WYCLIFFE HALL

Disability Equality Policy

Introduction

The purpose of Wycliffe Hall's Disability Equality Policy is to ensure that the needs of disabled persons are taken into account in all aspects of the life of the Hall. It is the intention of Wycliffe Hall to promote equality for disabled people and challenge all forms of discrimination against them.

As a Christian community, we believe that all people have dignity and worth because all people are made in the image of God and beloved by him. As part of our commitment to this truth, we will do all we can to ensure that no one is excluded or disadvantaged in our community because of a disability. We will continue to work towards a fully inclusive environment which takes an appropriate anticipatory approach to the needs of disabled staff, students, and visitors. This means that we will adopt the principles of inclusiveness wherever possible in terms of designing, managing and monitoring the built environment and carrying out the Hall's business. We aim to create a better environment for the entire community and better access for disabled people and users generally.

This Disability Equality Policy sets out the overall policy objectives for improving and addressing disability inequalities, the five core areas that we are concentrating on improving, and action plans for delivering improvements to access and services. The Hall's policy is set within the framework of our statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and related measures; our statement of ethos at the beginning of this document; our equal opportunities policy, which sets the standard for assessing our policies, practices and procedures, and the University of Oxford's Common Framework for Supporting Disabled Students (https://academic.admin.ox.ac.uk/common-framework-for-supporting-disabled-students).

Five core areas are incorporated into the action plan framework. These are

1.   buildings access and the built environment;

2.   communications: including how we communicate with students and staff and providing information in accessible formats;

3.   training: ongoing targeted training and information for all staff so that we are able to

4.   provide a better service and ensure our staff fully understand their responsibilities in relation to the Disability Equality Policy employment: including recruitment and retention of disabled people;

5.   learning support: for both staff and students.

Wycliffe Hall recognises that the Disability Equality Policy has to be a 'living' policy to be effective, and will therefore keep it constantly under review and regularly monitored.

Audit, Monitoring, Training and Review

Audit: Every three years an access audit will be carried by a qualified person which will, in the light of current legislation, statutory guidance and building and health and safety regulations, identify physical barriers to the use of buildings and equipment and determine the actions necessary to deal with them. The Senior Management Team will present a report on the audit, including an action plan, to Hall Council within six months of the outcome of the audit being received.

Monitoring: The Principal will designate a member of staff ('the Disability Lead') with strategic oversight of provision for disabled students, who will work with the Principal and Bursar in overseeing the operation of the Hall's Disability Policy. The Disability Lead will arrange for disabled staff and students to be involved in the monitoring exercise. Through the Disability Lead the Hall will co-operate with the University's arrangements for monitoring and overseeing disability provision.

Training: The Principal and the Senior Management Team will regularly review staff training to ensure that all staff – academic, administrative and support – fully understand their responsibilities under the Hall's Disability Equality Policy and are enabled to fulfil those responsibilities. Particular emphasis will be placed on the responsibility to communicate with students and staff and provide information in accessible formats.

Review: The Hall Council will review its Disability Policy every three years and at such other times as legislative changes, policy guidance or other events require.

Appendix 1: Individual Action Plans for the Five Core Areas

1.   Buildings Access and the Built Environment

The requirements of the Equality Act allocates responsibility to 'Service Providers' and priority has been given to the way services are delivered to ensure disabled people are not treated less favourably. This does not always involve making alterations to buildings.

It is recognised that where physical features in buildings completely prevent or seriously hinder access, sometimes, the only way of delivering a service may be through making alterations to buildings and equipment. Physical features arise from design or construction of a building and any fixtures, fittings and equipment on the premises. This could include paths, entrances, parking, doors, toilets, stairs etc.

a)   Access Audit

An Access Audit has been carried out by a qualified surveyor to identify physical barriers and determine what reasonable adjustments are required to buildings and equipment.

