

# **USQ DISABILITY ACTION PLAN**

## **Sections 3 to 8 Updates**

The USQ Disability Action Plan (DAP) was implemented in 2000 after wide consultation and input from the USQ community and approval of the draft plan by the Vice-Chancellor's Committee. The DAP was subsequently registered with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

A comprehensive review of the implementation of the DAP was undertaken in 2004. One of the outcomes was the adoption of a new review process by the Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) who has responsibility for driving and overseeing the implementation of the DAP.

Under the new process, sections of the DAP are reviewed on a rolling basis over a 4 year timetable. Action Officers who have responsibility for particular strategies are consulted and provide feedback to the DAC on progress in implementing the strategies. These consultation meetings also provide an opportunity for Action Officers to share successes and raise concerns with the committee, and to have direct input into formulating new strategies. Updated sections of the DAP are approved by the committee.

The following extract from the DAP contains sections 3 to 8 of the original DAP, that is:

3. Students
4. Staff
5. Physical Access
6. Library
7. Information Technology and Communication
8. Other Areas of University Life,

Sections 1 and 2 (Introduction, and University and Disability Action Plan respectively) have been deliberately omitted at this stage, and will be redrafted to reflect changes in legislation, USQ policy and committee structure, and the implementation processes. The References, Further Reading and Appendix sections of the Plan have also been omitted from this document. These sections of the DAP are available at <http://usq.edu.au/resources/dap.pdf>

Updates as recommended by Action Offices and approved by the DAC have been made to strategies, nomenclature (including changes to position titles), and timeframes. Changes will continue to be made as part of the review process. After the first cycle of the new process is completed a new version of the DAP will be submitted to the Vice Chancellor's Committee for approval. Changes which have been made to original Objectives, Strategies and Current Policies and Procedures have been highlighted.

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# STUDENTS

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## Goals:

- *To eliminate, as far as possible, discrimination [direct or indirect] against persons on the grounds of disability within education...*

(Disability Discrimination Act, 1992)

- *To promote and support fair access to higher education opportunities and ensure that all students have the opportunities for success ...*

(USQ Equity in Education Policy, 1998)

## 3.1 Recruitment

### Current Policies and Practices

The University's existing information and promotional strategies to prospective students are implemented through the following mechanisms:

- \* Generic, Faculty, Departmental and Course brochures and booklets.
- \* USQ Courses and Careers: an interactive CD ROM.
- \* USQ promotional video
- \* Brochures of the USQ Tertiary Preparation Program (SQ97), an enabling program that assists people who can demonstrate educational disadvantage to gain entrance to USQ. Brochures are distributed widely through a range of community services and a broad marketing campaign is undertaken annually. The Tertiary Preparatory Program also exists as a fee paying course (DD49) that is advertised through Continuing Education.
- \* The USQ Handbook
- \* The USQ Calendar
- \* Course Promotions Managers from the University's Marketing and Public Relations section visit high schools throughout Queensland and Northern New South Wales, and participate in careers markets throughout eastern Australia.
- \* A Tertiary Taste program is offered regularly and targets secondary school students with disabilities considering tertiary education. Facilitated by the Regional Disability Liaison Officer in collaboration with Student Services.
- \* The extensive recruitment drive amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and schools throughout Queensland conducted by Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag.

### Objective 3.1

**To improve access to information on USQ courses and admission procedures for prospective students with disabilities.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
1. Review generic and course information to ensure materials explicitly state entry options into the University for students with disabilities.	Chief Marketing Officer in consultation with Deans, Coordinator, Disability Resources, Academic Disability Contacts, Head, Outreach Services and Academic General Manager	2002
2. Position the University to provide course and admission information on request to prospective students in alternative formats. (For example,	Chief Marketing Officer in collaboration with Academic General	Ongoing

through the creation of unformatted disk versions of the relevant information).	Manager	
3. Introduce proactive strategies to ensure inclusive practices during school visits through consultation with school guidance officers.	Chief Marketing Officer	Ongoing
4. Continue to offer the Tertiary Taste Program for regional high school students with disabilities. Tertiary Taste program to be offered at Wide Bay and Toowoomba Campuses. Develop and offer other programs such as the Post School Options Expos which target mature-age students with disabilities.	Manager, Student Administration in conjunction with the Regional Disability Liaison Officer	Ongoing
5. Continue to seek funding to offer programs which provide information about tertiary study options and support to prospective students with disabilities.	Manager, Student Administration in conjunction with the Regional Disability Liaison Officer	Ongoing
6. Provide expert counselling to prospective students with disabilities considering entry to USQ's courses to ensure that needs are identified and appropriate accommodation planned.	Manager, Counselling and Health via Coordinator, Disability Resources & Careers Services in conjunction with other disability liaison staff as the need arises.	Ongoing

## 3.2 Selection, Admissions & Enrolments

### 3.2.1 Undergraduate Admission

#### Current Policy and Practices:

Current pathways to admission to undergraduate courses, include:

- \* Standard entry. Made via QTAC. Completion of Year 12 at a Queensland Secondary School or equivalent, the overall position or equivalent is used as the general basis for selection.
- \* Special entry. Applicants who do not meet normal requirements can apply for special consideration. Admission under this category is made according to one of the following criteria:
  - Mature Age - via QTAC. Applicants who at the 31st December in the year of application are 21 years or over. Applicants who have not completed Year 12 or do not have a higher level of formal education are advised to sit the Special Tertiary Admissions Test.
  - Direct entry after successful completion of the Tertiary Preparation Program (SQ97/DD49) at USQ.
  - Other exceptional circumstances - via QTAC. Applicants can apply for special consideration of educational disadvantage. If demonstrated, their Overall Position can be adjusted between 1-3 points.
  - Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag: Direct entry for Indigenous Australian students, including Indigenous Australian students with disabilities who do not meet standard entry requirements after successful completion of a 12 month Preparatory Studies Program.

