

# Disability Equality Scheme

## Foreword

The Disability Equality Duty is an important new duty aimed at promoting disability equality across the public sector. Promotion of equality of opportunity for every member of staff and for all students falls within the core values of Queen Mary, as expressed in the Strategic Plan 2006-10:

- Excellence in the personal achievements of staff and students, supported by the College in reaching their goal
- Collegiality in all aspects of the life and work of the College, treating all other members of our community with respect and courtesy and encouraging success
- Diversity in our staff and student body, valuing our differences as an important contribution to our research, teaching and other activities.

As Chair of the Queen Mary Equal Opportunities Committee I welcome the development of this Disability Equality Scheme which aims to embed disability equality into QMUL. There is still work to be done to close the gap between the experiences of disabled staff and students and those of non-disabled people but the development and implementation of this Scheme marks an important milestone towards the creation of an environment which actively addresses equality and diversity issues for staff and students in relation to disability, race, gender and age. This is a priority in attaining the College's Key Objective 5: "Develop and nurture our key human, physical and financial resources in a sustainable fashion that will enable our other key objectives to be achieved."

Virginia Davis  
Chair

Queen Mary, University of London  
Equal Opportunities Committee

## Introduction

The purpose of Queen Mary, University of London's (QMUL or the College) Disability Equality Scheme (DES) is to explain how the College will make sure that it promotes equality for disabled people and challenges discrimination against them. The DES sets out the means by which the College intends to meet its legal obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as amended by the 2005 Act (DDA 2005 or the Act). The College intends to ensure that equality is embedded in all its practices, policies and the functions it carries out.

## Aims and Objectives

Producing the DES is a requirement of the general duty to promote disability equality within public organisations. The aim of the DES is to facilitate the removal of barriers that disabled people (potential and current staff and students and visitors) may face. This includes those that do not consider themselves disabled but nevertheless experience discrimination because of their disability. The DES aims to address issues for people with a range of impairments and those that are indeed not visible.

The aim of our DES is to mainstream disability equality into QMUL by building it into the way we work. The DES looks at how we can close the gaps in the results and experiences for disabled staff and students when compared with non-disabled people.

The College operates in a variety of contexts and as such equality forms a fundamental part of the College's operations. The scheme covers its role as an employer, educator and service provider and demonstrates the College's commitment to:

- Build a well informed disability equality culture through our leadership
- Promote greater disability awareness amongst staff and students
- Continually involve and consult with disabled staff, students and stakeholders to identify and deliver the actions outlined within the scheme
- Promoting access to higher education for disabled students
- Ensuring that the recruitment and admissions process for staff and students is fair, transparent and fully accessible
- Provide a supportive working and learning environment which enables disabled staff and students to achieve their full potential
- Monitor and review the service provision for disabled stakeholders through the College's equality impact assessment arrangements
- Measure and monitor our progress on the disability equality targets we set within the DES action plan
- Evaluate our progress in order to identify what works and what doesn't
- Ensure that disability is considered within structural or financial planning within the College
- Ensure that information is provided in accessible formats for our disabled stakeholders
- Ensure that disability is considered within the College's communication strategy

## Context

### Legal Definition of Disability and Social Model of Disability

The Code of Practice made under the DDA Act 1995 states that 'A person has a disability if he has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. Some disabled people feel that this focuses too much on the individual's impairment. This traditional view of disability is called "the Medical Model of Disability", because it sees people as medical problems. As a result disabled people are expected to see their impairment as their problem, something they will have to make the best of and accept that there are many things they cannot do.

The DDA 2005 explores this issue further by explaining that, 'The poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion experienced by many disabled people is not the inevitable result of their impairments or medical conditions, but rather stems from attitudinal and environmental barriers'. This is known as 'the social model of disability', and provides a basis for the College to successfully implement the duty to promote disability equality within the university. This can be done by removing some of these environmental barriers and providing training to educate our staff and students in order to shift attitudes.

The social model of disability enables disabled people to operate in an atmosphere where there are limited barriers (those that accentuate their impairment or illness) to their environment. This model looks beyond a person's impairment and at **all** the relevant factors that affect their ability to be a full and equal participant in society.

The College is working to reduce the barriers that exclude people who have disabilities. These barriers can be:

- little or no access to information and buildings
- the way things are organised and run
- prejudice and stereotypes

Examples of how the College could change to allow disabled people to participate equally:

<b>Medical Model problem</b>	<b>Social Model Solution</b>
Difficulty climbing steps or inaccessible lecture theatres	Ramps and banisters in all theatres. Ensuring wheelchair space is planned into lecture theatre design.
Difficulty opening heavy swinging fire doors	Ensuring that swinging doors automatically open and close
Examination papers are exclusively provided in print	Examination papers are available in the choice of format for visually impaired students
Lecture notes are not provided	Hearing impaired students have access to similar materials to other students or hearing loops are

	available in every lecture room
Some field trips involve arduous physical activity	A plan exist for participation of students whose energy is limited by a condition, such as ME

### **The Disability Equality Duty**

The DDA 2005 means that from 4<sup>th</sup> December 2006 the College will have a duty to promote disability equality in all its functions, this is similar to the duty to promote race equality under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The Act changes the law in this area, from relying on individuals to make a complaint to expecting public organisations to be positive in removing barriers.

### **General Duty**

The Act sets out what is known as the general duty as follows.

Public bodies must in carrying out their functions, have due regard to:

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

The last point means that if the College is to play its part in promoting disability equality, it will have to go beyond just complying with the law and treating disabled and non-disabled alike. These new duties will require the Institution to consider its role in tackling the effects of any of its own decisions which failed to give due regard to disability equality.

