

## Introduction

Most of us in this room have a vision of ability equality. We have a dream of disability inclusion and believe in the right to live and participate in society on an equal basis as others. The great Professor Jacobus tenBroek led the way with his notion of participatory justice. tenBroek spoke of the importance of “physical capacity, the public approval, and the legal right to be abroad in the land.” Later the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, CRPD, included participatory justice within its paradigm shifting articles.

Like many others in this room, I have embraced, analysed and promoted the CRPD in a growing body of work. I have also analysed the limitations with domestic anti-discrimination laws in Australia, Canada, Ireland, UK and the US, as well as some other work in the South Pacific and Asia.

While I will mention the law, what I really want to talk about today is my experience in creating and working in a leadership position focusing on promoting disability inclusion at the strategic level in a major university; the University of Queensland. I want to say how a dream of ability equality has grown faster than I could have hoped for. In about 5 years we have made significant progress towards a new era of innovation and energy towards disability inclusion. This new paradigm is reflected in university level strategic documents that has clearly defined targets and assigns obligations on specific positions across the university. Under the old regime we were exceptional as being “disability confident”, but now, according to our University Senate, we have gone further and are striving to become “disability courageous”.

## Regulatory framework

From the introduction you note I am Australian and work at the University of Queensland. You might be wondering therefore if the legal system in Australia is better than the US and that has contributed to the advocacy and operational outcomes.

In some respects we are lucky in Australia. Australia never had the Sutton Trilogy and has always defined disability widely. Further, Australia has arguably had an easier comparator test for what we call direct discrimination and you call disparate impact.

While Australian disparate impact laws are probably better than those in the US, even post *ADAA*, the *ADA*'s disparate treatment does much more to promote ability equality than the equivalent indirect discrimination provisions in Australia.

Participation in society and to live in society requires removal of disabling barriers. Where does the law require those who disable us, to remove the barriers that disable us?

To require a person with a disability to prove that they have suffered a certain level of harm to have their denial of rights labelled as discrimination operates on the premise that persons with disabilities are not entitled to exercise their rights on an equal basis as others. Essentially this legislative approach provides that it is not discrimination unless the denial of rights cannot be overcome by the person with a disability. While US laws have their faults, in the coping test you are far superior to Australia.

The disparate impact doctrine in the United States arguably does not require proof of an inability to cope, or substantial hardship, to successfully impugn a practice. *Enyart v National Conference of Bar Examiners* involved a fantastic candidate for the bar exam who was legally blind. Enyart requested accommodations to how she sat the bar exam to enable her to use her adaptive technology (screen reader and screen magnification). The California Bar Association accepted that these requests would not alter the substance of the exam; however the National Conference of Bar Examiners refused to provide the exam in a digital format. The National Conference of Bar Examiners was not concerned with the requested accommodations altering the content of the exam or that the adjustments would provide an unfair advantage to Enyart. Instead, the National Conference of Bar Examiners provided Enyart the options of sitting the exam using a human reader or an audio recording of the exam. Either of these options was offered in addition to the use of closed-circuit television for text magnification. Considering lawyers with vision impairments primarily operate using digital

versions of documents and rarely, if ever, use live readers or recorded books for work purposes, it is not surprising Enyart rejected these options. Enyart asserted that live readers and audio recordings were not effective and would not enable her to complete the exam in an efficient manner. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals upheld Enyart's case and held that entities must provide individuals with disabilities 'an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge or abilities to the same degree as non-disabled people.' The court does not ask whether the person with a disability would be able, 'despite extreme discomfort and disability-related disadvantage, to pass the relevant exams.' While Enyart could possibly have coped with completing the bar exam using other accommodations, the court did not focus on what Enyart could cope with, but instead on what would provide an equal opportunity.

## **Coping with disadvantage in Australia**

Unlike the US, the Australian approach turns the focus onto how the person who has been disabled by the practice manages to cope with that barrier to equality. A practice will only breach Australian indirect discrimination laws where the person with a disability is sufficiently unable to cope with the denial of their human rights.

The coping test has resulted in negative outcomes for persons with print disabilities in Australia. The test has reduced students with print disabilities capacity to obtain essential readings in the formats that best promote equality.

For example, in *Hinchliffe v University of Sydney* the coping test was applied to a university student with a print disability desiring to access essential course readings. The university provided the student with the reading material in a printed format which only provided her partial access. The university remedied their error and provided the students the material in the required format after class had commenced.

In assessing whether the university had breached the indirect discrimination provisions the court considered whether the student coped with the disadvantage. In this case the student scanned papers and obtained assistance from her mother and grandmother to read documents onto tape. The court held that generally, it was possible for the applicant to comply with the university's requirement. She could make use of course material provided to her in a standard format by converting it to a different format.' As the student had some eyesight, had a strong support network and was prepared to work exceptionally hard, the court held there was insufficient harm caused to amount to a breach of the indirect discrimination provisions.

The coping test essentially authorises any practice that causes discriminatory harm, providing that a person with a disability can find a strategy to sufficiently cope with that harm. This requires courts to decide when coping strategies are sufficiently unsuccessful to enliven protection.

Courts accept that students with disabilities will experience disablement, but that this often does not constitute sufficient harm to justify intervention.

In *Clarke v Catholic Education Office* the court held an inability to comply was held to require a 'serious disadvantage' with the result that the student could not 'meaningfully participate in classroom instruction' without the accommodation. On appeal the Full Court adopted a similar approach through holding that the question of whether or not a student could comply should be decided by asking whether the student was 'able to receive the full benefit of [their] education.' The Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia has accepted that persons with disabilities have a right to access education but no equivalent right to access employment. Accordingly, the level of disadvantage that a person with a disability is expected to cope with outside the educational sector is significantly higher.

