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| **University of Wolverhampton Disability Equality Action Plan** | | | | | | | | | |
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| **Rationale**  *The problem that the action(s) are trying to address and why the actions would address it* | **Ref** | | | **Actions** | **Outputs**  *The work involved in delivering the action(s)* | **Timescales**  *When the action(s) will have been delivered* | **Owner**  *Person who will lead on the delivery of the action(s)* | | **UPDATE – January 2024** |
| 1.Communication of Disability action plan and embedding disability equality | | | | | | | | | |
| All members of the University need to know about the ‘Disability Equality Action Plan. | *1.1*  *1.2*  *1.3* | | | Work with external relations to develop a communications strategy for the whole life of the DEAP including a launch and key milestones.  Schedule a programme of events so that people can get involved, utilising Disability History Month/the International Day of people with disabilities for a DEAP ‘launch’.  Give regular updates on progress and achievements, including updates from VC to all staff. | Communications plan developed and launched.  Series of events delivered with high  staff turnout.  Quarterly updates via all staff comms. | ***On-going***  *June 2022*  ***Short Term***  ***AY 22/23***  *September 2022*  ***On-going***  ***AY 22/23***  *Jan 2023* | *DEAP*  *DESAT & EDI team* | | ***Not completed***  ***Series of events held as part of Disability History Month, as well as a number of Podcasts.***  ***Details of the Sharing campaign and the reasonable adjustment passport were sent to all staff via WLV insider*** |
| 2. Reporting, Governance and Monitoring of Action Plan | | | | | | | | | |
| Experience from the REC and Athena SWAN has taught us that it is not enough to aspire to creating Disability equality. We need to make sure we deliver on our plan by having an effective governance structure in place. | *2.1*  *2.2*  *2.3* | | | Evolve DESAT steering group to be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the action plan. This group will report to UEB on issues, progress and achievements.  Set terms of reference, recruitment of members agree meetings schedule, establish evaluation parameters and measures of success.  Establish localised actions and reporting at faculty and departmental level. | Disability Equality Action Plan (DEAP) deliver group set up.  Evaluation framework developed.  Localised actions agreed and incorporated into Faculty & PSG EDI committee action plans. Regular reports to and from Faculty and PSG EDI committees. As well as  update reports to Joint ED Committee | ***Short term***  ***AY 22/23***  *September 2022*  ***Short term***  ***AY 22/23***  *Jan 2023*  ***Short term***  ***AY 22/23***  *Dec 2022* | *DESAT*  *DESAT*  *HR EDI Team, Faculty and PSG EDI committee Chairs.* | | ***Completed***  ***Completed***  ***EDI actions, including Disability have been included in Faculty and Directorate Workforce plans 2023-24*** |
| 3. Staff Recruitment, Selection and Retention | | | | | | | | | |
| Lack of disabled staff at all levels within the Institution, this needs redressing so prop. Disabled staff more in line with that of working age population.  Recruitment and selection process that takes into account disability issues. | 3.1  3.2  3.3  3.4  3.5  3.6  3.7  3.8  3.9  3.10  3.11  3.12  3.13  3.14  3.15  3.16  3.17  3.18 | | | Accuracy of data - Ensure our systems (i.e. Agresso) are inclusive in terms of disability language/labels used and accessibility for staff with disabilities along with support for staff that require.  Campaign and guidance on ‘monitoring of diversity staff data’. Building confidence so staff will disclose without fear of negative repercussions. To encourage reporting on Agresso (accurate data) with DSN email to members to ‘opt-in’ to disclosure and bi-annual all staff email to ask staff to review personal details. To then analyse the monitoring data to identify disproportionality and underrepresentation  Review person specifications and update guidance for recruiting managers to ensure no discrimination against people with disabilities. (e.g. to accommodate different previous career paths, gaps in employment due to disability).  Disabled staff visible in marketing materials/job adverts/university webpages along with positive action statement with regards to underrepresentation of people with disabilities within our staff profile (where necessary). Ensure Disability Confident Committed and the DSN is stated/included in adverts. Ensure we advertise in accessible formats.  