### Objective 3.2.1:

**To ensure equity in access to admission for prospective students with disabilities to the University's undergraduate courses.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>
1. Develop procedures for alternate admission for school leavers with disabilities in exceptional circumstances. Students may be identified through high school outreach program or put forward by school guidance officers.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Deans, Coordinator, Disability Resources, Academic Disability Contacts and Regional Disability Liaison Officer	Ongoing
2. Continue with Tertiary Preparatory Program and direct entry procedures.	General Manager, University Services and Director, Learning and Teaching Support Unit Tertiary Preparation Program	Ongoing
3. Ensure that Student Administration and Faculty staff (eg course coordinators) involved in the admissions process have some understanding of accommodating students with disability in higher education through disability awareness training.	Manager, Organisational Development and Training in cooperation with General Manager, University Services, Coordinator, Disability Resources and Academic Disability Contacts	Ongoing
4. Collect accurate enrolment statistics on students with disabilities so that trends in this area can be tracked over time.	Manager, Strategic Information Analysis (Planning & Quality)	Ongoing

### 3.2.2 Postgraduate Admission

#### Current Policies and Procedures:

Direct entry. Entry requirements vary with courses.

### Objective 3.2.2

**To increase the participation of students with disabilities within postgraduate courses.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Time-frame</i>
1. Develop strategies to increase the representation of students with disabilities in postgraduate courses.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) in collaboration with Manager, Office of Research and Higher Degrees	Ongoing
2. Develop programs that create opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in fee paying postgraduate courses e.g. fee exemptions (equity scholarships).	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) in collaboration with Deans and Manager, Office of Research and Higher Degrees	Ongoing

### 3.2.3 Enrolment

#### Current Policies and Practices:

- \* Pen and paper enrolment forms are mailed to new students after acceptance for entry and continuing students at the end of previous year of study.
- \* Students can make changes to their enrolment details via the University's Internet services.
- \* Students with disabilities are given the opportunity to disclose a disability and indicate if they require support or special examination considerations at the time of enrolment.
- \* Course advice is provided by Faculty Program Administrators, Department Undergraduate and Postgraduate coordinators and the Careers, **Employment and Equity Section of Student Services**.
- \* All students with disabilities requiring support and/or special examination considerations are sent *Students with Disabilities Handbook*.

#### Objective 3.2.3:

**To ensure an appropriate enrolment process for students with disabilities; to encourage students with disabilities to disclose at enrolment; and ensure that students with disabilities are fully informed of available support services.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Have available upon request alternative enrolment processes.	General Manager, University Services	Achieved and ongoing
2. Ensure students are notified of purpose of disability data collection and the importance of disclosure.	General Manager, University Services	Achieved and ongoing
3. Provide students with disabilities with information on appropriate services at the time of enrolment.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Achieved & Ongoing

### 3.3. Teaching and Learning

#### Current Policies & Procedures

- \* Coordinator, Disability Resources, Student Services advises academic staff on the needs of students with disabilities.
- \* Disability Information sessions are conducted by the Coordinator, Disability Resources, with individual Departments upon request.
- \* Students with disabilities negotiate their own requirements with individual teaching staff.
- \* Flexible delivery initiatives aim to provide students with teaching and learning opportunities, at a time and place convenient to students and staff, through a variety of techniques and media.
- \* **Academic learning support is available to students, including students with disabilities through a range of face-to-face, print and online activities, including the Learning Centre within the Learning and Teaching Support Unit. Students with learning disabilities are referred to the Coordinator, Disability Resources, Student Services where they are individually assessed or referred to relevant support with Student Services or the Learning and Teaching Support Unit.**
- \* Fourth year psychology students are trained and supervised to act as Peer Counsellors who provide one-to-one counselling to assist students with study adjustment issues and to monitor academic progress.

### Objective 3.3.1:

**To develop an effective disabilities advisory service for academic staff and to ensure support is provided to Academic Disability Contacts within faculties.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Assign the role of Academic Disability Contact (ADC) to a staff member within each Faculty/Department. The ADC to act as a mediator/link between academic teaching staff and other disability liaison staff on the teaching and learning requirements of students with disabilities studying within their Faculty/ Department.	Deans in consultation with Coordinator, Disability Resources	Achieved & Ongoing
2. Publicise the ADC and the role of the ADC to both students and staff throughout the University.	Disability Advisory Committee in collaboration with Deans and Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Ongoing
3. Provide appropriate support to Academic Staff willing to take on the role of ADC.	Deans	Ongoing

