;
• deafness or hearing impairment (especially if the condition occurred as a child);
• a medical condition;
• side effects of medication.

The student may experience problems with understanding or processing written information, fatigue, memory, concentration, reading or writing. In such circumstances, it may be appropriate for the student and yourself to involve the Disability Support Service and, where necessary, a relevant specialist to assist in the process of helping you to determine suitable assessment strategies.

It is important that assessment of achievement should carry the same meaning for all students. Students with a disability want to learn and to have their competencies judged in the same way as other students. Academics should develop valid assessment procedures which accommodate the disability by procedural modifications, not by relaxing standards.

REMEMBER

In requesting that accommodation is made for a disability, the student is seeking not to obtain an academic advantage over other students, but rather the opportunity to participate on an equal level.
THE PURPOSE OF INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT IS TO:

- minimise the impact of the student's disability upon assessment performance and so accommodate the functional differences which exist because of the disability;
- place such students on a more equal footing with non-disabled students, not to give them any additional advantage; and
- provide all students with the opportunity to perform to their potential.

INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES SHOULD ALWAYS:

- be negotiated by the student and staff
- consider the individual student’s needs
- maintain the integrity of academic standards and competency requirements. The same academic and skill requirements should be applied to all students whether or not they have a disability
- be applied flexibly
- where possible, be applied to all students, rather than singling individuals out, eg. extended reading time may not diminish the competency standard.

Any assessment should satisfy the four following requirements:

VALIDITY
Does it measure what it is supposed to measure?

RELIABILITY
Does it produce consistent results?

PRACTICALITY
Is it practical in terms of time and resources?

EQUITY
Does it allow for equality of opportunity to all students?

Examples of possible inclusive assessment strategies

USE OF SPECIFIC PERSONNEL
- Sign Interpreter
- Reader
- Scribe (also called a writer or amanuensis)
- Personal Assistant

COMPUTERS, SPECIFIC SOFTWARE AND ELECTRONIC AIDS
- personal computers
- word processors
- voice synthesisers (speech interactive)

- closed circuit televisions
- software
  - spelling checkers
  - grammar checkers
  - thesauruses
  - print enlarging software (enlarges text on a screen)
  - voice activated software (Text input via voice, enables the computer to respond to the users vocal commands)

ADJUSTMENTS RELATING TO TIME
- additional time
- breaks
- flexible time arrangements
  - changes to scheduled assessment times within a given day
  - changes to scheduled examination dates and times within the assessment period
  - assessments split into more than one session

ASSESSMENT MATERIALS IN ACCESSIBLE FORMATS
- computer disk
- materials in braille (an embossed language used by some people who are blind)
- use of audio tape
- use of video tape

VENUE RELATED CHANGES
- separate room/venue
- provision of appropriate furniture - desk/chair heights and slopes
- adequate space for equipment and specific personnel

ALTERNATIVE TYPE OF ASSESSMENT
- additional assignments instead of examinations
- use of simulators, role plays, case studies
- selecting another method of assessment (eg. essays; short answer questions; multiple-choice tests; direct observation; oral examinations; and structured practical assessment)

ORAL ASSESSMENTS
- oral questions
- oral answers

Further information and examples of alternative assessment strategies are available upon request from the Disability Support Service staff or website resources.
WHAT ALTERNATIVES EXIST?

Providing Accessible Format Information & Study Materials

Students require access to information and study materials in a format, which best meets their needs.

There are a range of alternative formats and a number of strategies which can be applied in the process of successfully assisting the student to access the information they require.

The University’s disability support staff can assist you with information, advice and resources.

The importance of making materials available in electronic format cannot be overstated because, with the aid of technology, this format renders information accessible to almost everyone. (eg. a student who is blind or visually impaired can, from disk material, print out a large print copy, read it on a computer screen using screen enlargement software, listen to it via a voice synthesiser or convert it into braille.) Alternatives to printed materials include:

**Computer Disk or Audio Tape**

Lecture or training sessions can be readily taped using an audio cassette recorder. Students who experience writing difficulties can also provide information on audio tape. More complex needs, eg. taping of a text book, usually require the recording to be made using high quality equipment and highly trained staff working to exacting standards.