In order for the College to meet its general duties, the statutory Code of Practice requires public bodies to:

- Carry out impact assessments
- address any gaps identified through evidence
- involve disabled people
- prioritise actions
- public reporting

In addition to the above the Code also sets out the following mechanism for successful compliance with the new duty:

- the active involvement of leadership
- improving staff expertise through training
- attention to working with others: procurement and partnerships
- focusing on effective change and
- the effective use and planning of resources

### **Specific Duty**

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Revised 21 Feb 07

For reviewed by Dec 2009

As a named public body, the College has a specific legal duty to prepare a DES which includes:

- The aims and Objectives of the scheme;
- How disabled people were involved and the use of data already available;
- The gaps that still exist and how we as an organisation will bridge that gap;
- Our arrangements for Impact Assessment and
- Our action plan which should include our timetable and a list of those responsible for the various actions.

## **Development of the Queen Mary DES**

### ***Involvement and Consultation***

The College has been committed to attempting to involve disabled people in the development of its DES.

The College is committed to the continued involvement of disabled staff, students and other stakeholders throughout the implementation of the scheme.

The following actions were taken to develop QMUL's DES.

- Informed the Equal Opportunities Committee of the new responsibilities under the DDA
- Exploration of the data and findings of the 2005 staff survey in regard to the attitudes and beliefs of disabled staff
- Conducted a staff with disabilities focus group to explore the issues and concerns identified from the above survey.
- Briefing to all Heads of Department and Departmental Administrators about the upcoming preliminary involvement meetings
- posters and leaflets sent to all departments to publicise all future Disability Equality Group (DEG) meetings
- Use of all staff email to inform about the new duty under the DDA and upcoming DEG meetings
- Publicised upcoming events on the College intranet and Corporate Affairs events bulletin
- Consultation with staff and students on draft DES
- Draft scheme presented to the Equal Opportunities Committee
- Draft scheme presented to Principal's Steering Group
- Draft DES Launched
- DES ratified by SPC and Council

The lead in to the publication of the DES has been a period where the focus of students has been on examinations, out of college and commencing the new academic year. The College will continue to attempt to involve students through conducting an on line disability related questionnaire. As a substitute consultations have occurred with staff whose remit has included dealing with needs of disabled students. The College intends to revisit and improve its action plan having secured greater direct student participation.

The staff and student involvement described above has enabled the College to identify some of

- the barriers to disability equality and
- the key actions to be addressed within the scheme

### ***Key areas highlighted during the involvement & consultation process***

Communication is one of the key areas highlighted during the involvement process as disabled staff often feel that they have not been consulted about decisions made about them especially regarding physical changes to their environment. Staff also felt that they cannot disclose their disability due to the negative impact they feel it will have on their career prospects. There are also instances where disabled staff have expressed a need for some adjustments to their work environment which either has not been fulfilled or they have had to jump through hoops to receive. Staff feel that there is a need for standard procedures within the College to address this issue.

Staff also feel that the lack of awareness of certain disabilities is more commonplace than should be which can sometimes create difficulty and delay in progressing actions related to a disabled person's needs. It is felt that awareness training and clear policies will help to address this issue.

The group felt that the lack of access to dedicated support for staff in the way that it is available for students creates barriers in terms of making things happen quickly as things generally take a long time to be implemented.

It was identified that a more proactive approach is needed in identifying the needs of disabled staff on appointment to a new post. If reasonable adjustments are necessary these need to be in place before the commencement of employment. Standard procedures should address this issue.

Some students expressed a critical need to rely on IT in order for them to get their work done efficiently. Due to the nature of their impairment they were sometimes unable to achieve this as some departments hardly or never responded to emails. They often experienced extreme difficulty in accessing some of the College's services due to their multiple disabilities.

### ***Data Collection***

#### **Monitoring**

Work continues on the collation of data relating to staff and students with disabilities. The College can monitor the admission and progression of students and the recruitment of staff. However, limited data exists on the progression of disabled staff within the College. This is limited to monitoring the outcomes of the academic promotion round. While the information gathered in these processes are useful it is not sufficient to identify how policy and processes impact on disability equality.

There is a specific issue around the declaration of disability as can be seen among staff in the table below. The reasons for this are not entirely clear. The table below indicates that if the disabled staff and student group represent those in wider society: the College is not recruiting disabled people or they are not declaring those disabilities.

	<b>QMUL</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Disability</b>	41	2%
<b>Non-disabled</b>	2154	79%
<b>Not known</b>	523	19%

There is also the potential for data to be monitored around access to services and its effectiveness and also around exit of staff from the organisation and course drop out rates. The effective monitoring of these areas will contribute to future planning by enabling the College to set out clear and meaningful equality targets for areas that are identified as needing future development.

### **What are the gaps**

During the involvement process there have been certain gaps identified amongst staff. These are explained below.

- There are areas within the recruitment process that need further development. Quite often details of a new staff member's disability and needs are not easily identified until the individual begins employment. There is also a lack of details on any barriers faced during the recruitment processes.
- There is no information on the speed and success of any reasonable adjustments made for staff
- There is no information on why staff leave the organisation that would provide the College with information on leaving rates amongst disabled staff and their reasons.
- According to the Labour Force Survey, June 2005, the incidence of disability increases with age. Whilst 9 per cent of adults aged 16-24 are disabled, this increases to about 44 per cent in the 50 to retirement age category. There are no details held within the College on the number of staff who may have acquired a disability during their employment with the College.

## Disability Equality at QMUL

### Disability Profile (staff & Students) 2005/06

Staff Category	Non-Disabled		Disabled		Not Known		Grand Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
ACADEMIC (NON CLINICAL)	553	84%	6	1%	98	15%	657
ACADEMIC RELATED	339	79%	11	3%	78	18%	428
CLERICAL & RELATED	317	81%	5	1%	70	18%	392
CLINICAL ACADEMIC (DENTAL)	42	81%		0%	10	19%	52
CLINICAL ACADEMIC (MEDICAL)	27	82%	1	3%	5	15%	33
CLINICAL RESEARCH	32	86%	1	3%	4	11%	37
DENTAL NURSE	4	100%		0%		0%	4
HONORARY	2	100%		0%		0%	2
HONORARY CONSULTANTS (2003)	105	92%	1	1%	8	7%	114
LIBRARY RECEPTION	11	73%	1	7%	3	20%	15
MAINTENANCE CRAFT	28	80%	1	3%	6	17%	35
MAINTENANCE MANAGER	6	100%		0%		0%	6
MANUAL & ANCILLARY	71	87%	1	1%	10	12%	82
MLA	7	88%		0%	1	13%	8
MLSO	17	81%	1	5%	3	14%	21
NURSE	15	83%	1	6%	2	11%	18
NURSERY	6	55%		0%	5	45%	11
OTHER RELATED	22	69%	1	3%	9	28%	32
PURPLE CONTRACT TEMPORARY	84	41%	2	1%	120	58%	206
RESEARCH	383	83%	6	1%	75	16%	464
SECURITY	13	93%	1	7%		0%	14
TEACHING ASSISTANT		0%		0%	2	100%	2
TECHNICAL	70	82%	1	1%	14	16%	85
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>2154</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>2718</b>

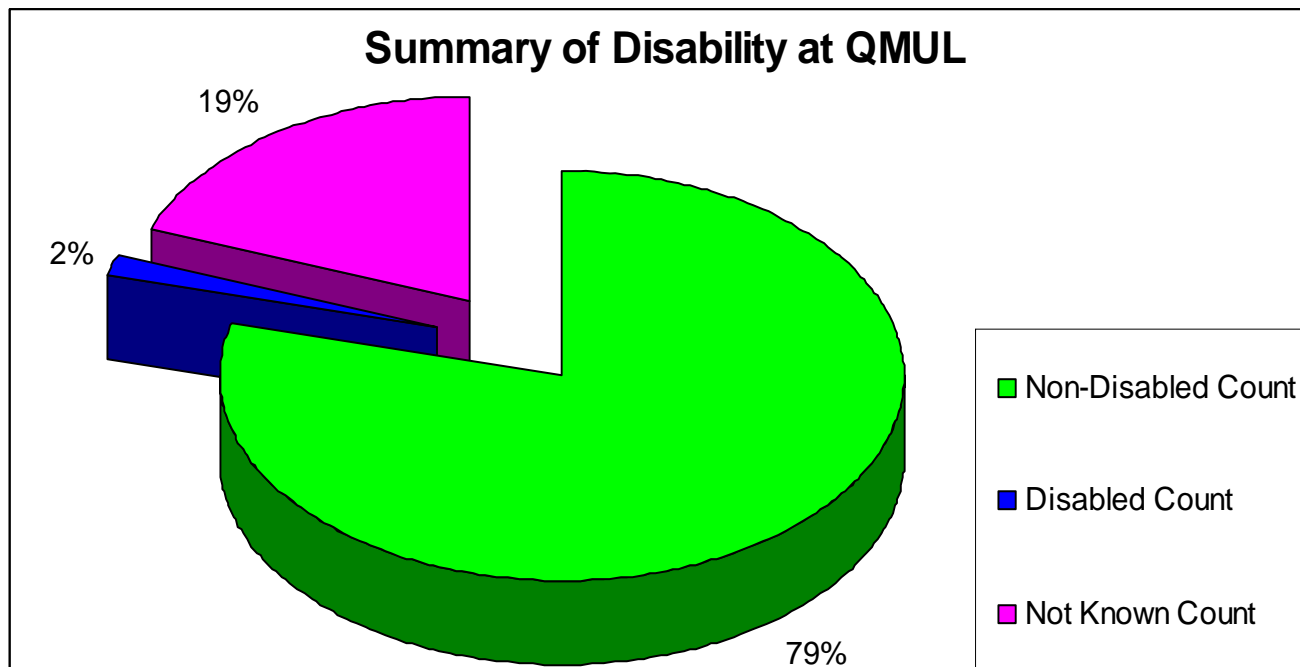
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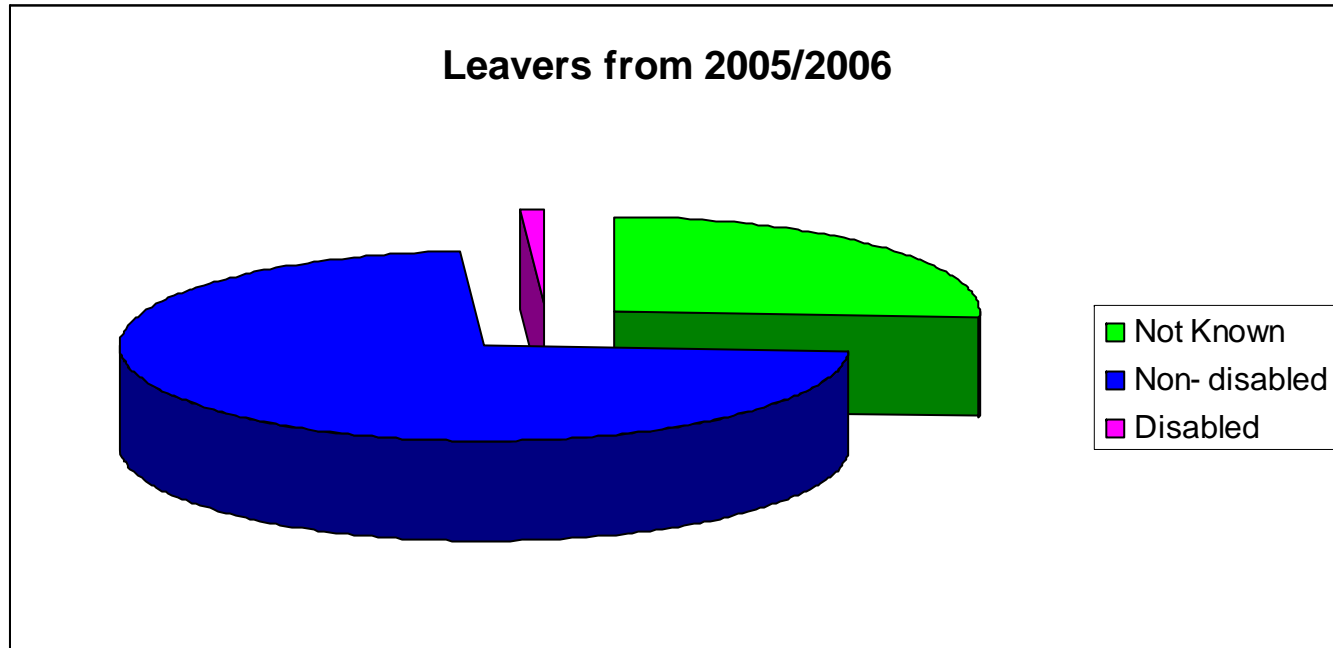
### Summary Disability at QMUL 2005/06

