

Enabling Access to Higher Education for Disabled Learners: How can HE do more?

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Context

- ▶ Global and market forces, shaping higher education institutions
- ▶ Policy rhetoric, widening participation
- ▶ Funding
- ▶ Definitions of disability, are problematic and tend to fixate on what individuals cannot do
- ▶ Broader concerns relating to welfare reform, withdrawal of ILF, problems with WCA, cuts to entitlements, and

Disparities

- ▶ Disabled student, numbers (ECU - 11% (2012/13))
- ▶ DSA - (approx 50.8% of disabled students receive DSA)
- ▶ Student Aspirations
- ▶ Careers service
- ▶ Degree success
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Independence
- ▶ Poverty
- ▶ ...

HE

- ▶ Structural inequalities remain largely uninterrogated
- ▶ Disproportionality with disabled students over-represented in specific subjects, (creative arts, social sciences)
- ▶ Decrease in part-time students, mature students, international students,
- ▶ Decrease in take-up of sub-degrees (Foundation degrees)
- ▶ Teaching/learning and assessment tend to ignore issues of adjustment, socially just pedagogies, and incorporating international/global perspectives
- ▶ Casualisation of academic/support staff
- ▶ Approximately 4.2% are disabled staff (ECU, 2015)
- ▶ Technology, and the use of social learning experiences
- ▶ Employability
- ▶ Reproduction of inequality
- ▶ ...

Barriers

- ▶ Attitudes, labelling
- ▶ Culture (issues of representation)
- ▶ (Segregated) Schooling
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Finance
- ▶ Modern Higher Education participation
- ▶ Self - (social relations)
- ▶ ...

How can HE do more?

- ▶ radical structural change, monitoring progress and implementing disability equality measures (access, participation, equal pay, academic/support staff)
- ▶ removing barriers, attitudinal, cultural, educational, financial, ...
- ▶ educating the HE workforce about social justice, consciousness raising,
- ▶ sharing good practice, empowering (creating space) for disabled people to be engaged in democratic decision-making,
- ▶ deterritorialising spaces, and transformation of the system in totality
- ▶ increasing the visibility of disabled people in public and private, financial, legal, social, economic, political and cultural institutions
- ▶ embracing civic engagement, accountability