**LARGE PRINT (TEXT/DIAGRAMS/IMAGES)**

Usually achieved through a process of photocopying or utilisation of text enlarging computer software. For some students the use of a hand or sheet magnifier or closed circuit television (CCTV) can be a more useful option.

**Braille**

Braille can be produced directly by a typist using a braille embosser. Larger quantities of text are usually produced from computer text-file format and printed out using a braille printer.

**TACTUAL GRAPHICS**

Allows the representation of visual images on braille type paper or in some cases live, using a special mat which produces a relief image.

**Captioning**

For students who are deaf or hard of hearing, video captions may assist their interpretation of material presented audiovisually.

**Conversion To Plain English Versions**

For students who experience difficulty accessing information which has been written in complex language, material can be rewritten in "plain English" format. This may particularly assist students who have an intellectual disability, some forms of learning disability, or for Deaf students whose first language is New Zealand Sign Language.

**Good Practice Example**

As standard practice at the University of Tasmania’s School of Education, all lecture notes and readings are accessible to students via electronic mail.

**Remember**

Accessible formats can take time to prepare so planning ahead is important.

Teachers can greatly assist students by:

- wherever possible, providing materials in electronic format;
- inviting them at the earliest possible stage to notify you of their specific needs;
- providing early access to course materials, some of which may include such items as reading lists, assignments, course notes and curriculum information. The conversion of a text book to audio tape may take up to three months;
- varying the methods by which you present information.
Use of Support Staff
In some circumstances, it may be necessary to engage the services of support staff in order to assist students to gain access to, or provide information.

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS
Provide an essential support for Deaf students who use signed English or New Zealand Sign Language to communicate. They interpret spoken English into signed language.

READERS
Assist students who are unable to read print (eg. some students who are blind or those who experience involuntary head movements). They also assist some students who access auditory information better than visual information (eg. some students with learning disability or acquired brain injury).

NOTETAKERS
Assist students who experience difficulties in being able to take class notes of their own. The Notetaker can be a student who is studying the same class or a person from outside the class who has the appropriate skills and background.

WRITERS
Also called a scribe or amanuensis assist students who:
- are unable to write or type (eg. some students with quadriplegia or cerebral palsy);
- have reduced writing speed or loss of endurance for writing (eg some students with muscular dystrophy or an injury to the dominant hand or arm);
- experience pain when writing (eg. in the case of overuse injury or some forms of arthritis).
- are restricted in their ability to maintain the posture needed for writing or typing;
- present information better in an oral form than in a written form (eg some students with learning disability).

PERSONAL ASSISTANTS
Personal Assistants are people who follow the student’s instructions to help them complete manual tasks (eg. turning pages, inserting computer disks, removing their coat) or, in some cases, assist with personal care tasks during rest breaks.

How Can Technology Assist?
Assistive technology, particularly computer based, plays an important role in assisting some students to access and successfully complete education and training courses. New software packages now make it possible to speak to your computer and have it type what you say or have the computer read to you what’s on the screen.

SOME EXAMPLES:
- software that provides enlarged text, voice and/or Braille output and/or closed circuit televisions to magnify materials;
- voice recognition software to dictate work on a computer;
- a personal FM system to amplify sound;
- specialised computer software programs which assist some students with learning disability with essay writing;
- ergonomically designed chairs which support a person’s posture and help alleviate pain;

FACTORS TO CONSIDER
- Technology is an assistive aid, not a `cure all’. Assistance from teaching staff is often more important.
- One piece of equipment may work well for one student but not for another.
- Students may be aware of and skilled at using technology, or they may have unrealistic expectations regarding its capabilities. They may require time to become proficient in its use.
- “High tech” remedies are not always called for as a "low tech" solution may be possible. Many ingenious designs and uses of low cost materials have provided students with adaptations needed to participate.