	Non-Disabled		Disabled		Not Known		Grand Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	
<b>Staff Total</b>	<b>2154</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>2718</b>



There is a low proportion (2%) of those that have a declared a disability. The high level (19%) of those who have not declared whether or not they have a disability is evident amongst those with a temporary contract as EO information on this category of staff is not systematically collected. Other organisations find capture of data from staff outside the “core” workforce to be challenging. 79% of staff considers themselves to be non-disabled although there may be some who are disabled under the legal definition of The Act but have not declared this.

Summary of Leavers from 2005/2006				
	Not Known	Non- disabled	Disabled	Grand Total
Grand Total	24	68	1	93



Information on leavers is recorded although the reasons for leaving are not monitored as exit interviews are not routinely conducted.

## Recruitment

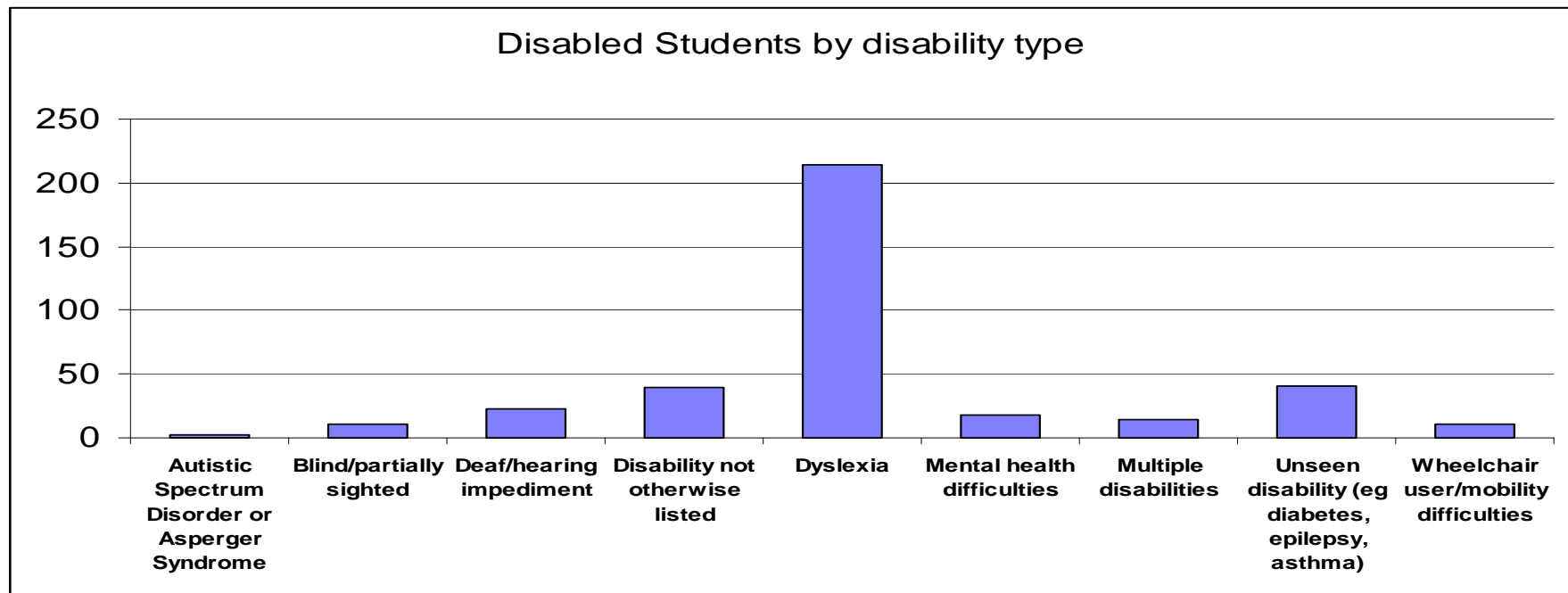
Summary of those recruited 2005/2006	Not Disabled	Disabled	Totals
Total Applications Received	7560	100	7660
% of Total Applications received	98.7%	1.3%	
Total Short listed	1108	12	1120
% Short listed of Total Short listed	98.9%	1.1%	
No. Appointed	277	3	280
% of Appointed of Total Appointed	98.9%	1.1%	

Between 2005 and 2006 we received 7772 applications of which 100 (1.3%) were received from disabled applicants. Out of the 100 applications that were received only 12 were short-listed and a further 3 were appointed. As the number of disabled applicants is quite low compared to the total number of applications received, we may not be attracting a wide range of disabled candidates. This disparity may also be due to people simply not declaring that they have a disability as we receive a large percentage of applications from non-disabled. This may mean that those who are defined as disabled by the medical definition may not consider themselves to be so. Since the reason for rejecting applicants is not monitored it is not clear if their rejection is for disability related reasons or not. In future, our recruitment process will need to be closely monitored by departments and HR to determine the reasons for the disparity and we may also need to develop strategies for improving our attraction and appointment rate.