There are arguably many situations where persons with disabilities can cope with disablement through the support of friends and family and expenditure of resources. There is a substantial gap between coping with disablement and the equality envisaged by the CRPD. In the United States case of *Enyart v National Conference of Bar Examiners* the capacity to cope was not addressed. If *Enyart v National Conference of Bar Examiners* was brought in Australia under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) then it is possible the court would have determined that Enyart could have sufficiently coped with the disadvantage such that she had no remedy. The coping test means that discrimination in society is deemed not to amount to disability discrimination simply because persons who are disabled by barriers find mechanisms to cope with inequalities.

Coping with disadvantage is a long way from the capacity to exercise rights on an equal basis as others as envisaged by the CRPD.

### **Motivating change in Australia**

The weakness of indirect discrimination laws presents a special challenge for people seeking to internally advocate. As a disability rights advocate speaking for public consumption I can argue for an expansive reading of the law. I have been in public interest litigation personally and helping others.

Of course it is different when the place I am trying to change is my employer. Where the law is exceptionally clear I can point out a risk to the university. Where it is able to be avoided or is open to interpretation, then the legal risk is low and trying to push it is not great for internal relationships or getting things done.

I work in a university with about 6 thousand staff many more casuals. The University of Queensland has around 55 thousand students and our annual budget is about 1300 million USD per year.

The University of Queensland is very successful and competitive:

- UQ is ranked #48 in the world by QS World University Rankings
- The law school is ranked 43 by the QS World University Rankings
- When talking about improving staff and student experiences at UQ, we have a strong history of achieving excellence. National surveys in 2017 compared the experiences of undergraduate students across Australia. The University of Queensland was top-ranked in the Group of Eight Universities and nationally in areas including:
  - Overall educational experience
  - Learning resources

### **My Dream for ability equality in universities**

When I started at the University of Queensland in 2011 we were definitely compliant with anti-discrimination laws, had a lot of people doing a lot of good work, but for me personally I felt isolated. I was on a post doctorate research fellowship, so I was not teaching much which contributed to me being apart from what was going on around me. So I was isolated from all the teaching activities and did not find other staff or students with disabilities on campus. They were there, somewhere, but I could not find them.

This did not mean it was not a great place to work. The school was open and friendly, I had great information-communication technology support and the library was great. Indeed, my work with the library, in particular Pam Schindler and Thomas Palmer, showed me how research and operational interests in disability inclusion can lead to operational changes.

The reason I felt isolated was that there was no central home for disability. We had:

Students with disabilities being managed by student services; Library access and support by the library; ITS issues by ITS; Staff by their schools or business units; Property and facilities the physical environment; And where issues crossed over silos, often no one really knew who was to do what and it was hard to get problems appropriately addressed.

### **Disability confident and disability courageous**

After a few years in 2015 I decided to do something about my concerns about how disability was approached. So I thought what would I like to see happen. Tomorrow was going to come around either way. The question was what did I want tomorrow to look like?

I wanted people who were causing students, staff and others who could impact on ability equality to sit around the table and hear concerns and see if anything could be done. I felt we needed some central group to hear what is going on and suggest change

I wondered what would happen if I walked over to the chancellery and just told them I wanted to set this body up. So I did just that. I literally walked across campus and got the lift up and spoke with the Vice-Chancellor's secretary. Before making an appointment with the Vice Chancellor it was suggested I first speak with Workforce Diversity and Inclusion.

I wanted to start small and just have a group of people meet. In a trend that I have noticed over the years when I go to the university leadership team with an idea, they come back to me with thumbs up but wanted more. Not more information but more visionary and more ambition.

UQ had a strategic commitment to disability inclusion. In 2015 UQ had lodged 5 disability action plans with the Australian human rights commission stretching back to 1999.

Workforce Diversity and Inclusion were just drafting the sixth iteration. The leadership team saw my interest as an opportunity to do more with this strategic plan. After some discussions a group was written into the sixth plan and I was appointed chair.

I reflected that UQ had already had 5 already so how could I do something different:

This group had representatives from the major operational units across the campus and reporting from schools and faculties and institutes. We had a lot of people here doing a lot of good things. So what made me different:

- I was the first with a disability to chair such a group
- I was the first disability rights advocate to operate in such a role

I was in a leadership position but now I had to lead. There was over 2000 people with disabilities known at the University of Queensland and probably more like 3500 where people never disclosed it formally. We had a lot already in place and my role was advisory to help promote and monitor the strategic disability action plan.

Despite being signed off by the Vice Chancellor, Professor Peter Høj, and University Senate, the operational groups across the university could entirely ignore this group if they wanted. I am a minnow in terms of university power broking. Moreover, these groups had been operating for decades; what could I do to make it worth their while to come, participate and listen to my suggestions?

The Disability Inclusion group is strongly supported by Workforce Diversity and Inclusion, in particular Dee Gibbon and Jordan Tredinnick (the creative Jordan came up with the term disability courageous which is in the 2018-2021 DAP), and we report to the Pro-Vice Chancellor in Professor Tim Dunne. Now Professor Dunne can lend his institutional authority where a problem is identified and ignored, and has done so when requested, but I wanted to primarily to lead by enthusing interest in promoting disability inclusion.

## **YES approach**

I read widely, took some leadership courses, spoke with leaders across the university about leadership, including professors Victor Callan, Tim Dunne and Fiona Rohde, and developed something that worked for me: the YES approach.

The Y stands for you are doing a good job

Our group collected data and identified problems, but we also found lots of good things. Where things are working as they should or where someone does something exceptional I did my best to let them know they had been noticed. I spend a lot of time noticing what goes on and sending e-mails or making calls to thank people or let them know they have been noticed. We have also nominated people for prizes internally and externally.

You are thinking now that making people feel good has a limited role in advancing the struggle for ability equality. You are right. Mostly it helps motivate those that are already doing good to keep doing good.