### Objective 3.3.2:

**To ensure students with disabilities have equity of access, participation and opportunity for success in all the University's academic programs.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Develop Student Information Sheets on the teaching, learning and assessment requirements of individual students with disabilities. With the student's permission this information to be collected and retained by Coordinator, Disability Resources and forwarded to ADC's for the purpose of advising other academic staff as the need arises.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health through the Coordinator, Disability Resources in consultation with Deans	Achieved and ongoing
2. Ensure that flexible delivery practices are developed with due consideration being given to access to students with disabilities in the planning and delivery of materials.	Design and Development Section of DeC in collaboration with Deans and Coordinator, Disability Resources, Student Services and Disability Technical Adviser, ITS	Ongoing
3. Prepare study materials in a format that can be readily converted to accessible formats, such as large font or braille.	Deans Unit Examiners, Faculties on advice from Coordinator, Disability Resources	Begin 2002
4. Students requiring study materials in certain accessible formats, (including braille, professional taping by the Royal Blind Society, computer disks of external study packages and other audio material) to submit their request no later than 2 months prior to the commencement of each semester. Requests after this time being not guaranteed.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health in collaboration with Deans	2001 & ongoing
5. Students in first semester of university study requiring accessible formats listed in 4 to be given flexible arrangements in terms of unit timelines for their first semester of study.	Deans in collaboration with Coordinator, Disability Resources	2001 & ongoing

6. Students requiring the accessible formats listed in 4 to be fully informed of their responsibility to submit their requests before the 2 month deadline in order to guarantee study materials on time.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health in collaboration with Deans	2001 & ongoing
7. Other requests for accessible formats (such as copies of lecture notes, enlarged copies of lecture notes, disk copies of lecture notes) to be provided by Faculties.	Deans in collaboration with Student Services	Ongoing
8. Disseminate information on the learning requirements of students with disabilities and inclusive teaching practices to academic teaching staff.	Deans & Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health through the ADC's and Coordinator, Disability Resources.	Achieved & ongoing
9. Integrate equity strategies relating to students with disabilities into Faculty strategic plans.	Deans	2006
10. Develop evaluation strategies to measure students with disabilities satisfaction with teaching and assessment procedures.	Survey Manager, Student Services in collaboration with Deans	2006

### 3.4. Academic Assessment

#### Current Practices and policies:

- \* Procedures are in place for the request of special examination considerations.
- \* Faculty Disability Contacts, the Coordinator, Disability Resources and the Examinations area of Student Administration coordinate the provision of examination considerations.
- \* Other changes to the assessment and/or the assessment process are negotiated by the student with a disability either, via the Coordinator, Disability Resources or directly with relevant teaching staff.

#### Objective 3.4:

**To ensure that students with disabilities are assessed in ways that give students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and learning; does not disadvantage the student; and maintains academic standards.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Regularly review special examination procedures to ensure students' needs are being met. Review practices in place in similar universities.	General Manager, University Services in conjunction with Deans, Coordinator, Disability Resources and Academic Disability Contact's	Achieved & ongoing
2. Ensure students with disabilities are given the necessary accommodations during all examinations.	Deans in consultation with Academic Disability Contact's & Coordinator, Disability Resources	Ongoing
3. Establish a database for the recording of actions in this area, with a view to rationalising decision making processes.	General Manager, University Services in collaboration with Academic Disability Contact's & Coordinator, Disability Resources	2002
4. Develop procedures for the provision of other	Academic Board to	Begin 2002

changes to assessment that may be required by students with disabilities (eg alternate assessment).	advise Vice-Chancellor	
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### 3.5. Student Support

#### Current Policies and Procedures:

Student Services provide integrated support services to students with disabilities based on the student's individual requirements. These services include: careers and employment service, chaplaincy, health services, counselling and workshops, learning enhancement assistance, student housing advisory service, student disability support, financial counselling, peer counselling services and counselling and learning enhancement to all students with a special focus on disability disabilities. All student services staff are sensitive to and informed of the needs of students with disabilities. External students can access services by telephone, email and internet, at the Brisbane centre and during Residential School.

- \* All students with disabilities indicating on their enrolment forms that they require support are mailed by the Coordinator, Disability Resources the *Handbook for Students with Disabilities*, which contains information of services and support available. Students are encouraged to make an appointment with one of the Disability Resource Personnel located on each of the three campuses to discuss their learning and assessment needs in a confidential interview.
- \* The Coordinator, Disability Resources provides assistance to students with disabilities, including: advocating for a student; liaising with academic staff on behalf of a student and coordinating academic and other accommodations a student may require to enable them to access the University's services and facilities and progress through their study.
- \* Each Faculty has nominated at least one staff member to act as their contact person for students with disabilities. It is the Faculty Disability Contact's role to assist students with disabilities in particular with regards to examination considerations.
- \* Professional Counsellors are available to provide telephone or on-campus personal counselling. Counsellors also provide psychological/medical/learning assessments and a variety of workshops.
- \* Students with learning disabilities are individually assessed and are referred to the Study Skills Program, which provides individualized programmes and support.
- \* Fourth year psychology students are trained and supervised to act as Peer Counsellors who provide one-to-one counselling to assist students with student adjustment issues and to monitor academic progress.
- \* All first year external students are mailed a copy of the publication used in the Learning Enhancement program, *Developing your Study Skills at University*.
- \* A full-time nurse and visiting general practitioners are available at the Health Service to treat student and staff medical complaints. A sick bay is available to students or staff that need to rest or require privacy for medical reasons. Health promotion activities are conducted.
- \* The Careers Employment and Equity section of Student Services assists students with course planning, employment prospects, career choice decisions, job search strategies, vocational assessment, graduate placement, employment preparation and further study options. Special emphasis is given to graduate placement for students with disabilities.
- \* Student Services can assist students in their search for off-campus accommodation. Student Services also maintains an online Accommodation Database.
- \* Financial Counselling is available to students by appointment. Special Financial Assistance or emergency loans are available to students to help with living expenses and study related expenses. Students with disabilities can apply for extended loans to meet costs of disability in relation to their study.
- \* Kumbhari/Ngurpai Lag provides academic and personal support, and financial counselling to indigenous students, including indigenous students with disabilities.
- \* Information on procedures relating to academic appeal of grades is available in the USQ Calendar and USQ Handbook. General complaints processes which might relate to direct or indirect discriminatory treatment of students, including students with disabilities is described only briefly

in the University Calendar, without any clarity of the procedures that would be undertaken.