### Disabled students by disability type 2006

Disability Type	Total	Percentage
Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Asperger Syndrome	2	1%
Blind/partially sighted	11	3%
Deaf/hearing impediment	23	6%
Disability not otherwise listed	40	11%
Dyslexia	214	57%
Mental health difficulties	18	5%
Multiple disabilities	14	4%
Unseen disability (e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma)	41	11%
Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties	11	3%
Grand Total	374	100%

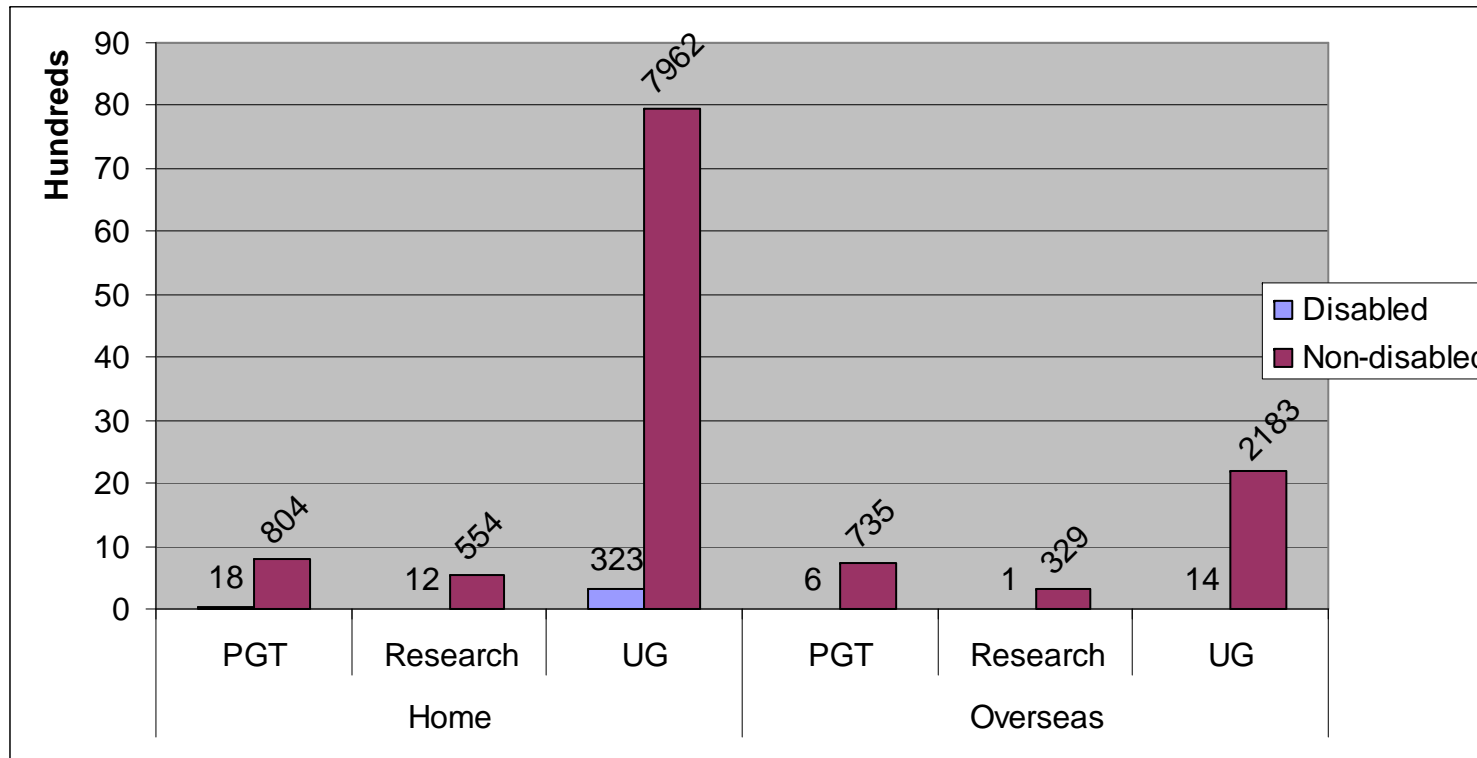
Out of the disability types declared by students dyslexia accounts for 57% while those with an unseen disability and unlisted disability account for 11% each.



### Student Population at QMUL 2006

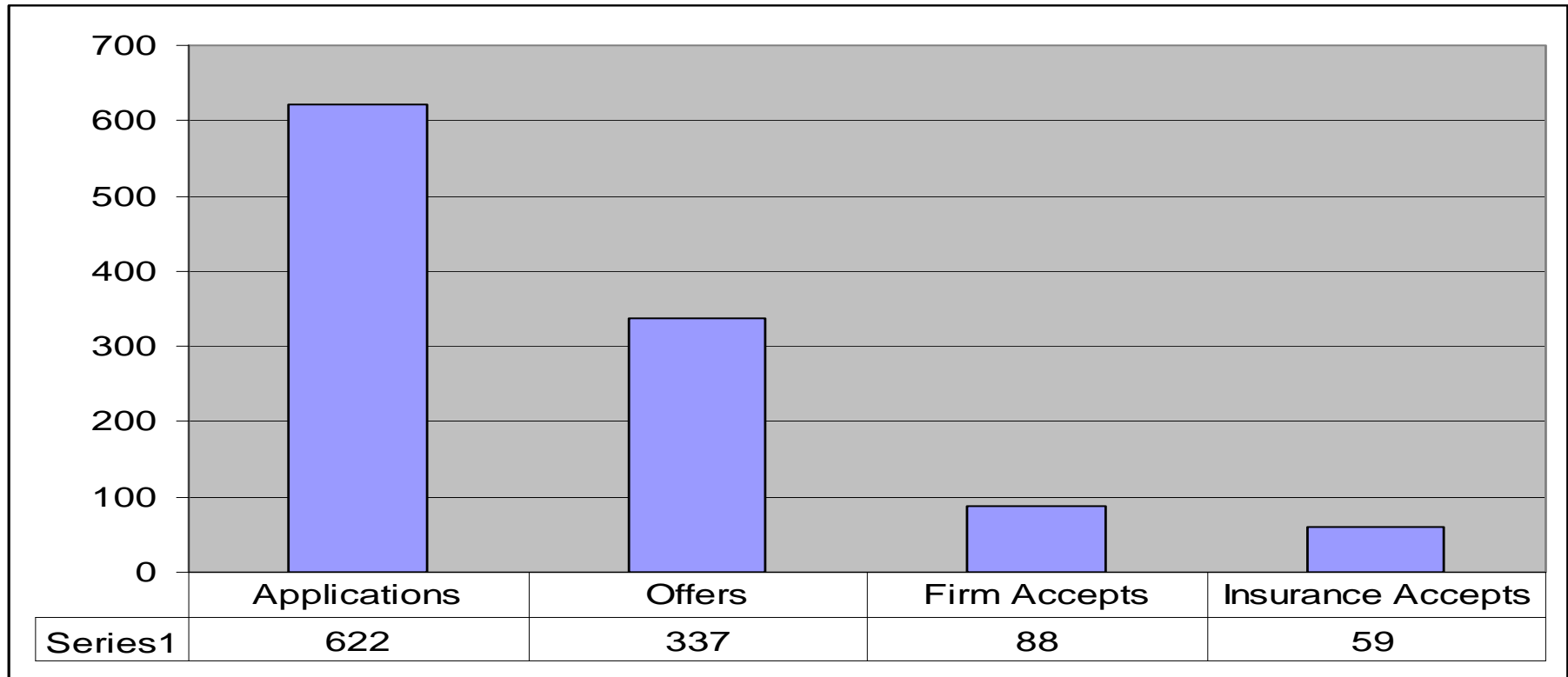
		Disabled	%	Non-disabled	%	Total
Home	PGT	18	2%	804	98%	822
	Research	12	2%	554	98%	566
	UG	323	4%	7962	96%	8285
Overseas	PGT	6	1%	735	99%	741
	Research	1	0%	329	100%	330
	UG	14	1%	2183	99%	2197

There are only minor differences between disabled home and overseas students with the exception of undergraduate students which appear to have the highest difference. There is a difference of 1% between postgraduate students, 2% between research students and 3% between undergraduate students.



### Undergraduate Applications of disabled potential students to QMUL 2005/2006

Applications	Offers	Firm Accepts	% applicants offered a place	% applicants accepting	Insurance Accepts	% of applicants accepting QMUL as an alternative
622	337	88	54%	26%	59	18%



More than half of the disabled student applications received are offered a place at QMUL while only 26% accept a place, 18% accept QMUL as an alternative to other institutions. It would be useful to monitor reasons for non-acceptance of offers after applications have been made.

## ***Key resources of relevance to people with disabilities For Students***

### **Recruitment & Admissions**

It is evident within the imagery of the undergraduate prospectus unlike the postgraduate prospectus, that the College embraces diversity of different ethnic groups but does not include references to or quotes from disabled students or graduates to encourage potential disabled students to apply to the College.

There is also no reference to the prospectus being available in alternative formats should a prospective student need one. Both prospectuses mention the advice and support available to disabled students through the disability and dyslexia unit.

The Publications and web team are in the process of commissioning a variety of photographs of staff and students who have disabilities within the College environment. This will allow the College to illustrate to applicants that the College has an awareness of their needs.

### **Teaching and Learning**

The Disability Coordinator informs academic departments of the need to make reasonable adjustment for disabled students. Implementation of the adjustments is the responsibility of the Head of Department and Administrator. The Advice and Counselling Website offers extensive guidance for tutors interacting with students with a disability.

### **Students' Services**

Outline information is available on the Student Intranet and in the Registry's printed Student Guide, currently only available in one print-size. The Disability Coordinator offers advice and information about the facilities and resources for students who have a disability or a learning difficulty, and how to use the facilities offered by the QM Learning Support Service. The Coordinator advises students on how to plan for their studies at Queen Mary, the support and resources available within Queen Mary, and how funding may be obtained to help pay for any needs. Further information is available on the Intranet. The College offers support and resources for students who have dyslexia or a specific learning difficulty. Disabled Student Allowances include funding for dyslexia support.

### **Assessment Policy for Disabled Students**

Students with a physical or learning disability may apply for special examination arrangements through the Advice and Counselling Office. A student wishing to apply for special examination arrangements must complete an application form (unless s/he had those arrangements previously) and return it to the Disability Co-ordinator, Disability and Dyslexia support Office by the stipulated deadline. The Disability Co-ordinator will then make

recommendations based on what the student has requested and what is recommended by the student's supporting evidence. All applications will then be forwarded to the student's department for endorsement by Chairs of Subject/Examination Board.

## **Disability and Dyslexia Services**

The Learning Support Service provides equipment, people and services to students at Queen Mary who have a disability or condition that affects their learning.

We have a team of Educational Support Workers (ESWs) who are Queen Mary students. They work with Educational Support Users to provide many types of help. Learning Support offers a variety of services that range from IT support to developing study skills.

## ***For Staff***

### **Occupational Health**

The Occupational Health Service captures information relating to the disabilities of staff prior to their commencement. This process can trigger assessment of whether reasonable adjustments can be made to allow the potential employee to successfully contribute to the College. Consideration will be given to whether the information captured needs to prompt a wider range of information regarding non-health related disabilities.

### **Recruitment**

Within the equality and diversity action plan, equalities in recruitment is a significant part. The College's Equal Opportunities policy includes a statement on the College's commitment to a program of equality measures so that unjustifiable barriers to educational and employment opportunities are removed. All members of staff involved in the recruitment and selection of staff are required to attend the Fair Selection and Interview Skills Course before they can interview. This course addresses all the relevant equality strands in addition to providing staff with the relevant interview skills.

The Good Practice guide in Recruitment and Selection gives general guidance to panel members regarding equality issues. However, members of interview panels do not systematically receive any awareness training on disability related issues should a disabled candidate be invited for interview.

### **Staff Development**

Education and Staff Development run a College wide induction program for all new staff within which an overview of the College's diversity agenda is covered. Attendance at this induction is not compulsory. Departmental discretion exists as to the content of the local induction process, it has significant elements heavily relied upon which vary across the College.

There is currently no formal mechanism for employees that encourages the disclosure of a disability or the request of support after joining the College. However, the occupational health department will perform assessments at the request of a department.

### **Grievances**

A summary of all grievances is reported to the College Council including those that may be discrimination related. The code of practice used to deal with discrimination (age, disability, race etc.) is not explicit in stating that it can be used for that purpose. Although the key concept which is a supporting document on how to implement the code will address this issue. Once this has been completed it will be given to all line managers and made available on the College intranet.

### **Accessibility**

Accessibility issues occur in many shapes and forms this could be:

- Inaccessible buildings or information or
- The lack of auxiliary aids such as induction loops for those with hearing impairment and so on.

Although some of the College buildings have varied levels of accessibility, attempts have been made in the past year to make them more accessible. The Estates department have built ramps on to a number of buildings and put up Braille signs for the visually impaired. There is a detailed plan of work scheduled to address accessibility around the College.

### **Support for Staff**

There is currently no dedicated support or funding within the College for staff with a disability. The Employee Relations Officer (Diversity & Engagement) advises managers on a variety of issues relating to the generic employment of staff with disabilities and individual cases. Staff are sometimes encouraged to seek external support through Access- to –Work, an external government agency. These external agencies should be utilised to provide specialised level of support in addition to College support.

HR work aims to address the attitudinal barriers which prevent disabled people from entering employment and participating on an equal level within the organisation through articles and briefings in the College bulletin. In addition to this more targeted training is necessary to increase awareness.

### **Communication**

Quite often non-disabled people may not know how to communicate with disabled people which may sometimes causes offence. What is important is that the language used does not reinforce negative stereotypes of a person's impairment. A code of practice on appropriate language usage will help keep people informed of the most appropriate words to use when communicating with disabled people.

There is no formal procedure for the provision of information for staff in alternative formats. There are established methods of internal communication within the College and information about the particular needs of disabled staff is provided on a reactive basis. Similarly it is not clear whether disability is taken into account in the IT infrastructure design. However, there have been updates to the College website in accordance with the Special Educational Needs Disability Act 2001 to make it more disability friendly.

There is a need to improve the availability of information in alternative formats to existing and potential disabled staff. There also needs to be a means of assessing the College's IT infrastructure to ensure that it is indeed accessible to disabled users.

### ***Equality Impact Assessment***

Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) is a way of mainstreaming equality so that it is the way we carry out our duties within the College. EIAs allow us to identify issues that could be or are potentially discriminatory within our policies, services and decision-making. The EIA process allows us to remove barriers to equality and disadvantages in the way we carry out our functions. They also help us to consider equality issues from the start rather than at the point where discriminatory effects are detected.

The College has a legal obligation to conduct EIAs on all proposed or existing policies, practices and procedures to determine if there is a disproportionate adverse impact suffered by disabled groups. This legal obligation also applies to other equality strands such as race and gender.

The EIA process begins with identifying all of our services, policies, strategies and functions. It has always been the College's strategy to respond to all equality strands (race, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation and age) as appropriate within its impact assessment framework.

Conducting these assessments will help the college address any potential areas of discrimination for our disabled stakeholders. It will also ensure that our decisions are made in recognition of the circumstances of disabled people and other equality groups.

This work began in 2005 in response to the Race Relations Amendment (Act) 2000 with the assistance of an external consultancy. In 2005, briefing sessions were held for all individuals that have the overall responsibility for writing or implementing policy. Since then, a number of departments have submitted their policies with initial assessments carried out on the range of Human Resources and History policies.

The overwhelming majority of the EIAs will be conducted by non-equality specialist staff and as such they will need to be fully trained and equipped to carry out this function. This training will be conducted by external consultants who have the knowledge and expertise to do so. Information and guidance

regarding the process will also be included on the College equality website for staff to access.

### **Further Work on EIAs**

There is still more work to be done to ensure that our EIA process remains relevant and as effective as possible:

- Identifying processes and functions that are not necessarily written down and introduce a method for capturing this and carrying out EIAs
- Ensuring that through the College's committee and board meetings equality impact is considered and captured
- Identifying within departments an individual responsible for equalities which will enhance information flow on various equality issues.
- Improve our methods for involvement and consultation to ensure that there is joined up thinking within the College and that duplication of effort is avoided.

## ***Responsibility for Implementation***

### **Council**

The DDA refers to the Governing Body as the "responsible body". The responsible body for the College is the Council. They are legally liable for the actions of the institution as a whole, but also for:

- the actions of individual employees of the institution in the course of their employment, whether they are full-time, part-time or temporary
- the actions of agents, including contractors, visiting speakers, etc.

The Council has overall responsibility for the scheme.

### **Principal Steering Group (PSG)**

PSG will have overall responsibility for ensuring that the scheme is put into action across the College.

### **Staff Policy Committee (SPC)**

The Staff Policy Committee is responsible for all aspects of policy within the College and is a committee of Council. The Equal Opportunities Committee reports progress on equality issues to the SPC. The SPC will have responsibility for approving the DES for publication.

### **Equal Opportunity Committee (EOC)**

This Committee is accountable to the College Council and will be responsible for monitoring progress of the DES action plan and producing a report on progress of the DES within the annual equal opportunities monitoring report.

## **Managers, Employees and Students**

Managers, Employees and Students all have a responsibility under the act to adhere to College policy and to support the work of the College in promoting equality between disabled and non-disabled people.