Disabled staff represented in shortlisting and interview panels, where possible, especially where there are disabled applicants and for all senior roles with significant or relevant staff management responsibilities. Panel Chair to seek advice from DSN or staff with lived experience if no panel member available.  Disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria to be invited to interview (as per Disability Confident Committed Level 1).  Flexibility allowed – job-sharing, agile working, working from home, etc. all considered to avoid a disabled candidate being excluded  Accessibility requirements requested (reasonable adjustments) as standard for all shortlisted applicants, advice provided to applicants (especially around neurodiversity) about our selection and interview procedures.  Neurodiverse applicants are put at a disadvantage by asking questions at the Interview. Explore the possibility of giving Interview questions in advance for all shortlisted applicants, where one of the is neurodiverse or make it a practice to send to all applicants being interviewed irrespective of any applicants with a disability or not.  As part of Induction for disabled staff, before they start or straightaway) signpost to support (where appropriate) to arrange follow-ups with OH/line managers and to arrange any required adjustments and training, etc. Transparent two-way communication with staff/line managers to avoid wasting time/confusion and ensure support is in place in a timely fashion.  To ensure we retain staff with disabilities and ensure a sense of belonging, training for line managers and staff in general to ensure greater consistency in support offered to disabled staff and how we are treated by colleagues.  Retention of staff – Review and amend the absence monitoring policy to establish absence in relation to disabilities is covered.  Develop a reasonable adjustment passport for staff and students.  Centralised fund and administration of reasonable adjustment requirements such as purchasing of equipment within HR (rather than departmental funding). Taking into account more consideration given to those with disabilities around returning to campus following pandemic, and flexibility in relation to working patterns.  Set up a DSN Teams Channel for posting relevant information and opportunities by and for members, to bridge the gap between DSN meetings.  Develop a ‘Disability Confident ’Web page, within EDI Web pages, accessible to all, which provides access to useful resources (e.g. policies, updates, relevant websites, etc.) and is a central source of guidance for disabled staff and line managers.  ‘Mental Health Matters’ campaign – Incorporated into Well-being strategy /workstream  Working towards Disability Confident Level 2 (currently Level 1) to inspire confidence in prospective staff and better support existing staff. | Updated accurate data  DSN review off disability language on Agresso  Successful campaign or guidance developed. The advantages of disclosure and support available (e.g. Disability Leave) to be shared prior to invite to opt-in for disclosure/ update Agresso. Data on Agresso is kept updated.  Sample Person specifications reviewed and any guidance updated and communicated to all recruiting managers.  Marketing material has portrayed positive images of staff with disabilities (affirmation model).  Diverse panels and update on guidance on recruitment panel composition.  Included in recruitment and selection guidance/policy.  Included in recruitment and selection guidance/policy.  Guidance on accessibility requirements and providing interview process for those that are neurodiverse within our recruitment and selection policy/guidance.  To be included in recruitment and selection policy/guidance  To be included in checklist for Induction of new staff, as well as managers guidance developed by HROD  Included in the relevant training for example workplace respect and dignity training  Policy reviewed – Guidance for Managers on supporting staff with Disabilities to be developed.  Reasonable adjustment passport produced.  Centralised administration set up with clear process and systems in place. | ***Short term***  ***AY 22/23***  *Sept-Dec 2022*  ***Mid term***  ***AY 22/23***  *Jan 2023*  ***Short Term***  ***Short term***  ***Short Term***  *On-going (monitor)*  *Links with action 3.3*  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term****-linked with action 3.8*  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Long Term*** | *DEAP, DSN and HR Systems team.*  *DEAP, EE and EDI team, DSN*  *HR Team*  *HRBP’s*  *DSN, HR Talent attraction Manager and EE*  *DSN, HR Operations team*  *HR Operations team*  *HR Operations team & Chairs of recruitment panels.