GOOD INCLUSIVE PRACTICE REGARDING TECHNOLOGY
- Communicating early with students allows time for effective strategies to be put in place.
- Find out about the limitations of the technology. Having realistic expectations about its capabilities will help in the process of determining teaching strategies and appropriate assessment methods to meet student requirements.
- Avoid making assumptions about what students can/can’t do. In many instances, technology is available which can assist them to achieve what may appear impossible.
- If you are unsure about any aspect of the technology or its use, contact someone with experience from the Disability Support Service.
ASSESSMENT 6

Research project
Choose one type of disability from the list provided:

- Hearing Impairment/Deaf
- Blind/Visual Impairment
- Psychiatric/Mental Health
- Learning Disability

You may want to contact the Disability Support Service or refer to the Fact Sheets on the DSS website for further information. Alternatively you could contact a community organization that represents the identified disability group. A list of Community Organisations is also included on the DSS website. You may also want to search the internet for information.

Research information on the specific disability type and the communication aids available to assist people with these disabilities. These can be simple aids such as audio loops, through to more complex technical devices, for example, voice activated computers.

Include the following information:

- profile of the disability and any problems people may experience with communication;
- current methods used to support communication; and any other communication methods that may help people with disabilities and staff in the future.

Detach this assessment page and send with your Cumulative Assessment Form on Page 53 to:
Disability Co-ordinator
Disability Support Service
Student Services Building
Which of the following alternative assessment methods or accommodations would be of use to a student with a visual disability? Tick each one that may be relevant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method/Accommodation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sign Interpreter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reader / Writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word processors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice syntheses (speech interactive)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closed circuit televisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breaks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flexible time arrangements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>changes to scheduled assessment times and dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assessments split into more than one session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>computer disk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>materials in Braille</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of audio tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of video tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separate room/venue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provision of appropriate furniture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adequate space for equipment and specific personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>additional assignments instead of examinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of simulators, role plays, case studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>selecting another method of assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral assessments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Detach this assessment page and send with your Cumulative Assessment Form on Page 53 to:
Disability Co-ordinator
Disability Support Service
Student Services Building
EXAMPLES OF INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

- Extra time permitted for assignment work and class notes provided on computer disk for a student who had difficulty reading because of a specific learning disability.
- Captioning of videos to ensure that a deaf student in a Business Management class had access to the information presented via this medium.
- Notetakers in an Law course utilised to support two students with different disabilities.
- Student who had difficulty writing due to a physical impairment provided with access to voice recognition software and a computer to enable her to independently complete assignments.
- Examination paper converted to Braille format for a student who is blind.
- Mechanisms developed to cover missed work/assignments for a student who has regular absences due to illness.
- Comprehensive management plan devised in conjunction with student/staff/peers for student with low tolerance to environmental irritants in a Trades related course.
- The lecturer verbalised the content of all visually displayed materials for a student who had difficulty reading the board and overheads because of her visual impairment.
- Tactile 3D periodic table produced for a chemistry student who is blind.
- Notetaking services provided for a deaf student studying at University. Visual aids also used to assist instruction.
- Peer support/reference person organised for student with an intellectual disability in mainstream training who occasionally displays inappropriate social skills.
- Small support network and mechanisms established to help maintain a student who experiences panic attacks due to an anxiety disorder.
- Class handouts and exercises put on computer disk for a student who is blind and uses text-to-speech software.
- Consideration towards incorrect spelling, poor grammar and essay structure given during the assessment process for a student who has a specific learning disability.
- Student with diabetes given permission to eat during her University examinations to assist her in maintaining her health.
- Lecturer wore a lapel microphone and repeated or paraphrased comments made by students during lectures and tutorials in order to provide access to this information for a student in the class who had a hearing impairment and used a FM transmitter.
- Arrangements made by a lecturer to conduct tests at different times or days if the student needed extra time so as to not draw attention to the student whilst in a classroom situation.
- Assessment format changed to allow student who experienced extreme exam anxiety the option of completing additional assignments to fulfil the essential requirements of the course.
- Overhead transparencies provided in hard copy format to a student who experienced difficulty reading overheads due to a visual impairment.
- Separate room and supervisor arranged for a student who could not physically access the examination room in her wheelchair.
- In an Accounting course, a student who is blind cannot write up bank reconciliations but uses a computer-based bookkeeping system to achieve this task.

Acknowledgments:

“Inclusive Practice is Good Practice” The Tasmanian State Disability Liaison Officer Initiative, University of Tasmania.
EXPERIENTIAL WORKSHOP
Attend a Disability Issue Awareness Workshop on one of the following dates:

NOTES
ASSESSMENT 8

1. What date did you attend the Disability Issue Awareness Workshop?

________________________________________________________________________

2. What are three key needs of students with disabilities in tertiary education?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. If a student with a disability is enrolled in your course, what support might you offer the student and what other campus support services should you contact?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Detach this assessment page and send with your Cumulative Assessment Form on Page 53 to:
Disability Co-ordinator
Disability Support Service
Student Services Building
SUMMARY

A QUICK CHECKLIST

The important thing to remember is that people with disabilities are people first. "Disability" is a social construct, and removing the dividing line between people 'with' and "without" disabilities is a step towards equal opportunities for all.

People with disabilities have the right to study, but this does not mean that academic standards need to fall. Often, administration systems may need to be altered to allow students with disabilities to achieve their potential.

Confidentiality is an important issue; only the minimum details relating to the student's disability should be passed on. Students' letters and professional assessments should not be passed within the University without the students' permission.

People with disabilities have different levels of acceptance of their disability - this must be respected.

University staff are not required or expected to find solutions to the impairment. University staff are expected to provide a helpful and supportive environment and to reasonably accommodate the needs of students with disabilities.

When planning arrangements to assist the student with a disability, it is most helpful to assume the student knows more about his/her particular disability than you do.

It is essential to listen to the student to avoid well-intentioned arrangements being made which either disrupt existing arrangements or fail to take the student's own desires and preferences into account.
# ANSWERS

## ACTIVITY 1

Which of the three models of disability are supported by the examples below?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXAMPLE</th>
<th>MODEL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising collection stand in the shape of a child with crutches</td>
<td>CHARITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A policy document which states “Those suffering from hearing loss can achieve much with the aid of speech therapy and the avoidance of sign language”</td>
<td>MEDICAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Paralympics</td>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An advertisement that shows a person with visual disability waiting for help at a roadside.</td>
<td>CHARITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A commentator at a sporting event saying “Since he was struck down by multiple sclerosis he has bravely managed to remain involved in sport, despite the fact that he is now wheelchair bound”.</td>
<td>MEDICAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A television programme which has wheelchair users as “extra’s” without referring to their disabilities at all.</td>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## ACTIVITY 6

For each of the following examples decide whether there is discrimination involved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Discrimination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Deaf person is refused entry into a film and media course because they cannot “hear the dialogue”</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student who lives with OOS is refused extra time allowances for examinations</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A person with a visual disability has no access to course books in an alternative format (eg electronic or Braille)</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Library is not accessible for a student using a large motorized wheelchair.</td>
<td>Yes. Unless individual case fits an exception.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A student was not accepted on a course because she was unlikely to be employed in the industry due to her age and disability.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lecturer refusing to allow a student with a visual disability to undertake laboratory work because of concerns that blind people are safety risks.</td>
<td>Yes. Risk to safety must be real and cannot be established in such a general way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University sign states “No Dogs Allowed”</td>
<td>Yes, if companion/ guide dogs are not allowed. It is illegal to ban these dogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man denied entry into a teacher education programme because the School thinks he has a mental health issue.</td>
<td>Yes, Act makes it unlawful to discriminate based on “assumption”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**ACTIVITY 7**

What services and support do you consider are appropriate for a student with one of the following temporary impairments?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>Broken arm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Use of Support Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Access to lecture notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Special Equipment (e.g. Dictaphones)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Extension for assignment/extra time in tests/exams</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>Tom Achilles tendon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Accessible Parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Special Equipment (e.g. Seating/mobility aids)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>Temporary deafness due to overexposure to noise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Use of Support Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Access to lecture notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Special Equipment (e.g. FM hearing systems)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTIVITY 8:**

1. 0800 4 YOUR RIGHTS
   0800 496 877 or TTY (teletypewriter) access number: 0800 150 111
2. "Whakatinanatia o tikanga" "Realising your rights now"

**ACTIVITY 9**

What strategies would you employ to help Mick to better access information in future?