### Objective 3.5:

**To ensure that students with disabilities are provided with the appropriate support to enable them to successfully progress through their study.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Ensure that specific funds are nominated to provide for the strategies and programs which are necessary to support students with disabilities within the University	General Manager, University Services as chief administrator of both Student Services and the Equal Opportunity Office	Achieved & ongoing
2. Develop evaluation methods of the services provided to students with disabilities.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	2001 & then annually
3. Continue the role of Faculty Disability Contact in coordinating special examination procedures.	Deans in collaboration with Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health and General Manager, University Services	Ongoing
4. The Coordinator, Disability Resources to liaise with Academic Disability Contacts (ADC) within each Faculty/Department and provide information to the ADC on the academic and learning requirements of students with disabilities.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health in collaboration with Deans	Achieved & ongoing
5. Aim to establish a new position of Disability Support Officer to assist the Coordinator, Disability Resources in the coordination of services and the implementation of new projects in accordance with student enrolments. This position could commence as part-time.	Vice-Chancellor in consultation with General Manager, University Services	Achieved
6. Review Student Services general informational materials - to include information relevant to students with disabilities (eg. housing advisory service).	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Began 2000 & ongoing
7. Plan to provide informational materials on student support services in alternate formats upon request.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Began 2000 & ongoing
8. Initiate and expand the Disability Services website, to include information on the accommodation of disability within the University (procedures for requesting accommodation support for students and strategies for teaching). Publicise website to students and staff.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health in collaboration with Disability Services	Began 2000 & ongoing
9. Develop grievance procedures for complaints that fall outside of academic appeals.	Manager, Equal Opportunity	2002
10. Ensure that students on the Wide Bay and Springfield Campuses have access to the services of a student counsellor with expertise in personal and careers counselling; psychological assessment; and the requirements of students with disabilities.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic	Ongoing
11. Develop strategies for providing improved support to indigenous students with disabilities.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health with Director, Kumbari/Ngurpai Lag	Began 2000 & ongoing

12. Develop projects that give students the opportunity to interact with peers with disabilities. a) The allocation of a respite room for students to meet for peer support, to exchange information, and to rest or take time-out. b) Create opportunities for online interaction through the University's web-site for students with disabilities studying externally (eg discussion group, discussion list).	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health in collaboration with Manager (Operations), Building & Facilities (a) and Disability Technical Adviser, Information Technology Services (b).	Respite room allocated in March, 2000  Online interaction begin 2001
13. Loan scheme provided for special equipment to be used to assist students with disabilities	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Began 1999 & ongoing

### 3.6 Distance Education/ Flexible Delivery

#### Current Policies and Practices:

The Distance and e-Learning Centre (DeC) coordinates the delivery of educational materials and services to students studying by external mode.

- \* Study materials, including study guides, CD-Roms, on-line units, tele-tutorials and video-conferencing are developed and coordinated by an Instructional Design team in collaboration with Faculties.
- \* Study materials are mailed to students studying externally prior to the commencement of each semester.
- \* Outreach Services for external students operate from DeC, including:
- \* Study Centres at locations in Brisbane and Ipswich.
- \* Twenty-five Regional Liaison Officers (RLOs) are employed by Outreach Services and are located in twenty major centres throughout Eastern Australia to provide students with information on relevant services, to coordinate external student requirements and to act as a relatively local contact point for students.
- \* Organise Residential School in collaboration with faculties and coordinate accommodation in collaboration with Residential Colleges.
- \* Organise telephone tutorials and audiographic tutorials and provide students with audio and video-tapes of these tutorials.

#### Objective 3.6:

**To ensure that students with disabilities receive the same benefits as other students receiving distance education and are not disadvantaged due to disability.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibly</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Ensure the Distance and e-Learning Centre has sufficient resources to implement strategies which provide necessary accommodations for students with disabilities.	Deputy Vice Chancellor (Global Learning Services) as chief administrator the Distance and e-Learning Centre	Ongoing
2. Provide print study materials in alternate formats upon request. The system by DEC for the production of external study materials aids this process.	Director, Distance and e-Learning Centre in collaboration with Deans, the Instructional Design Team, Distance Education Centre, Coordinator, Disability Resources, Student Services and Disability Technical Adviser, ITS.	Achieved & ongoing

3. Develop on-line study materials with due consideration to the requirements of students with disabilities.	Director, Distance and e-Learning Centre in collaboration with Deans, the Instructional Design Team, Distance Education Centre Coordinator, Disability Resources, Student Services, Disability Technical Adviser, ITS and Academic Disability Contacts	2002 & ongoing
4. Develop CD-ROM materials with due consideration to the requirements of students with disabilities (eg captioning sound segments).	Director, Distance and e-Learning Centre in collaboration with Deans, the Instructional Design Team, Distance e-Learning Centre, Coordinator, Disability Resources, Student Services, Disability Technical Adviser, ITS and Academic Disability Contacts	Begin 2002
5. Provide transcripts of teletutorials to students with hearing impairments upon request.	Head, Outreach	Available on request
6. Provide students with disabilities with home hookup telephone tutorials.	Head, Outreach	Available on request
7. Ensure students with disabilities are able to participate fully during residential school.	Head, Outreach Services, in cooperation with Coordinator, Disability Resources, Student Services, Disability Technical Adviser, ITS, Academic Disability Contacts and Disability Services and Library Disability Liaison Officer.	Ongoing
8. Develop strategies that ensure students with disabilities are provided with appropriate accommodation during Residential School.	Director, Residential Colleges in collaboration with Head, Outreach and Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Achieved & ongoing
9. Ensure students with disabilities attending Residential School are informed of specialised disability services.	Director, Distance and e-Learning Centre, Head, Outreach and Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health.	Achieved & ongoing. Monitor and update when necessary
10. Review and update training given to Regional Liaison Officer's of the services available to students with disabilities and their obligations under anti-discrimination legislation.	Director, Distance and e-Learning Centre in collaboration with Director, Human Resources and Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Ongoing
11. Develop evaluation procedures that monitor the	DVC (Academic)	2002

delivery of distance education to students with disabilities.		
12. Build disability strategies into the strategic planning for flexible delivery.	ISPCS, Design & Development Section	Begin 2001 & ongoing
13. Engender the development of appropriate assessment procedures to facilitate flexible assessment procedures for students with disabilities.	Director, Distance and e-Learning Centre, Academic Board	Current, ongoing

### 3.7 External Resources and Support

#### Current Policies and Practices:

In relation to supporting students with disabilities in their study the University currently liaises with and works in collaboration with a number of external organisations to offer the best support to its students with disabilities.

- \* The Royal Blind Society provide support and services to a number of students with visual impairments.
- \* Queensland Deaf Society provide support, services and advice relating to the deaf and hearing impairment.
- \* The Independent Living Centre provides services and advice on assistive technology.
- \* Disability Services liaises regularly with state and national bodies that have a specific interest in disability in higher education including, the Queensland Disability Liaison Officers Network (QDLON), and Tertiary Education Disability Council Australia (TEDCA).

#### Objective 3.7:

**To liaise and work with the appropriate external organisations to ensure that students with disabilities needs are met in the best possible way.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibly</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. To continue to liaise with and work in collaboration with external organisations to ensure that students with disabilities needs are best met.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Achieved & ongoing
2. To cooperate with TEDCA in the establishment of a database of resources at Australian tertiary institutions. The establishment of a such a database will allow resource sharing across Australian universities and reduce individual university's resource loads.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Achieved & ongoing

# STAFF

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## Goal:

- *To attract and retain employees of a high calibre.*
- *To maintain equitable and efficient processes to ensure that USQ is adequately and effectively staffed with the best available people.*
- *To provide equality and opportunity of employment for all staff.*
- *To develop, integrate and implement Human Resource strategies and management processes that are shaped by principles of equity and fairness.*

## 4.1 Employee Profile

### Current Policy and practices:

- \* The university's employee database does not currently collect data relating to employees with disabilities.
- \* In a staff survey conducted as part of the consultation process approximately 12% of the respondents reported some level of disability. Since it is likely that a high response rate would occur for people with disabilities, it is likely that the proportion of staff members with some form of disabilities is somewhat less than 12%. However, the survey indicates that disabilities represent a prominent feature of the USQ staff profile.

### Objective 4.1:

#### To collect data and monitor annually an employment profile of staff with disabilities.

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Time frame</i>
1. Develop methods for the collection of data on staff with disabilities, including numbers and classification of disabilities by Faculty and Division. .	Group Manager, Human Resources & Corporate Services in collaboration with Manager, Strategic Information Analysis (Planning & Quality	Begin 2005 & ongoing
2. Maintain database of staff members and monitor improvement in the equitable participation of staff with disabilities throughout the USQ workforce.	Group Manager, Human Resources & Corporate Services in consultation with Equal Opportunity Manager	Ongoing
3. Conduct a discussion forum and survey staff members who have identified as having a disability to ascertain issues relating to their disability and recommend improvements to the work environment..	Group Manager, Human Resources & Corporate Services , Coordinator Disability Resources and RDLO	2005 as part of EMAD Project then every second year

## 4.2 Recruitment

### Current Policies and Practices:

- \* USQ Human Resource Policy Manual
- \* There are two main paths for recruitment: (1) Through advertising vacant positions and an interview process; (2) Human Resource maintains register of applicants in a casual employment pool.
- \* Other casual employment opportunities exist in academic areas (e.g. marking, tutoring, and research). Postgraduate students are often targeted for employment.

### Objective 4.2.1:

**To develop a comprehensive Disabilities Workplace Strategy for the University that establishes USQ as a regional leader in the employment of people with disabilities..**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Enlist the assistance of Employees Making A Difference (EMAD) through Pathways to Charter membership to develop a comprehensive Disabilities Workplace Strategy for the University.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
2. Review all recruitment policy and practice to ensure all aspects of potential discrimination are addressed.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
3. Introduce policies and procedures which actively support the recruitment and support of people with disabilities as a part of the University's workforce; including the employment of USQ graduates with a disability	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
4. Consider the introduction of a preferred interview status for all applicants with a disability for each advertised position	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
5. Establish strong working relationships with local employment agencies for people with disabilities, with the goal to set achievable targets for the placement of clients from these agencies into the University workforce	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
6. Participate in structured work experience programs.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
7. Ensure that staff induction and professional development programs for USQ managers include information on disabilities in the workplace.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing

## 4.3 Support Services for Staff

### Current Policies and Practices:

- \* USQ Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual
- \* Counselling and health services are available to staff at Student Services.

- \* Grievance Procedures are currently being reviewed.
- \* USQ Safe is available to coordinate staff health and safety requirements within each section.
- \* Staff representation on committees is in accordance with HEWRR requirements.
- \* The Disability Advisory Committee now reports to an umbrella Social Justice Committee and has a mandate that includes a consideration of issues relating to staff with disabilities.

### Objective 4.3:

**To ensure employees with disabilities are provided with the necessary support to participate in the University workforce and community.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. USQ to enlist the assistance of Employees Making A Difference (EMAD) through Pathways to Charter membership to develop a comprehensive Disabilities Workplace Strategy for the University. This strategy will include an assurance of appropriate support for staff with disabilities and the organisational sections in which they work.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
2. Ensure staff induction programs and staff development programs consider the requirements of staff with disabilities and the appropriate accommodations are made.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing
3. Raise awareness among USQ Safe and Workplace Health and Safety Officers, Managers, and USQ employees on issues relating to disability within the workplace through staff development and other processes as appropriate.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	2005 and ongoing

## 4.4 Staff Development

### Current Policy and Practices:

- \* The organisation of staff development capabilities at USQ has been amended with the establishment of the Learning & Teaching Support Unit (LTSU) with responsibility for academic staff development. The delivery of General staff development programs remains the responsibility of Human Resources.

### Objective 4.4:

**To raise awareness of disability across the University community and provide employers with expert knowledge that will assist them in understanding and meeting the requirements of people with disabilities.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. USQ to enlist the assistance of Employees Making A Difference (EMAD) through Pathways to Charter membership to develop a comprehensive Disabilities Workplace Strategy for the University. This strategy will include staff induction and professional development programs for USQ managers and faculty liaison staff on disabilities in the workplace.	Group Manager, Human Resources & Corporate Services in consultation with Director, LTSU.	Ongoing
2. Develop and implement staff development programs that inform employees of their obligations and responsibilities under anti-discrimination legislation.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services in	Ongoing

	consultation with Equal Opportunity Manager and Manager, Employee Relations.	
3. Develop and implement staff development programs that provide academic staff with strategies for inclusive teaching. To begin with target Academic Disability Contacts.	Director, LTSU	Ongoing
4. Develop and implement staff development programs that train staff in the issues relating to disability and employment (target Workplace Health and Safety Officers and Managers of sections).	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services	Ongoing
5. Develop staff development programs that raise awareness of the issues relating to 'invisible' disability, such as, psychiatric illness and chronic fatigue syndrome.	Group Manager, Human Resources and Corporate Services in collaboration with Coordinator, Disability Resources.	Ongoing
6. Invite prominent people writing in the area of disabilities to visit USQ on a regular basis to conduct public forums and workshops, give lectures and seminars and discuss issues with students and staff; emulating the program that has been used so successfully at USQ in the area of racial discrimination and multi-culturalism.	Equal Opportunity Manager and Coordinator, Disability Resources.	Ongoing

# PHYSICAL ACCESS

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## Goals:

- *To eliminate, as far as possible, physical barriers to access by people with disabilities.*
- *To create an enabling built environment that facilitates the participation of people with disabilities within the University community.*

## 5.1 Built Environment

### Current Policy and Practices:

- \* All new building within the University now meet the standards set down in the Building Code of Australian. Physical access is also trialed with the assistance of people with disabilities. Any other barriers identified and modified.
- \* Modifications to buildings to allow access occurs through the University's minor works program.

### Objective 5.1:

**To identify and remove physical barriers from the Universities built environments, as far as is possible.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Conduct regular access audits of the University's Campuses as a means of identifying and rectifying any physical barriers.	General Manager, Buildings and Facilities	Ongoing
2. Continue to incorporate into the Capital Management Plan a plan of action that as far as possible removes existing physical barriers from the University's built environment over a reasonable timeframe.	General Manager, Buildings and Facilities	Achieved & ongoing
3. Ensure sites leased by the University are accessible to people with disabilities. Criteria for leasing sites to include physical access as part of the criteria for leasing.	General Manager, Buildings and Facilities	Ongoing

### Objective 5.2

**To ensure that disability access is incorporated into all plans for new buildings or facilities and in plans for refurbishments or modifications to existing buildings or facilities.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Buildings and Facilities staff to consult with Disability Resources staff and/or an appropriate Access Consultant about disability access when developing specifications for new buildings and refurbishments or modifications to existing buildings and other facilities.	General Manager, Finance and Facilities	Ongoing

# LIBRARY

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## Goal:

- *To ensure that all USQ students have fair access to student support, library resources and library services provided by the University.*

## Current Policies and Practices:

- \* All Library staff are encouraged to assist people with disabilities who are using the Library.
- \* One of the Library staff has been appointed as Disability Liaison Officer to assist people with disabilities in the Library.
- \* Additional assistance with catalogue and database searching by appointment with a Liaison Librarian.
- \* Lower height computer terminal desks throughout the Library.
- \* Wheelchair accessible toilet is available on level 1 only.
- \* Electronic Library entry and exit doors.
- \* Lift control panel with tactile buttons at wheelchair height.
- \* Small group or individual tours for students with disabilities, upon request.
- \* Retrieval of items from Library shelves for students with disabilities upon request.
- \* Longer loans periods to vision-impaired students and any others who demonstrate need, upon request.
- \* Provision of off-campus library services for local students who cannot use the Library upon request.
- \* An Assistive Technology Room with a range of specialized equipment has been provided in the Toowoomba campus library. Students with specific needs liaise with library staff and/or Disability Resource staff at the other campuses.

