University Disability Action Plan for Students

2009

Introduction:

Bond University has a number of policies that support its commitment to ensuring that students with a disability have equitable access to study and to fully participate in the life of the University.

This Disability Action Plan is intended to provide a framework and objectives for the process of improvement in University performance in this important area. It has been developed by the Bond University Student Disabilities Advisory Group and will require commitment from all parties, staff and students, working cooperatively and collaboratively with the University to implement the Plan.

The intent of Bond University Disability Action Plan is to focus on those areas identified as requiring attention or enhancement. Accountabilities have been assigned to senior officers whose role it will be to oversee the implementation of those actions assigned to their portfolio and progress will be reported on these through the Disabilities Advisory Group. The Plan will be reviewed and updated biennially,

The Bond University Disability Action Plan is informed by the following legislation and guidelines, and closer examination of these is recommended. Extracted relevant information is included in the Appendices.

1. Anti-discrimination Act *(Qld*) 1991
2. Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
3. AVCC Guidelines relating to Students with a Disability 2006
4. AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with Print Disabilities (2004)
5. Disability Standards for Education 2005

Reference should be made to relevant University Policies:

1. COR 1.01 Bond University Privacy Policy
2. COR 1.07 Bond University Disability Access Policy
3. TLR 4.01 Bond University Assessment Policy
4. Handbook Provision of Alternative Academic Arrangements for Students

 with a Disability

1. Handbook Arrangements for Reasonable Adjustment in Examinations for Students with a Disability
2. Handbook Part 3: Discipline Regulations

**Strategic Area**

**University Community**

**GOAL 1: To raise the awareness of staff in all academic and student related operational units of Bond University’s obligations under the relevant legislation relating to Disabilities.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Visit each Faculty, School and operational unit to explain the need to be aware of disability issues and to work with the Disability Officer in meeting the needs of students with a disability.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support)Disability Officer |
| * 1. Publish a Disabilities Guide for Bond University staff to provide a convenient guide for staff reference.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support)Disability Officer |
| * 1. Establish a Disabilities Advisory Group to provide support for the Disability Officer and to provide stronger links with Faculties, Schools and operational units.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support)Disability Officer |

**GOAL 2: Ensure that the University’s Disability Action Plan is implemented, monitored and evaluated on a regular basis**.

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Monitor the University’s overall performance in relation to facilitating equitable access and participation for students with disabilities.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support)Disability Officer |
| * 1. Review and update the Disability Action Plan on a biennial basis.
 | Disability Officer |
| * 1. Consult with students with disabilities about the services and facilities provided.
 | Disability Officer |

**GOAL 3: To communicate the policies and programs of the Disability Action Plan to the University community and the specific responsibilities for those policies and programs to the relevant University personnel.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| 3.1 Communicate responsibilities and time frames for Actions identified in the DAP to responsible officers. | Disability Officer |
| * 1. Promulgate in electronic and hard copy the Disability Action Plan after each review to all stakeholders.
 | Disability Officer |
| * 1. Consult with Accountable Officers annually to discuss progress in implementing Actions.
 | Disability Officer |

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| * 1. Provide information to students regarding their rights and responsibilities in relation to disabilities,
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |
| * 1. Include reference to the Disability Action Plan in Staff Induction programs.
 | Director, Human Resources |

**GOAL 4: Monitor the University’s grievance resolution in procedures to ensure that they appropriately address issues related with disability.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| 4.1 Ensure that the University community is informed about the obligation to support students with disabilities and their associates. | Director, Human ResourcesPro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |

**GOAL 5: Provide equitable access to all University buildings and facilities.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Ensure that all new buildings and refurbishments of existing buildings comply with the Building Code of Australia
 | General Manager, Buildings & Facilities |
| * 1. Ensure that when plans for refurbishments and new buildings are being developed all access issues are considered.
 | Director, Finance & Projects |
| * 1. Conduct regular access audits of campus to identify and prioritise alterations to buildings and facilities.
 | General Manager, Buildings & Facilities |
| * 1. Provide a reasonable funding allocation each year for ongoing maintenance and improvements to facilitate accessibility to buildings and facilities.
 | Director, Finance & ProjectsSenior Management Group |
| * 1. Develop access maps for campus and make these available in accessible formats on the web and in hard copy by request.
 | General Manager, Buildings & Facilities |
| * 1. Ensure that the needs of people with a disability are incorporated into evacuation procedures, and the staff and students are informed of these procedures through regular drills and appropriate signage.
 | General Manager, Risk & Audit |
| * 1. Monitor the use of special parking spaces for people with a disability on campus and ensure than an adequate number of spaces are provided and in particular where existing spaces are affected by construction work.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |

**GOAL 6: All information published by the University, whether in print or electronic format, should be fully accessible to people with a disability.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Ensure that materials provided in accessible formats for students with a print disability are compliant with the AVCC Guidelines on Information Access for Students with a Print Disability.
 | Director, Information Services |
| * 1. Develop timelines for the preparation of reading lists to ensure course materials can be made available in accessible formats in sufficient time to facilitate equitable participation for all students.
 | Director, Information Services |
| * 1. Ensure that the University’s website, recruitment and employment information, and all online student services are fully accessible and comply with W3C accessibility guidelines.
 | Director, Information Services |

**GOAL 7: All students should have reasonable access to appropriate technology to support their learning experience at Bond.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Facilitate equitable access for students with disabilities to computers/technology/ appropriate software and library materials, where possible.
 | Director, Information Services |
| * 1. Provide library resources in accessible formats, where available.
 | Director, Information Services |

**GOAL 8: Accommodation services provided by the University address the needs of students with a disability.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Provide the required number of rooms which comply with Building standards in on-campus residential accommodation for students.
 | General Manager, Buildings & Facilities |

**GOAL 9: Ensure resource allocation mechanisms for providing reasonable adjustments for fee paying students comply with the specification of the Higher Education Funding Act 1998.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Factor into tuition fee-levels the costs associated with providing services to students with disabilities.
 | Director, Finance & Projects |

**Strategic Area**

**STUDENTS**

One of the key features of the Disability Standards for Education 2005 is consultation between students with a disability and those responsible for making reasonable adjustments.

This principle should underpin strategies for students with disabilities (refer to *AVCC Guidelines Relating to Students with a Disability*)

**GOAL 10: To ensure that prospective and enrolling students with a disability are aware of the services and facilities provided by the university, and the processes required to access these.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Publish information about the extent of services available for students with a disability through outreach activities and at recruitment events.
 | Disability Officer,Marketing & Admissions |
| * 1. Ensure that all images used in promotional materials are inclusive and do not present stereotypical portrayals with a disability.
 | General Manager, Marketing & Communications |
| * 1. Ensure that enrolment advice and materials promote the services and adjustments for students with a disability and encourage students with a disability to disclose at the time of enrolment.
 | Marketing & AdmissionsStudent Administration |
| * 1. Provide appropriate training so that all staff involved with student recruitment and/or outreach and all teaching and administrative staff who deal with students are aware of relevant university services for students with a disability.
 | Disability OfficerMarketing & AdmissionsPro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |
| * 1. Ensure that University publications and web based information are accessible to students with a disability and available in alternative formats upon request.
 | General Manager, Marketing & Communications |
| * 1. Ensure that enrolment procedures are accessible for students with a disability.
 | Student AdministrationPro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |
| * 1. Ensure that all program and course profiles contain the statement “any student with a disability who may require alternative academic arrangements in the course is encouraged to seek advice at the commencement of the semester from the Disability Officer.
 | Office of Admissions & MarketingStudent AdministrationFaculties and Schools |