E is for make it easy to be inclusive

One of the biggest challenges we face in removing disabling barriers is working out how to do this. People do not have time to spend hours or days researching issues and coming up with solutions. Often a decision maker has minutes, no resources and is tempted to do the best they can in the circumstances.

Where possible I try to find ways to make it easy to be inclusive. This has involved a lot of extra work for me doing searches, arranging meetings and doing what I can to facilitate positive change.

E-book access is a particular research interest of mine and I have published extensively. I used this research to help operational units. I worked with the library and then they took what I did and built upon it. They funded their own operational research and now have one of the best policies in Australia on disability inclusive procurement.

A bigger challenge is who should fix an issue which is owned and managed by several units across the university and also external bodies? The individuals involved do not have the answer. One thing we can do at UQ DIG is identify that no one really knows the answer to the question. Then the question is sent to the university leadership to decide how this should be managed.

We are doing this with a digital audit and it is slow but effective. We found an easy, if slightly expensive, way of substantially improving digital disability inclusion across the university. My colleague Pam Schindler found a group and managed the logistics. We put a request to the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Professor Tim Dunne, to fund the audit and he did. Now a number of units across the campus are taking this seriously and making short, medium and long-term interventions. This has involved in hiring more staff to help.

S is strategic focus

I believe my vision for ability equality has always aligned with the university and with those who lead it. The fact strategic documents at first did not precisely reflect my belief I regarded as a challenge. Others and I have worked hard at strategically aligning disability inclusion with the university's vision. It has not been easy, but it has been successful. The last Disability Action Plan, signed off by Professor Peter Høj and then approved by the University senate in December 2018, has a vision of ability equality that I helped write (I have placed the entire DAP as an appendix). My words are there, my dreams are there and my vision for a university as a disability change agent is now the University of Queensland vision of ability equality. If you have not gathered the fact I am exceptionally excited by this state of affairs ... well I am. The only question I ask myself, am I aligned with the university's position or have they aligned themselves with me?

We have formulated a clear direction for the future of disability inclusion at UQ. The new disability action plan includes a new vision and assigns operational targets for many people across the university.

We have done fantastic things but we will do more. We are future-focused and have funded projects in place to identify opportunities and risks and to propose decisive measures to respond.

I am exceptionally excited to be part of a group that is actively building a constructive culture that supports UQ's strategic vision for ability equality.

## **Conclusion**

There is substantial need for targeted legal actions and law reform work to improve the regulatory framework which we act within. Regardless of changes in the law though we are able to make significant changes on the ground through internal advocacy in the places we work. A lot of the small changes we have helped make might only save 5 minutes here, 10 minutes there. They add up though. 20 minutes a day is over 120 hours per year.

I want to finish with one of my favourite Fulbright quotes:

The future is not in the stars but in our hearts and minds.

## **Disclaimer**

This is the written version of the speech that I will orally deliver in Baltimore. Further, the remarks and observations are my own, however the below strategic disability action plan is very much the position of the University of Queensland, having been signed off by our Vice Chancellor and President, Professor Peter Høj, and ratified by our University Senate.

The University of Queensland  
December 2018



CREATE CHANGE

# The University of Queensland Disability Action Plan 2018-2021



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## Foreword from the Vice-Chancellor

The University of Queensland has a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion and recognises that our people are our greatest strength. To ensure that we are truly enacting these values, and retaining our status as a world leading organisation, we must ensure that all students and staff have an opportunity to create positive change by fully contributing to, and participating in, all aspects of University life.

The University's Disability Action Plan 2018-2021 builds on previous iterations to further the University's goal to become an inclusive, supportive and accessible place of study and work for people of all abilities. To do this, we have to step away from business as usual. This means being bold and innovative, and challenging previous practices in relation to disability inclusion.

UQ has the academic expertise, strategic commitment and dedicated resources available to achieve our ambition of becoming a recognised leader and innovator in disability inclusion; this Disability Action Plan takes us further towards this ambition.

I am proud to endorse The University of Queensland Disability Action Plan 2018-2021, and urge the UQ community to work together so that people of all abilities may optimise their potential by learning, discovering and collaborating with us.

Professor Peter Høj  
Vice-Chancellor and President  
The University of Queensland

# 1. Context

## 1.1 Overview

The University of Queensland (UQ), as an education provider, leading research institution and employer, is committed to working proactively to develop an organisation that is disability confident and embodies disability inclusion and respect for inherent dignities.

*The University of Queensland Disability Action Plan 2018-2021* (DAP, the Plan) constitutes formal recognition of UQ's commitment to ensuring persons with disability are afforded equal opportunities to participate in, excel, and be a part of, the University community.

The DAP is a coordinated plan that provides a framework of principles and systematic planning that is supported by a monitoring and reporting function to ensure achievement of the University's vision of being a leading organisation for disability inclusion and success.

UQ's DAP is an iterative plan, which was first lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission in 1999. Subsequent iterations have built on the excellent foundations of each previous version of the DAP. This is UQ's seventh DAP.

This DAP was developed by Workplace Diversity and Inclusion (WD&I) in consultation with the broader UQ community, in particular the Disability Inclusion Group (DIG), Faculties, Schools, Institutes and central areas.

## 1.2 Strategic context

*The University of Queensland Disability Action Plan 2018-2021* is situated within the University's broader strategic framework, in particular *The University of Queensland Strategic Plan 2018-2021*. The DAP is aligned with the UQ values of supporting our people and mutual respect and diversity.

The DAP should be implemented in partnership with:

- The University of Queensland Strategic Plan 2018-2021
- The University of Queensland Student Strategy 2016-2020
- The University of Queensland Mental Health Strategy 2018-2020
- The Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2021

## 1.3 Legislative framework

The DAP is designed in accordance with the provisions of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) (DDA), and the associated *Disability Standards of Education 2005*, and will be lodged with the Australian Human Rights Commission for the length of the Plan.

The DAP is informed by a number of international conventions, legislation and guidelines, outlined in Appendix 2.