*  *HR Operations team*  *HR Operations team & Recruiting Managers*  *HROD*  *HROD*  *HR & DSN*  *HR (Developed and on HR Portal)*  *HR*  *DSN*  *DSN & EDI team*  *Wellbeing team (Claire Dickens)*  *DSN & EDI team* | | ***New labels/definitions suggested and discussed with HR systems team and Registry to ensure alignment with HESA returns data.***  ***Disclosure campaign, ‘’Disability is Everybody’s Business’ launched in September 2023. Disclosure for Disabled staff in September was 7%, a snapshot of the data as of 9th January 2024 shows it at 9%.***  ***HR working on email to all staff at a set time each year, asking staff to update their details on Agresso, with any changes.***  ***Guidance for Managers has been updated. A working group will be set up by the HR Head of EE to review a number of JD’s as well as developing a bank of generic interview questions.***  ***On-going.***  ***Guidance on recruitment panel and composition updated and link to this will be added to the Chair of Panels paperwork/checklist (SS to confirm this has been completed) Need to monitor.***  ***A report has been produced on the pilot within FEHW of sending Interview questions in advance for all candidates. The report with a paper on recommendations to change the recruitment and selection policy to include this will be tabled at UEB meeting.***  ***This is to be included in the Induction checklist – discussion with HROD who are reviewing this.***  ***Within the*** [***Information & Guidance on Line Manager Expectations***](https://www.wlv.ac.uk/staff/services/humanresources/guidance-for-managers/line-manager-expectations/) ***document, included in the Induction and Probation is:***   * ***‘’*** Line managers must complete the induction documentation including allocating a mentor and buddy. Also Ensure staff with disabilities have all reasonable adjustments in place as well as details of support available. Complete the reasonable [adjustment passport](https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/equality-diversity--inclusion/policies-and-governance/reasonable-adjustment-passport/)’’   ***Included in the Mandatory Line Managers training.***  ***Guidance drafted, paper to UEB by end of January 2024, for sign off.***  [***Completed with guidance***](https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/corporate-information/equality-diversity--inclusion/policies-and-governance/reasonable-adjustment-passport/) ***and on EDI web pages. Presentations to Executive and senior team on RA passport and guidance from Feb – April.***  ***To be discussed with newly appointed Chief People and Culture Officer***  ***Awaiting information from DSN team.***  ***Follow up to Clare Dickins student research ambassadors & suicide project by newly appoint person in HROD.*** |
| 4. Staff Progression and Promotion | | | | | | | | | |
| We are stuck where we are, little opportunities for progression and promotion, significant barriers – others come up with excuses why we cannot do jobs with more responsibility due to mis-understanding of what we can achieve. There are such low expectations of what disabled people can do.  How to provide an accurate picture, with staff who acquired a disability later on in life, after major career progression has taken place (past experiences of these members of staff are significantly different to those who are disabled throughout their career) | 4.1  4.2  4.3  4.4  4.5  4.6  4.7 | | | Organise workshops/seminars/events/ communications where Senior staff with disabilities share experiences – e.g. DSN/My Career Journey talks, Inclusivity Matters and podcast etc. – to empower others and challenge misconceptions (also explore mentoring opportunities)  Produce and analysis data to compare promotion / progression average time and rates for disabled and non-disabled staff.  (*Flexibility in role descriptions, equivalent skills and experience should be given equal status to more traditional requirements (e.g PhD requirement for academic posts and promotion / progression person specifications)*  Job shadowing available for staff (with aspirations to progress).  Leadership programmes within Faculties for academic and PSS staff that earmark so many places for those from groups under-represented within leadership (already happening FEHW)  Research Fellowship offer for those from under-represented groups. -Part Research Concordat  Review and reconsider the exemptions form that goes alongside research banding and promotion exercises to cover long and short-term disabilities. (Disabilities do not necessarily lead to long term periods of absence and disruption but can cause day to day short term disruption that will impact the individual’s ability to progress)  All roles to be available as job-shares to accommodate those unable to work full-time due to disability/caring responsibilities. LINK TO 3.3 | Several Events and communications organised with large number of participants.  Data produced and analysed after each annual conferment. | *Mid /Long term*  *After next Conferment 2023*  ***Long Term***  ***Short Term***  *Long Term*  ***Long term***  ***Long term*** | *DSN & EE*  *HROD*  *Faculty and PSG EDI Committees*  *Faculty EDI Committees, DSN*  *Researcher Development Sub Committee*  *DEAP &DSN* | | ***During DHM delivered a My Career Journey Disability Edition but poorly attended. Staff members, including those in seniority have taken part in podcasts and (see Disability History Month 2021 - University of Wolverhampton (wlv.ac.uk)), written blogs. Julian’s blog has received over 500 views. These continue.*** |