**GOAL 11: To facilitate partnerships between academic and student service units in relation to managing information on, and the responsibilities of providing services and academic adjustments to, students with a disability.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Ensure that for those programs leading to professional registration, program and course profiles will contain the additional statement: “While it is the responsibility of the relevant Faculty to liaise with professional bodies regarding the acceptability of any adjustment to an academic program, Student Services can arrange appropriate advice and assistance on personal and public health issues.
 | Deans of Faculties |
| * 1. In consultation with the student concerned, Student Services will have the ability to determine practice guidelines for students in Practical settings if necessary.
 | Student ServicesDisability Officer |
| * 1. Encourage all staff to attend sensitivity and other training related to disability discrimination issues.
 | Deans DirectorsAll supervisors |
| * 1. Ensure that flexible learning materials are provided by academic staff for students with a disability in a timely manner.
 | Academic Staff |
| 11.6 Develop guidelines for academic staff which1. outline the procedures that the University follows in relation to teaching students with a disability; and
2. list references to resources available to assist the academic provide an inclusive curriculum and with teaching students with a disability.
 | Student Disabilities Advisory GroupDisability Officer |

**GOAL 12: To utilise staff and resources to develop and deliver support services and related infrastructure to students with disabilities that are compliant with AVCC guidelines.**

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| **ACTIONS** | **ACCOUNTABILITY** |
| * 1. Monitor the staffing levels for disability support and ensure it is adequate to meet the needs of students with a disability on campus.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |
| * 1. Review procedural guidelines which have been developed.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |
| * 1. Ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are considered when developing and delivering support services for students in general and that these services are accessible to students with disabilities.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support) |
| * 1. Ensure that all staff, particularly those providing enrolment and program advice for students, undertake appropriate sensitivity training.
 | Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Students & Academic Support)Deans, Heads of Schools |

**Appendix 1: how does the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 define disability?**

The definition of disability for the purposes of DDA is

* Total or partial loss of the person’s bodily or mental functions
* Total or partial loss of a part of a body
* The presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness
* The presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness
* The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the person’s body
* A disorder or malfunction that results in the person learning differently from a person without the disorder or malfunction
* A disorder, illness or disease that affects a person’s thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgement or that results in disturbed behaviour.

The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person because of a disability

* Which he or she has
* Which he or she used to have
* Which he or she may have in the future
* Which is imputed to him or her
* Of an associate, such as a friend, partner, carer, or family member of the person.

Discrimination is also unlawful where it occurs because a person with a disability

* Uses a palliative, therapeutic or assistive device
* Is accompanied by a carer, interpreter, reader or assistant
* Is accompanied by a guide or hearing dog or other trained assistant animal.

A person does not gain any special rights or benefits by coming within the definition of disability under the DDA – only the right not to be discriminated against.

The definition of disability in the DDA only applies for the purposes of the DDA. It does not change the definition of disability regarding eligibility for benefits or services under other legislation, such as the Disability Services Act, the Social Security Act or workers’ compensation legislation.

The Act makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of a disability that she or he has now, once had, may have in the future or is assumed to have. It also makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis that her or his associate (partner, carer, friend, family member of work colleague) has a disability.

**Appendix 2: Legislative requirements for action plans**

It is not a requirement of the DDA that service providers prepare and implement Action Plans.

If, however, an institution decodes to prepare an Action Plan, the DDA specifies that the Plan must include certain things.

***Disability Discrimination Act 1992***

Provisions of action plans:

SECTION 61

The action plan of a service provider must include provisions relating to:

a. the devising of policies and programs to achieve the objects of this Act; and

b. the communication of these policies and programs to persons within the service provider; and

c. the review of practices within the service provider with a view to the identification of any discriminatory practices; and

d. the setting of goals and targets, where these may reasonable be determined against which the success of the plan in achieving the objects of the Act may be assessed; and

e. the means, other than those referred to in paragraph (d), of evaluating the policies and programs referred to in paragraph (a); and

f. the appointment of persons within the service provider to implement the provisions referred to in paragraphs (a) to (e) (inclusive).

Action plans may have other provisions:

SECTION 62

The action plan of a service provider may include provisions, other than those referred to in section 61, that are not consistent with the objects of this Act.