Examples may include:
- Provide access to a Sign Language Interpreter
- Develop “easy-to-read” versions of key information
- Provide access to a notetaker to scribe oral information.
- Provide advance copies of lecture notes to enable additional time to decode information
- Allow extra time to make sure complex information is clearly communicated and understood.
- Undertake a basic course in New Zealand Sign Language.
CUMULATIVE ASSESSMENT

Please complete the following details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I feel that I have successfully achieved the following objectives:</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have an understanding of the physical and attitudinal barriers that people with disabilities may experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate language and communication strategies when working with people with disabilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have an understanding of disability legislation and related legal requirements.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have the capacity to deliver good customer service to people with disabilities.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand the concept of inclusion within tertiary education.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have participated in a face to face workshop exploring disability issues in education.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have completed the Web Based Disability Training Package</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STAFF DETAILS

Name

__________________________________________

Department

__________________________________________

General / Academic
Full-time / Part-time / Casual

Comments

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Please attach:

☐ Assessment # _____

☐ Assessment # _____

☐ Assessment # _____

☐ Assessment # _____

☐ Evaluation Form

Please return to:
Disability Coordinator
Student Services Building

signed:

__________________________________________

date: ______ / ______ / _______

Please return to:
Disability Coordinator
Student Services Building

53
EVALUATION FORM

Name (optional):

_____________________________________________________________

The training package was useful: YES / NO / UNSURE
Comments: ____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

I feel I understood the material well: YES / NO / UNSURE
Comments: ____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

The Disability workshop was useful: YES / NO / UNSURE
Comments: ____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

I feel I understood the material well: YES / NO / UNSURE
Comments: ____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________

Do you have any suggestions for improving the training package?
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________

Please return to:
Disability Coordinator
Student Services Building
Appendix 1

Disability Policy
The University of Waikato
1997

Purpose Statement
The Disability Policy sets out the University of Waikato's responsibilities and commitments towards providing equal opportunities and equitable access for people with disabilities. In line with the Human Rights Act 1993 and our Equal Opportunities and Freedom from Harassment Policy, The University of Waikato will continue to work towards providing a more inclusive learning and work environment.

Policy Statement
The University of Waikato will:

1. Endeavour to remove any physical access barriers to ensure our campus is as accessible as possible for students, staff and visitors with disabilities.

2. Seek to foster positive attitudes amongst students and staff towards people with disabilities.

3. Encourage the development and implementation of procedures to address the requirements of students and staff with disabilities across all areas of the University; each School, Division and other area to operate within the Disability Policy framework.

4. Provide reasonable accommodations in the form of teaching strategies, alternative assessments and support assistance for students with disabilities, in all aspects of academic programmes.

5. Advertise and promote the Disability Policy and procedures and the provision of disability support within all areas of academic learning, research, and employment opportunities.

References
The University of Waikato Equal Opportunities Policy (1984)

The Human Rights Act (1993)

The Building Act (1991)

Guiding Concepts
The term "disability" refers to any temporary or permanent sensory, physical, medical, mental health, or learning condition/impairment which may result in any reduced access to educational and employment services and facilities.

A "reasonable accommodation" refers to a support provision or strategy which when put in place, aims to minimise any disadvantage due to the impact of disability. It is not the intention to advantage any one person over another, but rather to ensure students and staff with disabilities are placed on a more equitable level with others.

For the University's purposes, the extent to which an accommodation is considered "reasonable" is based upon legislative requirements and defined through the dissemination of current and acceptable University practices and levels of agreement which can be attained between the interested parties.

Guiding Concepts

The term "disability" refers to any temporary or permanent sensory, physical, medical, mental health, or learning condition/impairment which may result in any reduced access to educational and employment services and facilities.

A "reasonable accommodation" refers to a support provision or strategy which when put in place, aims to minimise any disadvantage due to the impact of disability. It is not the intention to advantage any one person over another, but rather to ensure students and staff with disabilities are placed on a more equitable level with others.

For the University's purposes, the extent to which an accommodation is considered "reasonable" is based upon legislative requirements and defined through the dissemination of current and acceptable University practices and levels of agreement which can be attained between the interested parties.
Operational Procedures

While each area of the University is to operate within the broad context of the University's Disability Policy, the following operational procedures allow for some flexibility to adapt to the different areas of operations and devolved University structures.