## 1.4 Key achievements

The last iteration of the UQ Disability Action Plan 2016-2018, had a vision of developing UQ as a disability confident organisation. A disability confident organisation takes a proactive approach towards eliminating barriers to access and participation for persons with disability, and puts policy into practice.

Some of the key achievements of UQ's Disability Action Plan 2016-2018 include:

- Development of the inaugural Disability Inclusion Group (DIG).
- Development of the inaugural UQ Mental Health Strategy.
- Review of all physical accessibility maps, and the development of new maps for UQ locations that previously didn't have physical accessibility maps.
- Continual improvement of the UQ digital infrastructure to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 (Level AA) (WCAG 2.0).
- Development of several training programs available to all staff including: Supporting Students with Disability, Staff Disability Inclusion Workshop; and Supporting Students with Mental Health Conditions.
- Faculties, Schools and Institutes embodying disability confidence by ensuring disability inclusion is embedded in all aspects of the student experience, including learning and study environments.
- Review of the process for developing and implanting Student Access Plans - Disability (SAPD) to dramatically improve wait times, communication, access and implementation for students.
- Development of the inaugural Staff with Disability Reasonable Adjustment Guide.
- Review of UQ's recruitment and selection process to embed disability inclusion.
- Completion of the Library's Ebook Accessibility Project, which enabled the Library to prefer more accessibility formats in purchasing, thereby moving towards disability-inclusive procurement practice.

A full overview of all of the work completed by the UQ community in disability inclusion over the last three years can be found in [The University of Queensland Disability Action Plan 2016-2018 annual reports](#).

## 2. Vision and principles

UQ's vision is to become a global leader in disability inclusion. This entails moving beyond compliance and 'disability confidence' towards a new paradigm for disability inclusion. UQ seeks to become 'disability courageous'; which entails dismantling current 'deficit' models of disability tolerance/acceptance and reframing them as 'ability diversity'. It takes courage to lead the way; to step away from safe and accepted approaches; to challenge extant paradigms; and to take risks. UQ seeks to be bold and courageous; by using our privileged position and organisational/research efforts to champion evolution from tolerating difference to embracing ability diversity.

This DAP takes UQ further towards achieving this vision. Universities are uniquely situated to become transformative agents of change by enabling staff, students and other persons with disabilities to fully realise their rights set out in the paradigm shifting United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (see appendix 1).

The DAP is underpinned by the following principles as outlined in The University of Queensland Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2018-2021:

1. UQ embraces the disability human rights paradigm established in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and recognises the university's role in transforming its own practices, the students it moulds, the staff it employs and the wider community.
2. Visible leadership commitment to disability inclusion enacted through courage, innovation, action and change; this commitment is aligned to UQ's core values of excellence, diversity and inclusion, and supporting our people.

3. Programs, policies and initiatives must be designed and implemented with the full and direct participation of, and/or leadership by, persons with disability. This principle is fundamental to future success.
4. Significant and sustainable change has not, and will not, occur without intervention.
5. Social, environmental, digital and attitudinal challenges and barriers may prohibit the inclusion, success and participation of persons with disability. Structural barriers and challenges must be addressed in order for the University to achieve its strategic vision for disability inclusion.
6. Change cannot occur in isolation. UQ needs to research with, learn from and lead other practitioners and experts in the disability inclusion space to ensure UQ is at the forefront of international best practice.
7. Universal design principles should be embedded into all that we do; including planning, policy, teaching, learning, research and our physical, social and digital environments.

## 3. Governance

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### 3.1 Implementation

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Office of the Provost, is the identified champion and principal strategic manager of the Plan. The Senate Committee for Equity, Diversity and the Status of Women (EDSW Committee) provides strategic oversight of and governance pertaining to the DAP, through the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Office of the Provost.

Responsibility for implementing the DAP is shared by the UQ community. Key stakeholders identified as responsible for the implementation of the Plan will be involved in the creation of the Plan and be accountable for the achievement of the Plan through an annual reporting process. There are a number of key roles identified in the DAP:

- The **owner/s** identified in the Plan is the member of the University Senior Management Group who oversees the implementation of the action; including the allocation of resources.
- The **responsible officer/s** identified in the plan is responsible for reporting on the achievements of the Plan. There may be many staff in the responsible officers' portfolio who contribute to the implementation of the actions in the Plan.
- Some of the portfolios who may be able to provide **support and/or must be consulted** with in the implementation of an action are also identified in the Plan.

The DAP provides Faculties, Institutes and central areas with a framework to develop and maintain UQ as a leading organisation for inclusion and accessibility for persons with disability. It is recommended that work areas include the actions they are responsible for into their broader annual plans to ensure disability inclusion initiatives are embedded into all University business.

