Creating a culture of inclusivity for disabled students

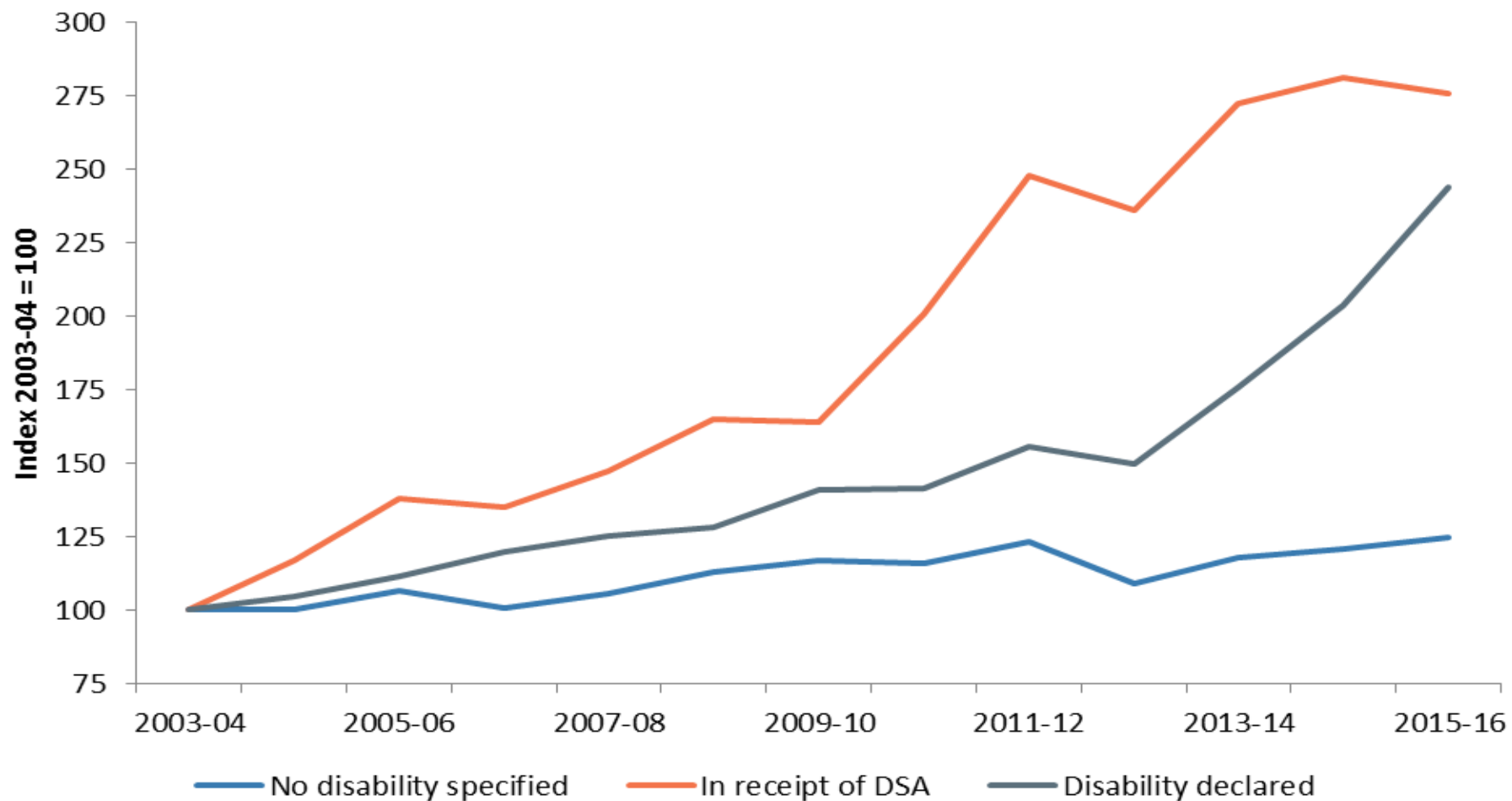**Sarah Howls**

Head of Student Opportunity, HEFCE

NEON

Thursday 15th March 2018

Introduction

- Numbers of disabled students in HE
- Review outline
- Funding
- Inclusive practice and progress to the social model
- What is working well and what are the challenges?

Change in HE student numbers by disability 2003-04 to 2015-16

Source: HESA Student record (2008-09 to 2015-16)

Review of models of support for disabled students

- Survey completed by 105 providers in receipt of at least £20,000 funding for disabled students

- Case study interviews with 13 providers and 59 individuals in various roles

Funding

Changes to external funding result in:

- Drawing on core institutional funds

- A more proactive and anticipatory approach

- More anticipatory approaches sometimes hindered by the need to provide individual support

Increased HEFCE funding was used to :

- Expand disability services and provide additional staff

- Respond to the rapid rise in students with mental health problems

- Provide training and resources

- Expand assistive technologies

- Create/extend dedicated learning support posts

- Improve inclusivity of teaching and learning

Inclusive practice

Inclusive practice is widespread but not consistent:

- 45% say inclusive teaching and learning is embedded on programme and module review

- 52% have an accessibility plan

- 99% have course materials online

- 88% of providers provide lecture notes in advance but only 45% of these do this for all students