| 5. Training and Staff Development | | | | | | | | | |
| Staff level of understanding around disability is unknown, however, there continues opportunities to increase understanding in working with students and fellow colleagues who identify with different disabilities. | *5.1*  *5.2*  5.3  5.4 | | | Specific sessions on a multitude of disabilities (including MH) at inclusivity and other conferences organised by Universities.  Ensure a simple process for accessing an autism diagnostic test in staff ? LINK INTO REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT PASSPORT  All managers to receive continuous ‘Disability Confident’ training in supporting individuals with disabilities (designing reasonable adjustments with OH etc) and educated about the ‘Disability Confident’ Canvas page.  *(Create more inclusive and less stigmatising environments for all disabilities through continuous activities rather than reactive bolt on activities).*  Develop educational tools in relation to working with students who have Tutor Awareness Sheet (particularly with Faculty Enabling Tutors –(FET’s) | Standalone training produced and aspects incorporated into existing training and guidance.  Educational tools developed | ***Mid Term***  ***Mid-Long Term***  ***Mid Term*** | *Inclusivity lead*  *HROD*  *DEAP* | | ***DHM sessions included a talk on dwarfism, mental health/suicide prevention and included panellists and podcasters with different disabilities.*** |
| 6. Inclusive Decision Making | | | | | | | | | |
| Improve engagement by power sharing relationships and collaboration between senior management and the Disabled Staff Network (DSN) and its members. | 6.1  6.2  6.3 | | | Promote, support and engage Disabled staff by encouraging them to join the DSN. Involve the Network in delivering and monitoring the DE action plan.  Promote the concept of ‘nothing about us without us’ for all actions. By making sure that disabled staff are consulted and their views are represented in all strategies, policies, and decisions.  Establish a university CPD training, education and development programme based on the affirmation model of disability for all decision-making committees. |  | ***Short Term***  *On-going*  ***Long term*** | *DSN*  *University Secretary & Business Planning team*  *HROD, University Secretary and DSN* | | ***DSN members regularly advised of activities happening and opportunities to get involved***.  ***DSN office bearers involved in meetings with VC, Chair of Board of Governors as well as attending a meeting of the University EDI Committee.***  ***DSN have been asked to review some online training. DSN hoping to arrange some Autism training.*** |
| 7. Addressing and reporting Disability harassment and Institutional culture | | | | | | | | | |
|  | 7.1  7.2  7.3  7.4  7.5  7.6 | | | Review of existing policies, procedures and guidance (identified by DSN) through Disability lens. As well as monitoring and ensuring compliance with them.  Simplified document with guidance for Disabled staff on support available as well as policies and procedures on reporting issues related to their disability.  Monitor Incident reporting tool and provide report on issues reported related to disability.  Including data analysis to understand the level of disability bullying and harassment  Monitor grievance reporting from disabled staff and action taken.  Training – what is disability discrimination, bullying and harassment. Also Ally training- Inviting staff to be ‘allies for disability’ by being an ‘active’ rather than ‘passive’ bystander, challenging micro-aggressions, etc.  Creating an ‘advocacy directory’ within the DSN wherein members commit to be an advocate for other disabled staff and receive mentoring/training accordingly. | Policies identified and reviewed.  Develop guidance /signposting- web page  Yearly report on disability discrimination and harassment cases (numbers)  To be incorporated into existing training. | ***Mid Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Long term***  ***Long term***  ***Long term***  ***Short Term*** | *HR and DSN*  *HR & DSN*  *EDI team*  *HR*  *HROD*  *DSN* | | ***Policy review group set up by HR Employee Relations Team.***  ***Regular reports to EDI Working group***  ***HR Employee Relations team working on data dashboards.***  ***Incorporated within the Dignity and Respect in the workplace training.*** |