## Objective 6.1:

**To provide the appropriate support and resources to students with disabilities at all USQ libraries.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Ensure the Library has sufficient resources to implement strategies which provide necessary accommodations for students with disabilities.	University Librarian	Ongoing
2. The Library Disability Liaison Officer to provide individual assistance to students with disabilities, provide advice to other library staff and liaise with other areas of the University.	University Librarian	Achieved and ongoing
3. Promote Library services to students with disabilities.	University Librarian in collaboration with other relevant sections.	Achieved and ongoing
4. Create and maintain a list of services for students with disabilities on the Library Web page in an accessible format.	University Librarian	Achieved and ongoing
5. Raise awareness among all librarians of the access issues for students with disabilities in the Library.	University Librarian in consultation with Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	Achieved and ongoing
6. Provide photocopying and enlarging services, with a 24 hour turnabout	University Librarian	Achieved and ongoing

7.	Provide some basic reference tools in large print as required.	University Librarian	Achieved and ongoing
8.	Provide magnifying glasses at the reference and information desks.	University Librarian	Achieved and ongoing
9.	Investigate options for specialised technologies and software for people with disabilities that will provide access to library resources. As specialised equipment is currently not provided at USQ the opportunity exists to standardise the provision of this equipment across the campuses.	University Librarian in consultation with Chief Information Officer.	Begin 2002 & ongoing
10.	Compile a list of equipment and software in consultation with Disability Services according to current statistics.	University Librarian	Ongoing
11.	Re-establish and maintain a room that can be used by students with disabilities and in the provision of an assistive technology.	University Librarian	Room established 2004.
12.	Install new equipment and software, expand and maintain assistive technological services as demand requires.	University Librarian	Achieved and ongoing
13.	Develop evaluation strategies of borrowing services and other services in relation to people with disabilities.	University Librarian	To begin in 2004 and ongoing
14.	Library to include equity initiatives relating to students with disabilities as part of the Library planning process.	University Librarian	Achieved and ongoing

# INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION

## Goal:

**To ensure that USQ provides an equitable environment for students and staff with disabilities to access information and communicate using ICT.**

## Current Policy and Practice:

- Policy and practice shaped by Disability Discrimination Act (1992), Disability Standards for Education (2005), World-Wide Web Consortium Guidelines on Web Accessibility (W3C) and AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities.
- Reform to ICT structures at USQ through the implementation of the recommendations of the 2004 ICT Review Report including the appointment of Chief Information Officer (CIO) and Chief Technical Officer (CTO) positions; establishment of an expanded ICT Division involving all USQ staff associated with core ICT; and ICT strategic planning, decision making and operational processes that secure alignment of ICT with University strategic directions.
- Restructure of Disability Resources at USQ in 2005, including a Technical Coordinator position to advise on and implement technology based solutions for people with disability.
- Process for regular reporting against Disability Action Plan introduced by Disabilities Advisory Committee in 2005.

## Objective 7.1:

**Provide students and staff with disabilities equivalent access to information, and learning and employment experiences as other students and staff of the University.**

Strategies	Responsibility	Timeframe
1. Technical Coordinator, Disability Resources to work in collaboration with the CTO to ensure the appropriate deployment of ICT to meet the needs of students and staff with disabilities, and to identify solutions to meet the needs of individuals as required. The AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities, including the use of the W3C web standards to guide USQ's approaches in this area	Technical Coordinator, Disability Resources, in collaboration with CTO; under the auspices of the Disabilities Advisory Committee	Ongoing
2. Processes introduced to ensure that systems developments comply with AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities, including the W3C web standard.	CTO	From 2005 and ongoing
3. A regular professional development program undertaken to ensure that key staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities	Director Learning & Teaching Support Unit in consultation with Technical Coordinator, Disability Resources	Introduced from 2006 then ongoing
4. Examples of best practice promoted as a further strategy for promoting compliance with AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities – including the Department of Psychology website as an exemplar of W3C Standard implementation.	Coordinator, Disability Resources	Coordinator, Disability Resources
5. Mechanisms in place for quality assuring the University's program for securing ICT solutions for people with disability – including processes for	Disability Planning Officer; under the auspices of the	Ongoing

appropriate monitoring and review, of performance against DAP and compliance with AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities, regular reporting, and forward planning.	Disabilities Advisory Committee	
6. Ensure appropriate information is available on ICT use by people with disability to inform decision making and forward planning in this area; including the use of evaluation strategies to measure students with disability satisfaction with ICT services.	Disability Planning Officer in collaboration with Planning & Quality Office and Learning & Teaching Support Unit	Ongoing

**Objective 7.2:**

**To provide accessible communication systems to people with disabilities on the University campuses.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Deploy communications technologies in ways that make them accessible to students and staff with disabilities	CTO, with advice from Technical Officer, Disability Resources	Ongoing

## OTHER AREAS OF UNIVERSITY LIFE

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### Goals:

- **To ensure that all students and staff have access to all university facilities.**
- **To promote access to participation in all activities by all members of the university community.**

## 8.1 Accommodation

### Current policy and practices:

- \* On-campus accommodation is available to students (including external students) at one of three University-controlled Residential Colleges at the Toowoomba campus. **There is no on-campus accommodation available at Wide Bay. At Springfield, on-campus accommodation is provided and administered by Education City.**
- \* When applying to Residential Colleges students are given the opportunity to disclose specific requirements in relation to disability, diet and medical conditions. Residential Colleges contact individual students to ensure that the appropriate planning and action is taken in accommodating each student.
- \* Two colleges are owned and managed by the University and the third by the Catholic Diocese.
- \* Residential Colleges also provide accommodation to people participating in other on-campus venues (e.g. Summer School, conferences)

### Objective 8.1.1:

**To ensure Residential Colleges can provide fully accessible accommodation for students and visitors with disabilities.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. As a temporary solution, secure an agreement with the Student Village to continue to lease the accessible unit on a long-term basis.	General Manager, University Services	Achieved & continue until other arrangements are made
2. Ensure the availability of this unit is made known in the promotional information for: Residential Colleges; Housing Advisory Service and Coordinator, Disability Resources and accommodation information provided to external students through Outreach, Distance Education Centre.	General Manager, University Services through the Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health; Director, Residential Colleges; Manager, Outreach	Achieved & ongoing
3. As a number of units in Residential Colleges are currently accessible to many users of wheelchairs, provide accessible bathing and toilet facilities.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Director, Residential Colleges; Manager, Buildings and Facilities and Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	2002
4. Modify minimum of two units within University owned Residential Colleges to provide fully accessible accommodation to students and visitors with disabilities.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Director, Residential Colleges, Manager, Buildings and	2003

	Facilities; and Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health	
5. Review the use of and demand for accessible units in Residential Colleges with a view to assessing the need to increase the number of accessible units available..	Director, Residential Colleges in consultation with the General Manager, University Services & Bursar	2002
6. Negotiate with the Catholic Diocese to have at least one accessible unit provided in the Catholic owned Residential College, Concannon College.	Director, Residential Colleges	Begin 2001

### Objective 8.1.2:

**Residential Colleges to provide appropriate support to enable students with disabilities to participate in all Residential College activities.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Continue to forward plan in meeting the individual needs of students with disabilities through the early disclosure of disability upon application to Residential Colleges and follow-up discussion with individual students.	Director, Residential Colleges	Ongoing
2. Review services and activities provided at Residential Colleges in relation to access and participation by students with disabilities. Develop strategies to increase the participation of students with disabilities in college activities.	Director, Residential Colleges	Achieved & ongoing
3. Residential Colleges to consider the inclusion of equity initiatives relating to students with disabilities within sectional strategic plan.	Director, Residential Colleges	Begin 2001 & ongoing
4. Ensure students with disabilities accommodated in temporary alternative at Student Village have access to the full range of services provided by Residential Colleges.	Director, Residential Colleges	Achieved & ongoing

## 8.2 Advertising and Marketing

### Objective 8.2:

**To publicly promote the University of Southern Queensland as an organisation committed to the inclusion of people with disabilities in both employment and education.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Ensure that university promotional <b>resource materials</b> are inclusive of a wide diversity of students, including positive images of staff and students with disabilities.	Chief Marketing Officer and Director, Secretariat	Begin 2001 & ongoing
2. Promotional material to include information publicising the programs and policies for staff and students with disabilities.	Chief Marketing Officer and Director, Human Resources	Begin 2001 & ongoing

## 8.3 USQ Student Guild

### Objective 8.3.1:

**To ensure students with disabilities have the opportunity to fully benefit from their membership of the USQ Student Guild**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Clarify with the USQ Student Guild its obligations to students and staff with disabilities under the Disability Discrimination Act.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Manager, Student Guild	2001
2. Encourage the USQ Student Guild to ensure access requirements for people with disabilities are factored into the design of new facilities and upgrading of existing facilities.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Manager, Student Guild	Ongoing
3. Encourage the USQ Student Guild to provide representation on relevant University committees by board members who are informed of the issues relating to students with disabilities.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Manager, Student Guild	Ongoing
4. Encourage the USQ Student Guild to provide disability awareness training for staff on a regular basis.	General Manager, University Services in consultation with Manager, Student Guild	Begin 2001 & ongoing

## 8.4 Parking and Transport

### Current Policies and Practices:

- \* Parking spaces designated for people with disabilities are available close to all campus buildings.
- \* The local bus service, *City Bus* now has one accessible bus with a service to the University. The company has two more accessible buses on order.

### Objective 8.4

**To ensure ease of transport, drop-down points and parking to people with disabilities**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Ensure advertising and schedules of <i>City Bus</i> ' accessible service are available to students and staff with disabilities.	Manager, Counselling, Disability and Health in consultation with Manager, <i>City Bus</i>	Ongoing
2. Provide full-time staff with mobility disabilities with permit parking spaces within close proximity to their place of work.	General Manager, Finance and Facilities	2001
3. Regularly monitor the use and need for further disability parking. Include plans to increase disabled parking bays as demand increases	General Manager, Finance and Facilities	Begin 2001 & ongoing
4. Clearly mark set down points for maxi-taxis and ensure set down points have close access to University buildings.	General Manager, Finance and Facilities	2001

## 8.5 Safety and Emergency Evacuation

### Objective 8.5

**To ensure the safety of people with disabilities and the safe evacuation of people with disabilities in case of an emergency.**

<i>Strategies</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>
1. Ensure Workplace, Health and Safety Officers are informed of potential hazards to people with disabilities and develop strategies to avoid potentially dangerous situations.	Director Human Resources	2002
2. Review safety procedures in science laboratories, workshops, and visual arts facilities with consideration to the safety of people with disabilities. If necessary redraft safety procedures with strategies that include the safety of people with disabilities.	Director Human Resources	2002
3. Develop procedures for evacuation in the case of an emergency that is inclusive of people with disabilities.	Director Human Resources	2001
4. Ensure fire wardens practice procedures for the evacuation of people with disabilities in drills.	Director Human Resources	2001 & ongoing