1. **Endeavour to remove any physical access barriers to ensure our campus is as accessible as possible for students, staff and visitors with disabilities.**

   Any existing physical access barriers to current buildings and facilities should be reported to Facilities Management Division or Disabilities Coordinator. Where feasible, every attempt will be made to rectify the problem promptly, or if this cannot be achieved, such as for any major projects, these may be placed on a Capital Works priority schedule.

   All new capital facilities must provide adequate physical access to buildings and facilities for people with disabilities as set out in The Building Act (s47a). Facilities Management Division will collaborate at the planning stages of any major projects with Disabilities Coordinator, who has the responsibility to ensure that any interested persons are appropriately consulted.

   As not all lecture and tutorial rooms are easily accessible for students with disabilities, it may be necessary for staff to organise scheduled classes to be relocated to a more accessible room.

   Each School, Division and other area is to provide the appropriate furniture, equipment and technology for students and staff with disabilities, provided the funding costs are considered reasonable and acceptable. In other cases, it may be appropriate for the individual who has specific requirements to investigate other funding options.

   The allocation of mobility parking on campus will be reviewed periodically by Facilities Management in consultation with Disabilities Coordinator, with regard to the strategic locations and number ratios so as to cater to changing needs.

   A disability access audit of the physical environment will be undertaken initially to identify any barriers, with the overall aim of planning to rectify these. The appropriate Managers will be advised of the outcomes of the audit and decisions made on who will have the funding responsibility for rectifying these. Disabilities Coordinator is to liaise with Facilities Management, Deans and Directors of each cost-centre.

2. **Seek to foster positive attitudes amongst students and staff towards people with disabilities.**

   Staff development opportunities will be provided to raise a general awareness of disability-related issues. Disabilities Coordinator to liaise with Personnel and Management Services Division to facilitate this.

   Training sessions for academic staff will be provided to ensure a cohesive approach towards providing disability support and to further develop teaching strategies which meet the requirements of students with disabilities. Disabilities Coordinator to facilitate this in conjunction with Teaching and Learning Development Unit.

   The Disabilities Coordinator will work with staff individually on matters relating to supporting students with disabilities in teaching and research situations and for other issues such as support in employment and workplace conditions.

   A disability awareness initiative amongst students on campus will be facilitated each year by Disabilities Coordinator and in conjunction with the relevant student groups, interested staff members and the Waikato Student Union Disability representative.

3. **Encourage the development and implementation of procedures to address the requirements of students and staff with disabilities across all areas of the University; each School, Division and other area to operate within the Disability Policy framework.**

   Each School/Division/other area should develop a funding strategy which allocates specified funding support to individual staff and students with disabilities. This may
involve the establishment of a separate budget cost-centre to assist each area in meeting identified disability support requirements.

Each School/Division/other area will nominate one staff person to have the overall responsibility for seeking to ensure that the requirements of students and staff with disabilities within their areas are able to be met. This role includes:

- Referring students and staff with disabilities to the Disabilities Coordinator to discuss individual support requirements. The Disabilities Coordinator will arrange the appropriate assessments, evaluate individual requirements and then forward written recommendations and costings to the School.

- The responsibility for ensuring that all agreed reasonable accommodations are able to be met within the School/Division/other area.

- To prepare an annual report for their School/Division/other area and the Disabilities Coordinator in regard to expenditure and the resulting accommodations which are made for students and staff with disabilities.

- To prepare in consultation with the Disabilities Coordinator and the School/Division/other area an annual draft budget for specific allocation for students and staff with disability support requirements.

- To develop, if appropriate, an infrastructure of disability Contact People at a local level who have a working knowledge of their particular area.

**Contact People** will have responsibilities to:

- Act as a contact point within their area for students and staff with particular disability-related concerns.

- Advocate on behalf of students and staff with disabilities if appropriate.

- Liaise with the Disabilities Coordinator, the person with the overall responsibility in the School/Division/other area and teaching staff with the aim of organising agreed accommodations at a local level.

(Refer to appendix for examples of current Contact People practices)

4. Provide reasonable accommodations in the form of teaching strategies, alternative assessments and support assistance for students with disabilities in all aspects of academic programmes.

Through recognising the student's right to equity in educational service provision, disability accommodations should be made wherever it is reasonable to do so, and which are in compliance with current University policies and regulations, and the requirements of other professional bodies.

The main objective of alternative forms of assessment is to provide a means of measuring the degree to which the student with a disability is able to meet the course objectives. This will be best achieved through considering the impact of the disability on a student's capacity to demonstrate learning and then seeking to minimise this impact.

Reasonable accommodations should always be considered on an individual basis, through consultation with the student and/or staff person and Disabilities Coordinator or other qualified person if appropriate. This may require exploring creative solutions to the diverse range of issues that will arise for teaching and assessment purposes.
Process

When it is identified that a student with a disability requires accommodations the following procedures are available for academic staff persons:

- An academic staff person should firstly and in consultation with the student, make such accommodations as he/she considers appropriate eg. arranging to photocopy OHT'S and other lecture material, or ensuring that a student using a wheelchair has easy access to a tutorial room, or:

- Refer the student with a disability to local Contact Person who has the responsibility to coordinate any agreed accommodations at a Departmental level, or:

- Refer the student with a disability to Disabilities Coordinator for evaluation of disability requirements and to provide written recommendations. The Disabilities Coordinator can also assist the staff person to organise any agreed accommodations.

5. Advertise and promote the Disability Policy and procedures and the provision of disability support within all areas of academic learning, research and employment opportunities.

The University will encourage students to identify their disability/condition to facilitate better access to information and support services. Enrolment packs for new students will include an information sheet for students with disabilities, which are returned directly to Disabilities Coordinator to ensure confidentiality.

Staff will initially be introduced to the University's Disability Policy and it's more practical implications during employment induction and orientation programmes. Disabilities Coordinator to liaise with Human Resource Management Division to facilitate this.

A Disability Policy and information brochure for students and staff with disabilities will be developed and updated annually by Disabilities Coordinator.

University advertising and promotions material will include information on available disability support services and educational opportunities for students with disabilities. All School handbooks and course information will include an equity statement and outline a support process for students with disabilities to access.

A University Disability Resource Guide will be readily available to all staff within their work area and on a University Web-site Disability Page. This will be developed by Disabilities Coordinator to provide students and staff with updated information and resources relating to disability issues on campus.

Equal Opportunities programme development for all Schools/Divisions/other areas will be encouraged to include a focus on disability issues.

Each School/Division/other area will also be encouraged to recruit and retain staff with disabilities. This may require individual support programme development which should be undertaken in liaison with Human Resource Management Division.

Statement of Standards

1. All access barriers will be reported to Facilities Management Division, who will liaise with Disabilities Coordinator to ensure the appropriate action is taken.

2. Allocated mobility parking will be reviewed annually by Facilities Management Division and Disabilities Coordinator.

3. Disability Access Audit will be undertaken. This will be followed by the development of a strategic plan to address any identified barriers and the implementation of appropriate monitoring processes.

4. All staff inductions and orientations will include a session on the Disability Policy and procedures and the provision of disability support. At least two staff development opportunities will be organised for each year.
5. The Disabilities Coordinator will continue to be part of regular Student Services Division surveys and to react appropriately to the relevant outcomes.

6. Each School, Division and other area will prepare an annual report detailing funding expenditure and the resulting disability support processes to the Dean/Director and Disabilities Coordinator.

7. Disabilities Coordinator will prepare an annual report which collates the overall development of support processes and funding requirements and the relevant student and staff disability statistics.

**Measures of Effectiveness**

1. Levels of improved access

2. Increased participation by students and staff with disabilities

3. Responses from staff and students involved in processes

4. Outcomes of Student Services Division surveys

5. Problems which continue to arise

**Examples of current Contact People practices are to:**

Arrange a separate room facility for test conditions
Organise access to a computer for a student
Ensure students have access to photocopies of course material
Facilitate the purchase of specific seating for a staff person.
Coordinate Reader/writer assistance for a student