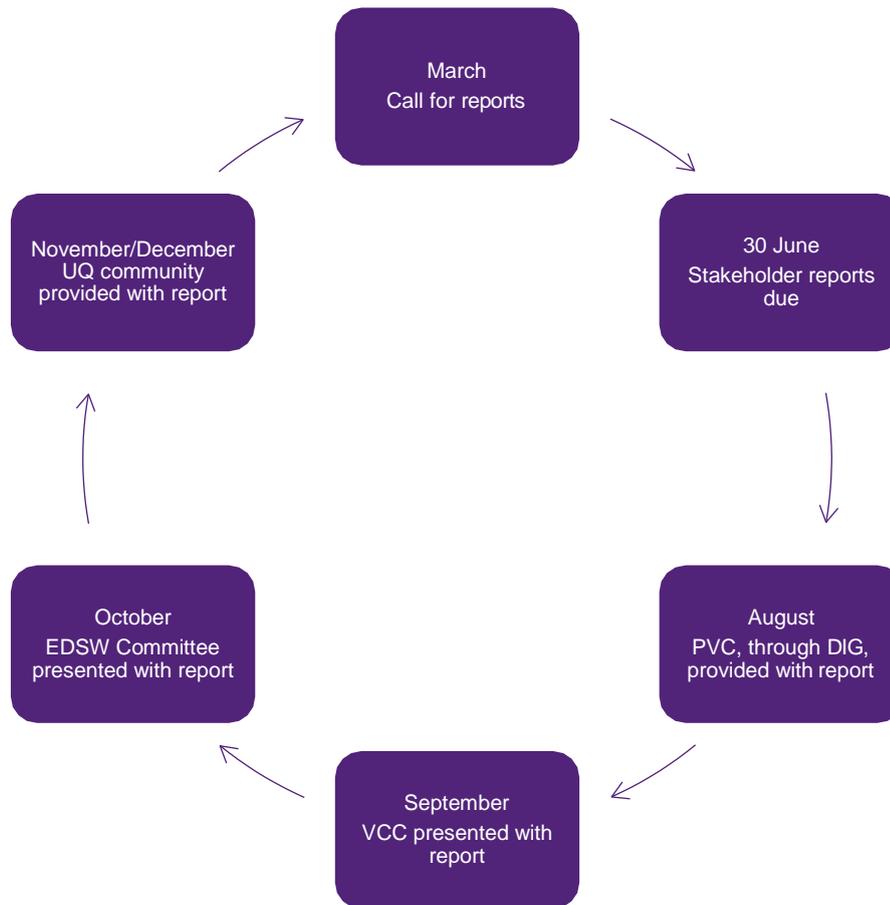
### 3.2 Annual reporting process for stakeholders

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor, as principal manager of the Plan, will seek annual reports from identified stakeholders on the progress of achievement of the Plan to be presented to the EDSW Committee, through the Vice-Chancellor's Committee and Senate as appropriate, for endorsement.

Key stakeholders identified as responsible for the implementation of the Plan will be involved in the creation of the plan and accountable for the achievement of the Plan through an annual reporting process.

Stakeholders will be asked to provide a report on the progress they have made in achieving the actions they are responsible for in the Plan over the last 12 months by 30 June each reporting year.

The endorsed DAP annual report will be made available to the UQ community on the DAP website.



**Figure One: overview of timeline of DAP reporting process**

The annual report process will be managed by Workplace Diversity and Inclusion. If you have any questions or concerns about the process please contact the team at [ideals@uq.edu.au](mailto:ideals@uq.edu.au).

### 3.3 Monitoring and review of the DAP

The DAP is an evolving plan of action that requires ongoing review, evaluation and monitoring to ensure its effectiveness. The University will review, evaluate and monitor the plan in the following ways:

- The Disability Inclusion Group, who report to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, will monitor the effectiveness of the Plan through the annual reporting process.
- The Senate Committee for Equity and Diversity and the Status of Women (EDSW Committee) will monitor the Plan in conjunction with the achievements of objectives reported by relevant stakeholders and recommendations provided by the DIG through the Pro-Vice-Chancellor.
- The DAP will be reviewed in line with the University planning process.

Ongoing feedback from the University community can be submitted to the DIG through Workplace Diversity and Inclusion at [ideas@uq.edu.au](mailto:ideas@uq.edu.au).

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### 3.4 Processes and contacts for student and staff disability services and support

For enquiries in relation to the administration of the Plan, please contact Workplace Diversity and Inclusion on [ideas@uq.edu.au](mailto:ideas@uq.edu.au).

For any enquiries relating to physical barriers to accessibility, please refer to the [Property and Facilities website](#) where you can lodge a request for this to be addressed or call (07) 336 52222.

For any enquiries relating to digital barriers to accessibility, please refer to [Information Technology Services](#) where you can seek assistance or call (07) 336 56000.

For any enquiries relating to accessibility of books and other publications, please contact the Library on [askus@library.uq.edu.au](mailto:askus@library.uq.edu.au) or call (07) 334 64312.

For any specific enquiries relating to staff and disability please contact your [local Human Resources team](#).

For any specific enquiries relating to student disability please contact [Student Services](#).

## 4. Action Plan

Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
<b>ALL UQ COMMUNITY</b>				
<b>Objective 1: Communicate and promote disability inclusion across, and outside of, UQ</b>				
1.1	Ensure that disability inclusive language and images are used in all UQ media, communication and marketing collateral.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Office of Marketing and Communication</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Disability inclusion is included in UQ Style Guide.
1.2	Identify and promote champions and/or examples of good practice and research in disability inclusion at UQ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Office of Marketing and Communication</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> DIG, Schools/Faculties and Institutes, Human Resources and Student Services</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least two people/examples recognised in UQ media channels.
1.3	Promote the existence, and implementation, of the DAP to the UQ community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Provost</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> DIG, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Office of the Provost</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Office of Marketing and Communication</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	DAP is available to UQ community and is communicated to all staff annually.
1.4	Continue to improve the communication/promotion of internal and external teams that can provide specialist advice and support relating to disability inclusion to the UQ community to raise awareness about these information and support services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owners:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officers:</b> Human Resources and Student Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Office of Marketing and Communication and Information Technology Services and Property and Facilities</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Information is made available to UQ community.
<b>Objective 2: Ensure UQ's physical infrastructure embodies all elements of disability inclusion and physical access</b>				

2.1	Monitor the University accessibility maps to ensure their accuracy for all UQ locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Property and Facilities</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Updated at least annually, informed by user feedback sought each year.
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Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
2.2	Embed information about accessibility into UQ maps and UQNav	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Property and Facilities</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	2020	Accessibility information is available on UQ maps and UQNav.
2.3	Continue to improve the process of communicating temporary impediments to accessibility across all University locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Property and Facilities</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> Information and Technology Services and Office of Marketing and Communication</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Information is more accessible to more of the UQ community in a timely manner.
2.4	Commit to ensuring that all new, and refurbishment of, buildings are informed by a specialist in physical accessibility for persons with disability in the design phase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Property and Facilities</li> </ul>	2021	A specialist in physical accessibility is engaged in all building projects.
2.5	Develop a process for accessibility features of rooms to be communicated to users, such as through the Teaching Space Management website.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Teaching Space Management</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Property and Facilities and Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	2020	Accessibility features of central teaching rooms are communicated on the Teaching Space Management website.
2.6	Improve the signage of accessible routes at all UQ locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Property and Facilities</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> Office of Marketing and Communication and DIG</li> </ul>	2019, continued for life of plan	Signage is improved, based on user feedback, and consistently monitored.
2.7	Maintain accessible pathways to ensure that accessibility is not compromised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Property and Facilities</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Decrease in the number of reports of compromised accessibility through PF Assist.
2.8	Establish a mechanism for the UQ community to provide feedback on physical accessibility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Property and Facilities</li> </ul>	2020	Feedback mechanism established.

Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
<b>Objective 3: Ensure UQ's digital infrastructure and content embodies all elements of disability inclusion and accessibility</b>				
3.1	Continue to improve UQ website platforms and design to ensure compliance with at least WCAG 2.0.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Website platforms comply with at least WCAG 2.0.
3.2	Embed a requirement for compliance with at least WCAG 2.0 in UQ procurement policies and procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Finance and Business Services</li> </ul>	2020	A requirement for compliance with at least WCAG 2.0 is included in UQ procurement policies and procedures.
3.3	Ensure that all current, and future, online learning platforms are at least WCAG 2.0 compliant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Institute for Teaching, Learning and Innovation and University Staff Development Committee</li> </ul>	2019 and ongoing for life of plan	Process and/or policy established to ensure all current, and future, online learning platforms are at least WCAG 2.0 compliant.
3.4	Apply the recommendations from the 2018 Jisc Accessibility Snapshot, where appropriate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) portfolio</li> </ul>	2020	UQ Jisc Accessibility Snapshot implementation plan implemented.
3.5	Identify point/s of contact for students and staff with disability to seek IT support, including the use of assistive technologies, within the UQ digital environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Library, Student Services and Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	2020	Point/s of contact established and communicated to UQ community.
3.6	Identify point/s of contact with expertise in digital accessibility who can be drawn on to inform the development and implementation of all relevant projects and programs, including teaching and learning resources, to ensure consistent application and consideration of digital accessibility across the University.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	2020	Point/s of contact established and communicated to UQ community.
3.7	Monitor website content, where possible, to ensure compliance with at least WCAG 2.0.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Include WCAG 2.0 in checklist used to monitor centralised websites.

Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
3.8	Continue to provide opportunities for web accessibility training for all staff involved in website content development and management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Web accessibility training is continued to be provided to all staff involved in website content development and management.
3.9	Continue to seek preferred suppliers and publishers who provide learning resources and publications in various accessible formats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Library</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Preferred accessible suppliers and publishers are prioritised.
3.10	Ensure that all videos and digital media content that is developed by the University is accessible to all people, including having captions on all videos.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Office of Marketing and Communication</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> Information and Technology Services, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) portfolio; Faculties and Schools</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Digital accessibility requirements are embedded in policy/process for digital media development.
<b>Objective 4: Provide a welcoming and inclusive community for persons with disability</b>				
4.1	Provide education and training opportunities for UQ students and staff that provide them with the knowledge and skills to support staff and students with disability and contribute to a disability inclusive culture at UQ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owners:</b> Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officers:</b> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion, Student Services</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> University Staff Development Committee</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least three workshops are provided to UQ staff and students each year.
4.2	Continue to work as a consultative group for all disability inclusion matters, in accordance with its Terms of Reference.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Provost</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officers:</b> DIG, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Office of the Provost</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Annual plan provided to PVC each year.
4.3	Recognise the multiple locations that comprise the University environment, and ensure that all persons with disability have access to equivalent levels of support and information resources across all University locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owners:</b> Provost, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officers:</b></li> <li>• Human Resources</li> <li>• Student Services</li> <li>• Property and Facilities</li> <li>• Information and Technology Services</li> <li>• Schools/Faculties and Institutes</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Relevant programs, plans, policies and initiatives explicitly include coverage of at least St Lucia, Herston and Gatton campuses.

Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Library</li> </ul>		
4.4	Ensure that all learning materials and course work, including online content such as the UQ2U program, is inclusive and representative of the diverse UQ community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Institute for Teaching, Learning and Innovation</li> <li><i>Supported by:</i> Schools/Faculties and Institutes, Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Evidence of diversity and inclusion being embedded in learning materials.
4.5	Develop a list of people with disability in the UQ community who may be engaged by staff who need to test their training, programs, products etc to ensure they are accessible, on a casual or contract basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Provost</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Office of the Provost, DIG</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Human Resources and Student Affairs</li> </ul>	2020, and continued for life of plan.	Process is established, and at least one person engaged through the process.
4.6	UQ will continue to promote and support academic and student research which help it become a disability courageous organisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owners:</b> Provost and Deputy-Vice-Chancellor (Research)</li> <li><b>Responsible officers:</b> Graduate School and Faculties/Schools and Institutes</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Office of Marketing and Communication, Student Services and Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least one piece of research completed is promoted through UQ media channels.
<b>Objective 5: Provide support to UQ students and staff who have a mental health condition</b>				
5.1	Implement the UQ Mental Health Strategy 2018-2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Mental Health Strategy Project Board</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Mental Health Strategy is implemented.
<b>STAFF</b>				
<b>Objective 1: Gain a better understanding of staff with disability experiences at UQ</b>				
1.1	Implement an option for staff to identify their disability in the Human Resources Enterprise System (HRES).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Human Resources</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	2021	Staff with disability are able to voluntarily self-disclose through the HRES.

Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
1.2	Address inaccessibility issues identified with the current Human Resources Information System to ensure that it is accessible for all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Human Resources</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Information Technology Services and external service provider</li> </ul>	2021	Accessibility issues are addressed.
1.3	Include disability demographic information for all-staff engagement and/or diversity surveys and analyse the data to gain a better understanding of the experiences of staff with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> Human Resources</li> </ul>	2019, continuing for life of plan	Disability demographic data is included in staff engagement and/or diversity surveys.
<b>Objective 2: Encourage suitably qualified persons with disability to apply for positions at all levels across the University</b>				
2.1	Monitor recruitment processes to ensure that they are accessible and inclusive of persons with disability in practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Human Resources</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Recruitment processes are reviewed annually to ensure universal design principles are embedded.
2.2	Continue to strengthen recruitment processes to ensure they reflect best practice to attract diverse candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Human Resources</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Recruitment processes are reviewed annually to ensure diversity and inclusion principles are embedded.
2.3	Continue to develop partnerships with disability employment service providers to create employment opportunities for persons with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least one partnership is developed.
2.4	Continue to provide educational opportunities to hiring managers with respect to disability inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> Human Resources</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least one workshop is provided to staff engaged in recruitment each year.
<b>Objective 3: Address barriers and challenges in the workplace that may impact the participation of persons with disability</b>				
3.1	Implement the UQ Staff Reasonable Adjustment Procedure ensuring that managers and supervisors have access to training, information and support to guide the process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>• <i>Supported by:</i> Human Resources</li> </ul>	2019	Procedure is in place and supported by a communication strategy, which include education.
3.2	Embed disability inclusion initiatives in the Workplace Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and associated Action Plan that are evidence-based and designed to remove barriers and challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	2019, continuing for life of plan	Disability inclusion initiatives are embedded in the Strategy and Action Plan.

Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
3.3	Include disability inclusion information in induction programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Human Resources</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	2019, continuing for life of plan	Disability inclusion information is embedded in induction program.
3.4	Develop guides to inform how disability inclusion may be embedded in all areas of the employee life cycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Workplace Diversity and Inclusion</li> </ul>	2021	At least one new guide is developed.
<b>STUDENTS</b>				
<b>Objective 1: Contribute to student retention and success through the provision of an informed and supportive pre-arrival and orientation environment</b>				
1.1	Promote and encourage pre-admission discussions with Student Services with potential students as part of our promotion to future students, signalling our positive and inclusive, supportive environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Schools/Faculties and Institutes, Graduate School, UQ International, Academic Services and Library</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Number of pre-admission discussions increase by 20%.
1.2	Develop clear inherent requirement statements for each program as required, to be available to prospective students and the University community, so that students are able to make informed study choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Provost</li> <li><b>Responsible officers:</b> Faculties/Schools and Institutes</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Academic Services Division</li> </ul>	2021	Inherent requirement statements exist for all programs.
<b>Objective 2: Provide a supportive and high quality student experience for students with disability</b>				
2.1	Monitor retention among UQ students who identify as having a disability and evaluate the effectiveness of the support measures in place for students with disability, on an annual basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Schools/Faculties and Institutes</li> </ul>	Annually during the life of the plan	Retention rate is provided in DAP annual report and continues to increase.
2.2	Continue to implement processes so that Library has advanced notice of the enrolment of students with disabilities in courses so the preparation of reading materials can be prioritised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li><b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> <li><i>In consultation with:</i> Library</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Process in place is monitored and evaluated regularly.

2.3	Continue to provide access to the Library collection for students and staff with visual impairments and other print	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li></ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Access to the Library collection is available to all students.
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	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible Stakeholders*</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Measure of success</b>
	disabilities, through digitisation, and through seeking and adopting new and developing technologies in the field.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Library</li> </ul>		
2.4	Continue to consult with students with disability, and other relevant stakeholders, as to what physical, support based, and virtual improvements can be made to improve their student experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> DIG</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least five students are consulted with on their student experience.
2.5	Provide improved communication, support, and advice to academic staff regarding the development and implementation of student access plans for students with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Schools/Faculties and Institutes, Information and Technology Services and Library</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	Feedback mechanism put in place for academic staff and students, with majority of feedback received being positive.
2.6	Review the process for communicating and supporting academic staff to implement exam adjustments. This will be informed by the Inherent Requirements. Additional guidance required at a local level for 'in-class' or non-centrally supported examinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Academic Registrar</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Schools/Faculties and Institutes</li> </ul>	2021	Revised process is in place.
2.7	Ensure that Higher Degree Research (HDR) students with disability have access to appropriate support and that the available support is appropriately communicated to HDR students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Graduate School, Schools/Faculties and Institutes and Library</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least 10% of HDR students who disclose a disability access support.
2.8	Develop guides to assist student-facing staff to support students with disability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> </ul>	2019	Guides in place.
2.9	Continue to provide the Zoom Mentoring program, with a focus on remote UQ locations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> </ul>	2020	Zoom Mentoring program is provided.
2.10	Develop employability opportunities for students with disability, for example the Neurodiversity Hub.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Employability Centre</li> </ul>	Ongoing for life of plan	At least two new employability opportunities provided.

Action		Responsible Stakeholders*	Timeline	Measure of success
2.11	Strengthen the voice-to-text features of lecture recordings to ensure all students can access lectures online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Chief Operating Officer</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Information and Technology Services</li> </ul>	2021	Voice-to-text features of lecture recordings are useable.
2.12	Investigate opportunities to improve communication and engagement with students about support services available for students with disability to reach students who acquire disability during their studies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Owner:</b> Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• <b>Responsible officer:</b> Student Services</li> <li>• <i>In consultation with:</i> Office of Marketing and Communication</li> </ul>	2021	Review of current communication and engagement processes is completed and improvements identified.

\*Please refer to section 3.1 of the Plan for clarification on the role of the “owner” and “responsible officers” identified in the Plan.

# Appendix 1 – Legislative Framework and Standard Setting Agencies

## International Conventions:

- *Marrakesh Treaty*

The Marrakesh Treaty allows exceptions to copyright law to enable organisations to give people who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print disabled greater access to works published in accessible formats, such as print, braille and audio. The Marrakesh Treaty was signed by Australia in June 2015.

- *United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ratified by Australia in 2008. The stated purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities, and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. The Convention requires the provision of an inclusive education system at all levels and recognises the right of persons with disabilities to work, on an equal basis with others.

## Commonwealth Legislation:

- *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*

The Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 established the Australian Human Rights Commission, a body capable of receiving and hearing complaints in relation to disability discrimination.

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*

The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their disability. Within higher education, it places an obligation on institutions to provide services and facilities in a way that ensures students and staff with disabilities can participate on a substantively equal basis. The DDA provides that in order to achieve this substantive equality, the organisation is to make reasonable adjustments.

- *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*

The *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)* outlines the University's obligations as an employer to ensure discrimination on the basis of disability and temporary absence from the workplace due to injury or illness does not occur.

## State Legislation:

- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) (ADA)*

The ADA outlines that it is unlawful in Queensland to discriminate, either directly or indirectly, against a person on the basis of, inter alia, their disability. Anti-discrimination obligations relate to the areas of education and employment. The ADA also establishes the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland, a body capable of receiving and hearing complaints in relation to disability discrimination.

## Guidelines/Standards:

- *AVCC Guidelines relating to Students with a Disability (May 2006)*

The Guidelines are underpinned by a set of key general principles that encompass university policy and administration, teaching and learning, and campus life and services and are designed to assist universities to fulfil their responsibilities to students with a disability through strategies and arrangements appropriate to each university's local circumstances.

- *Disability (Access to Premises – buildings) Standards 2010*

These standards were formulated under the DDA. The purpose of the Standards is to ensure greater and dignified access to and use of buildings for persons with disability and also provide certainty to the building industry. The Standards provide a practical and on-going means to improved building access. The Standards achieve this by requiring that all new buildings, together with modifications of existing buildings that require a building approval, meet the standards.

- *Disability Standards for Education 2005*

The *Disability Standards for Education 2005* were formulated under the DDA to clarify the obligations of education and training providers to ensure that students with disabilities are able to access and participate in education and training on the same basis as those without disability.

- *University of Queensland Policy and Procedures*

The University of Queensland has a number of policies and procedures that inform this Plan. For more information about these policies, please refer to the UQ [Policy and Procedures Library](#).

- *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 Level AA*

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA covers a wide range of recommendations for making Web content more accessible. Following these guidelines will make content accessible to a wider range of persons with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing loss, learning disabilities, cognitive limitations, limited movement, speech disabilities, photosensitivity and combinations of these. Conformance with Level AA of WCAG 2.0 is recommended by the Australian Human Rights Commission as well as federal and state government guidelines and standards.

## Appendix 2 – Key Definitions

**Access(ability):** People’s ability to participate in the life of the University including its teaching, learning, research, employment, physical, virtual communication environments.

**Disability:** A condition or state of being which is covered by the broad Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) definition. The term includes; physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual and neurological disabilities, physical disfigurement and the presence in the body of organisms causing or capable of causing disease, such as HIV, and includes both permanent and temporary conditions.

**Inherent Requirement:** Inherent requirements are the core activities, tasks, skills and/or components that are essential to a workplace in general, to a specific position or completion of a course of study. The onus is on the University to show that inherent requirements exist in a job or course of study, based on substantive and defensible rationales, not merely traditional practice. Reasonable workplace accommodation/adjustments or study accommodation/adjustments can assist candidates, staff or students meet the inherent requirements of a position or course of study. Understanding the inherent requirements of a specific job or course of study will demonstrate how much job customisation is possible.

**Reasonable Accommodation/Adjustment:** This is defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as the necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments which do not impose a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, in order to ensure that persons with disabilities can enjoy or exercise all human rights and fundamental freedoms on a substantively equitable basis with others. In the education environment this may be a measure or action (or group of) that assists the student with a disability to participate on the same basis as a student without a disability and can include an aid, a facility, or a service that the student requires because of the functional consequences of their disability (DSE 2005 pp 9 – 20).

**Reasonable adjustments for students** are measures taken to enable students to participate on the same basis (DSE 2005, p9) as a student without a disability in areas of the University’s operations, including:

- admission and enrolment,
- academic activities,
- curriculum development, assessment and certification requirements,
- physical access to buildings and facilities,
- information access,
- support services.

Reasonable adjustments are to be provided in consultation with the student, within a reasonable time after notification of the need for adjustments. When making an adjustment it is reasonable for the University to “maintain the academic requirements of the course that are inherent in or essential to its nature” DSE 2005 p11, however, this does not mean that all assessment or activities must be the same for all students.

**Reasonable adjustments for staff** means the University will provide staff with reasonable workplace adjustments, to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to participate on a substantially equal basis in all aspects of workplace life, especially in regard to the following:

- recruitment and performance of duties,
- benefits and conditions,
- professional and career development,
- physical access to buildings and facilities,
- access to information.

Once a reasonable adjustment is made, the principles of merit and academic standards apply.

The DDA and Disability Standards for Education 2005 provide exceptions to the obligation to provide reasonable adjustments including where the provision of adjustments or measures would impose unjustifiable hardship on the University.

**Universal Design:** Universal design is defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with disabilities as the design of products, environments, programs, and services to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialised design.

Universal design shall not exclude assistive devices for particular groups of persons with disabilities where these are needed. [Universal design](#) is informed by seven principles:

- Principle 1: Equitable use
- Principle 2: Flexibility in use
- Principle 3: Simple and intuitive
- Principle 4: Perceptible information
- Principle 5: Tolerance for error
- Principle 6: Low physical effort
- Principle 7: Size and space for approach and use

## Contact details

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