| 8. Closing Gaps for Disabled students in attainment, progression and employability (linked to University APP and Inclusivity Framework) | | | | | | | | | |
|  | 8.1  8.2  8.3 | | | Data Analysis to ascertain where the attainment, progression and employability and measures of success gaps are based on specific disabilities.  Analyse Progression to PG study data for staff with disabilities.  Develop actions as a result of the data analysis above that are not already covered by APP work streams. |  | ***Long term***  ***Long term***  ***Long term*** | *APP*  *APP*  *DEAP* | |  |
| 9. Increasing Disabled students’ sense of belonging and Intersectionality both UG and PG | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | 9.1  9.2  9.3  9.4  9.5  9.6 | Provide networking offering opportunities for Disabled students. For example by supporting the liberation officer for disability who is working with disabled students through focus groups to organise events and consultations.  Sign posting across the university including on-line about support mechanisms for disabled students. As well as using existing communication modes.  Ensure Induction covers more than Student Support and Welfare (SSW). For example focusing on the needs of students with neurodiversity with relevant course teams.  Course consultative meeting's agenda to have disabled student voice.  Showcase of disabled student success as achievements (use positive imagery) in our communications and publications.  Provide support and training to Faculty Enabling Tutors (FETS) so that they can continue to work with students with disabilities to increase their sense of belonging. Ensuring consistency of approach and capturing ‘good practice.  Peer mentoring or alumni mentoring | |  | ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Mid Term***  ***Mid Term***  ***Long term***  ***Long term*** | | Liberation Officer for Disabled students  DSAS (SSW)  HROD  Course leaders  EE  DSAS (SSW)  Faculty EDI committees |  |
| 10. Access, reasonable adjustments | | | | | | | | | |
|  | | 10.1  10.2  10.3  10.4  10.5  10.6  10.7 | To develop Guidance/check list for Managers and Estates and Facilities staff to cover:   * Access – due to the topology of our campuses, flexibility is needed for those with mobility issues and staff should not be expected to travel between buildings where they cannot. * ensure equipment required by disabled employee is available at all sites.   Develop a Reasonable Adjustment passport. This will include guidance on:   * Timely decisions on RA i.e. within 2 weeks * Line manager support from HR or similar where needed for implementing reasonable adjustments * “Reasonable” to be clearly defined for staff in advance (soft systems methodology) * Central support and funding for diagnosis and RA suggestions for dyslexia, ASC etc. Accessible and known systems to use for staff * For Medical / assessment reports ensure RA passport is what employer requires rather than medical details (staff equivalent to a TAS).     Promote awareness of the Sunflower scheme and Autism Alert Cards.  Create designated ‘quiet’ rooms on campus for those who need are experiencing sensory overload.  Review of leave policy to incorporate disability leave (for assessment, rehabilitation, etc.) to ensure absences are not recorded as sick leave.  Re-introducing Cancer policy and support group  Explore having Staff equivalent to disability advisors to assist staff who are unsure what RA they need. | | Guidance/check list for Managers and Estates and Facilities staff developed.  Included within reasonable adjustment policy/passport (AP:3.10).  Centralised administration set up with clear process and systems in place (AP:3.11).  PR and purchase of several cards.  Link to action 3.12 -To develop guidance for managers on supporting staff with disabilities including Neurodiversity and Mental Health.  Guidance for Managers on supporting staff with Cancer to be developed rather than policy | ***Mid Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Long term***  ***Short Term***  ***Short Term***  ***Long term*** | | HR & Estates and Facilities  HR  DEAP & DSN  Estates and Facilities  HR  HR  DEAP | ***Completed***  ***Cards Purchased, to be distributed.***  ***See 3.11 update.***  ***Guidance drafted, paper to UEB by end of January 2024, for sign off.*** |

Version 5: 12/10/2022

***Short Term – 1-6 Months Mid Term – 6-12 Months Long Terms – 12 Months***