From this audit Access Plans have been put into place. The Access Plans are designed to record adjustments to improve accessibility and are used to identify short, medium and long term targets for addressing problems.

b)   Projects to Alter Physical Barriers

Access Plans assist in prioritising necessary works for improving accessibility to buildings. Many building issues identified within Access Plans (lighting, heating, door furniture, colour contrasts etc.) will be improved as part of an on-going general maintenance and future improvement plan. These will be identified accordingly within the Access Plan.

c)   Standards for New and Existing Buildings

All new buildings will comply with legislation and follow the guidelines for 'BS 8300 Design of Buildings'.

Existing buildings shall, where it is reasonable to do so, be improved to the guidelines within BS 8300.

2.   Communication

There is also an equality statement on the Wycliffe Hall website. This can be found at www.wycliffehall.org.uk/equality-policy.

Induction training for staff will. provide clear standards and advice on:

- Structuring your material
- Using plain English/language
- Clear print
- Signs and signage

- What to do when we receive a request

- Using large print effectively

- Using positive images

- Face to face communications

- Communicating with people with learning disabilities

- Advertising

- Presentations

3. Training

The Senior Management Team has responsibility for our organisational approach to all equality training. In reviewing and developing training, they will take into consideration:

- The social model of disability, which recognises that people are often disabled by barriers in society, rather than by their difference;

- The need for disability equality training to be a consistent and mandatory part of induction for all staff (using University of Oxford materials when available);

- The need for training to encompass all staff irrespective of hierarchy, contracted hours or nature of contract.

4. Employment

Standards to take into consideration:

- Disabled people being guaranteed an interview if they meet the essential minimum requirements for the post.

- Making reasonable adjustments to the working environment to allow disabled applicants to be appointed.

- Ensuring that every support is given to employees who develop a disability.

- Encouraging new and current employees to apply to the Government's Access to Work funding scheme.

5. Learning Support

In line with the University of Oxford's Common Framework for Supporting Disabled Students, the Hall seeks to demonstrate exemplary inclusive practice in all its teaching, recognising that this benefits all students, whether disabled or not and whether or not they choose to disclose a disability. The Hall has appointed a Disability Officer to work with the Disability Lead to coordinate implementation of provision for students.

On application to the Hall, potential students are given the opportunity to declare an SpLD or other disability and are then referred by the Recruitment and Admissions Officer to the Disability Officer. Additionally, students are encouraged to declare disabilities to the Disability Officer during their course.

The University of Oxford has a clearly developed pathway for support for students with a disability. Wycliffe Hall follows Oxford University's Common Framework for Supporting Disabled Students processes and recommendations, which can be found at www.ox.ac.uk/students/welfare/disability. The guidance below therefore only applies to students on University of Durham programmes.

University of Durham students will be referred for a Study Needs Assessment (SNA) if they have declared a disability. In all areas listed below, Wycliffe Hall will follow the recommendations of the Study Needs Assessment.

a) Delivery

Where a student's particular need requires a particular form of support (e.g. room with a hearing loop) or material in advance (e.g. handouts for students with dyslexia), teaching staff will be advised by the Disability Officer.

Most libraries, including the Wycliffe Hall library, will allow students with SpLDs extended loan times. Differentiated reading lists and other guidance are routinely offered by teaching staff.

Lectures (but not seminars) will be recorded where possible, and disabled students who need access to these recordings will be given access to them.

b) Submission of Work

Students who have declared a Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) will be named on a list held by the Academic Administrator. When work is submitted, the Academic Administrator will put an indication on the cover sheet so that the tutor marking the work knows not to penalise the student for errors in their written English, provided those errors do not compromise the students' achievement of the module's learning outcomes.

c) Types of Assessment for Students with SpLDs

i.

The Hall will follow any recommendations made in an SNA for alterations to assessments. These may include, but are not limited to:

  i.   Extensions to deadlines;
  ii.   Extra time in exams;
  iii. Use of a word processer or other adaptive technology in exams;
  iv.   Alterations to the mode of assessment.

VERSION CONTROL					
Version Number	Policy Gatekeeper	Date of Approval	Sub-Committee	Date to Take Effect	Date of Next Major Review
V.2	JRW	24.11.14	Education	24.11.14	Hilary 2017
V 3	KAR		Education		

It is the responsibility of the Gatekeeper of each policy to check annually whether there have been any legislative and/or University policy changes that are relevant to Wycliffe Hall.