## ***Reviewing the DES***

The College is required to revise the DES every 3 years. This revision should take into account any information gathered during the initial 3 years and what it indicates, as well as what areas need to be focused on in the following 3 years. This work will be done by the Employee Relations Officer (Diversity & Engagement) and the Disability Co-ordinator with the involvement of disabled staff and students.

The Equality Act 2006 establishes the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) that will come into being in October 2007. This will bring together all the equality bodies (Commission for Racial Equality, Disability Rights Commission and so on) under a single equality body.

Due to this development, there is a possibility that the DES will be brought into a College-wide Single Equality Scheme, covering all aspects of equality.

## DES- Action Plan

The disability equality scheme contains what our disabled stakeholders have asked for and in part what the College recognises as an immediate need.

### ***List of Actions with timetables and responsibilities***

#### *1. Making sure the DES is put into Practice*

***Purpose: To ensure compliance with our duty to promote equality for all by ensuring that disability equality is mainstreamed into all policies, functions and procedures of the College***

<b><i>Objective</i></b>	<b><i>Action</i></b>	<b><i>Outcome</i></b>	<b><i>Lead/Responsibility</i></b>	<b><i>Timeframe</i></b>
<i>To implement the DES</i>	<i>Prepare action Plan to review practices, policies and procedures</i>	<i>Completion of action plans. Increased awareness of disability equality across the College i.e. recruitment processes, data collection etc.</i>	<b><i>Employee Relations Officer (Diversity &amp; Engagement)</i></b>	<b><i>Jan 07-Dec 07</i></b>
<i>Identification of management responsibilities regarding the implementation of the</i>	<i>the requirement to promote disability equality as part of management duties that</i>	<i>Increased emphasis given to disability equality within decision making across the College</i>	<b><i>Chair of EOC PSG ESD</i></b>	<b><i>Jun 07- Jun 08</i></b>

<i>DES</i>	<i>they are assessed against</i>			
<i>To provide assistance in the implementation of the scheme at a corporate level</i>	<i>Guidelines and advice to be developed and disseminated</i>	<i>Increased awareness of disability equality and the implementation of the DES</i>	<b>EOC ERO Corporate Affairs</b>	<b>Sept 07- Sept 08</b>
<i>Development of a group/unit to support the work of Disability Equality within the College</i>	<i>Resources provided at a corporate level</i>	<i>Team created to support the disability equality work. More support to disabled staff and Managers in dealing with disability issues</i>	<b>Finance ERO</b>	<b>Jun 07-Dec 07</b>

## **2. Improving Communication**

**Purpose: To make sure that communication is integral to how the College operates**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead/Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<i>Improve Internal communication with staff</i>	<i>Review communication mechanisms across the College</i>	<i>Information provided or available in accessible formats for disabled staff</i>	<b>ERO Corporate Affairs</b>	<b>Jun 07- Jun 08</b>

	<i>Develop appropriate standards of communication</i>	<i>and students Strategy to include appropriate language usage and standards expected is developed and disseminated across the College</i>		
	<i>Ensure IT infrastructure is suitable to the needs of disabled staff and students</i>	<i>IT technology is compatible to most disability enabled equipment</i>	<b>Computing Services</b>	<b>Jun 08-Jun 09</b>

### 3. Identify Relevant Functions and Policies

**Purpose: To give appropriate Priority to the promotion of disability equality when carrying out functions, policies and carrying out procedures**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead/Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<i>To meet the requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005</i>	<i>To review all practices, policies and procedures of the College according to our duty to promote</i>	<i>All existing policies, procedures and practices are reviewed. All new policies</i>	<b>HoD, Departmental Lead on EIA</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

	<i>disability equality</i>	<i>procedures and practices are considered at the outset.</i>		
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**4. Assessing and consulting on the likely impact of proposed policies**  
***Purpose: To determine how policies, functions and procedures affect disabled people (in service delivery and employment) and whether they are having an adverse impact on some groups or individuals***

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead/Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<i>Inform all senior managers of the need to capture data necessary for long term impact to be assessed</i>	<i>A monitoring form is produced and adopted</i>	<i>Data is monitored in a consistent manner throughout the College</i>	<b>ERO</b>	<b>Jan 07- Jun 07</b>
<i>To ensure that arrangements are made to monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of disability equality</i>	<i>Ongoing appropriate consultation and an evaluation of their effectiveness in supporting objectives</i>	<i>Corporate baseline statistics established</i>	<b>Departmental Lead on EIA</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
<i>Disability Action Plan Review</i>	<i>Actions from current action plan reviewed and assessed</i>	<i>All ongoing and unresolved actions are included in the new action plan for 2009-2012</i>	<b>ERO Disability Co-ordinator Disabled Staff &amp;</b>	<b>Jan 09-Dec 09</b>

### 5. Monitoring College policies for adverse impact

**Purpose: To build disability equality into the policy-making process, and to make that process clear, open and inclusive**

<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Lead/Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
<i>To assess the likely impact of proposed policies on the promotion of disability equality</i>	<i>Departments undertake Equality Impact Assessments</i>	<i>Qualitative research is provided to identify likely, and existing impact, on disability equality</i>	<b>Departmental Lead on EIA</b>	<b>Annual assessment and reporting</b>
<i>To propose and assess the value of standard reporting format to committee to include EIA</i>	<i>Trial in SPC. Propose to Chair of Council Paper to Council.</i>	<i>Decision on whether standard committee report formats to include EIA</i>	<b>ERO</b>	<b>Feb 07</b>
<i>To develop a monitoring group that will assess the outcomes of departmental policies</i>	<i>Develop group or sub-group within the EOC.  Utilise interest groups within the College</i>	<i>Mechanism for review of departmental progress</i>	<b>EOC</b>	<b>Jan 07-Jun 07 and review ongoing thereafter</b>