- 78% have lecture capture but over half record less than 20% of lectures

- 92% provide alternative assessment but usually on case-by-case basis

- Staff training is widespread but not all staff have mandatory training

Current progress towards the social model

On a scale of 1-10 where 1 is not inclusive and 10 is fully inclusive, how far along do you feel you are in providing an inclusive model of support?
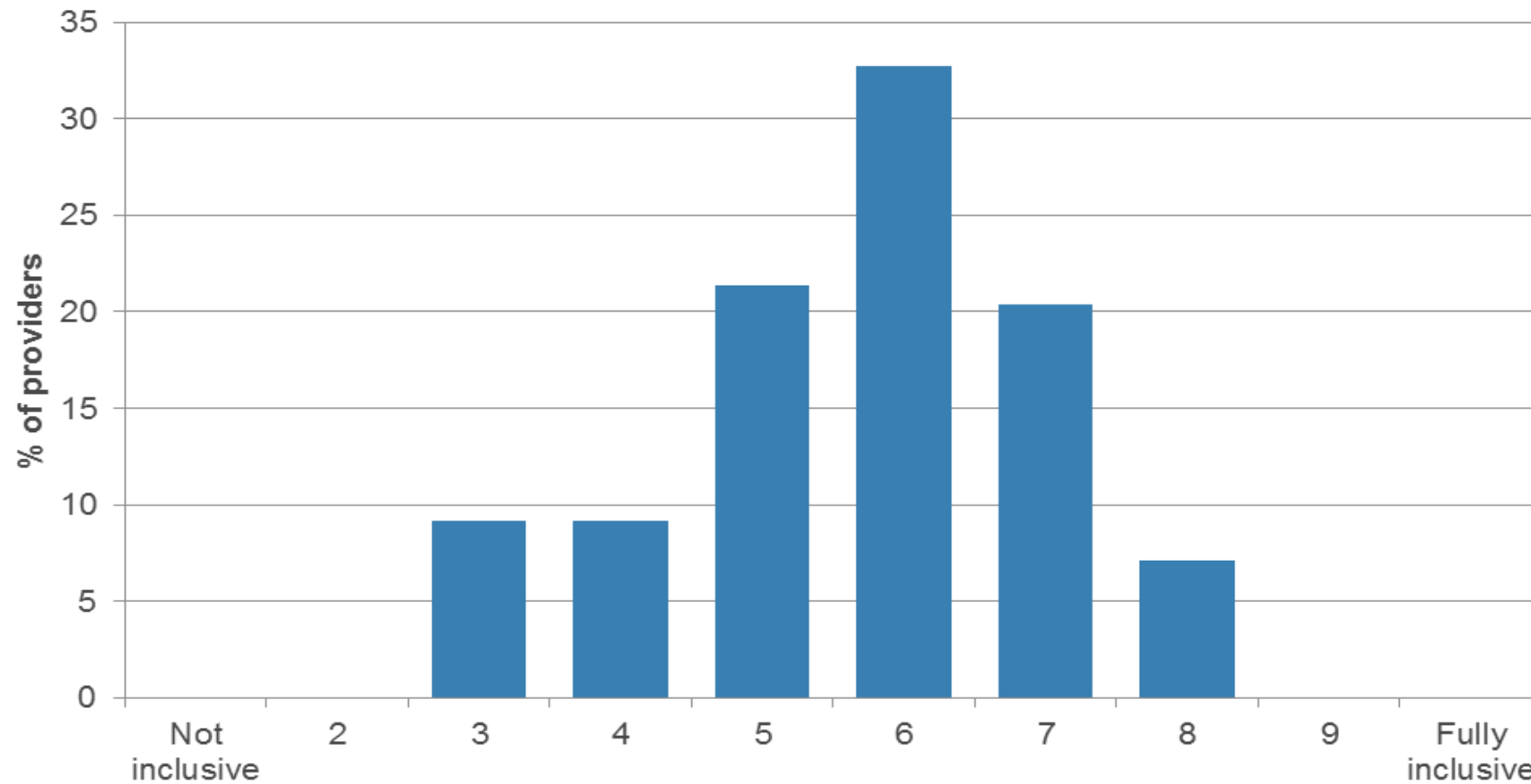
What is going well?

- Training and organisation for staff to support disabled students

- Inclusive curriculum design

- Teaching and learning practices

- Support for mental health

Remaining barriers to the social model

- Greater staff engagement with training (44%)

- Adjustments to estates and technology (38%)

- Inclusive assessments (18%)

- Inclusive teaching and learning (11%)

- Greater consistency across the provider

Review and monitoring

- 85% of respondents had either conducted or were in the process of conducting a review of disability provision

- Providers evaluate their provision through:

  - Student survey feedback

  - Attainment metrics

  - Retention metrics

  - Focus groups

Recommendations

- Use champions to promote inclusive practice

- Guidance on rationale and impact of funding changes

- Identify alternative funding streams

- Support effective use of specialist software

- Improve accessibility of digital resources

- Support further development and use of lecture capture

- Promote greater use of alternative assessments

- Promote culture change to gain staff engagement in include approaches

- Greater clarity of approach to staff training

- Encourage disclosure across student lifecycle

- Establish clear programme of evaluation

Follow us on Twitter at #hefce

Thank you for listening

S.Howls@hefce.ac.uk

hefce

HIGHER EDUCATION
FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND