

The disabled student experience at Cardiff

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Scenario

First year undergraduate in the School of Journalism and Media Studies

A disabled student with dyslexia and vision impairment

The enabling structure

Background

- Full support from Director of Information Services (INSRV)

- Scale of the service
 - 24,000 students on 2 campuses
 - 500+ staff in INSRV
 - 18 libraries and computer rooms

The supporting structure

- INSRV Equality and Diversity rep
- Network of reps in physical locations
- E and D Working Group
 - INSRV staff
 - CU Disability and Dyslexia Service
 - HR E and D manager
 - Inclusive Curriculum officer
 - Students Union

The Action Plan

1. Maintain a baseline level of service and liaise with Estates
2. Implement an E and D impact assessment of INSRV policies and procedures
3. Seek funding
4. Identify and activate training and awareness programmes

The Action Plan

5. Publicise our activities and developments
6. Liaise with key stakeholders in the University eg DDS and students
7. Embed disability issues into learning and teaching
8. Ensure online developments are fully accessible

The practice Services

- Library help
 - longer loan periods
 - personal assistance
- Documentation and leaflets
 - alternative formats
- Physical adaptation
 - induction loops
 - alterations to counters to BS standards

The Practice

Hardware, software and equipment

- Landscape for Enhanced Assistive Provision (LEAP)
 - assistive IT equipment
 - adjustable tables and ergonomic chairs
- Assistive software
- Smartboards

Advice from DDS, RNIB, RNID

The Practice

Training and Publicity

- An accessible INSRV website
 - INSRV web accessibility officer
- Disability awareness training, especially for front-line staff
- Software training for IT support staff
- University HR Staff Development Programme
 - disability courses

The Practice

Learning and Teaching

- Accessible curriculum for subject librarians
 - accessible teaching methods
 - handouts
 - location
- Liaison with School disability contacts

Funding

A constant concern

- Clear disability opportunities
 - funding councils, government (UK and Wales), JISC, TechDis
- Less obvious sources
 - learning and teaching bids
 - refurbishment

A holistic approach

Embed disability support in all our activities
eg

- E and D impact assessment of policies and practices, including disability impact
- Project planning within INSRV
 - adherence to INSRV accessibility standards

The challenges

- Awareness
 - essential to obtain complete support from INSRV Board members and senior staff
 - constant reminders of disability issues
- Funding, especially for larger projects and training
- Time and dedicated staff