University of Wolverhampton

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Supporting Disabled Students over the Student Lifecycle

Professor Geoff Layer

The Purpose of Higher Education

"university places should be available to all who were qualified for them by ability and attainment"

Robbins (1963)

- To enhance individual life chances by encouraging and enabling individuals to develop their own capabilities

- To increase knowledge and understanding to benefit the economy and society

- To serve the needs of an adaptable economy, regionally, nationally and internationally

- To play a major role in shaping a democratic, inclusive society

Dearing (1997)

Inclusive Learning & Practice

"By inclusive learning…we mean the greatest degree of match or fit between the individual learner's requirements and the provision that is made for them"

The Tomlinson Report (1996)

Inclusive practice ……

- Recognises the diversity of students
- Enables all students to access content, participate fully and demonstrate their knowledge and strengths.

Drivers of Change

- TEF - focus on inclusive practice across all provision
- Office for Students
- DSA Reform
- Social Mobility

Summary of recent disability-related changes

- Change to traditional model of supporting individual learner needs.

- Many new students no longer entitled to less specialist support.

- Need for HE providers to develop a more strategic approach to inclusive practice.

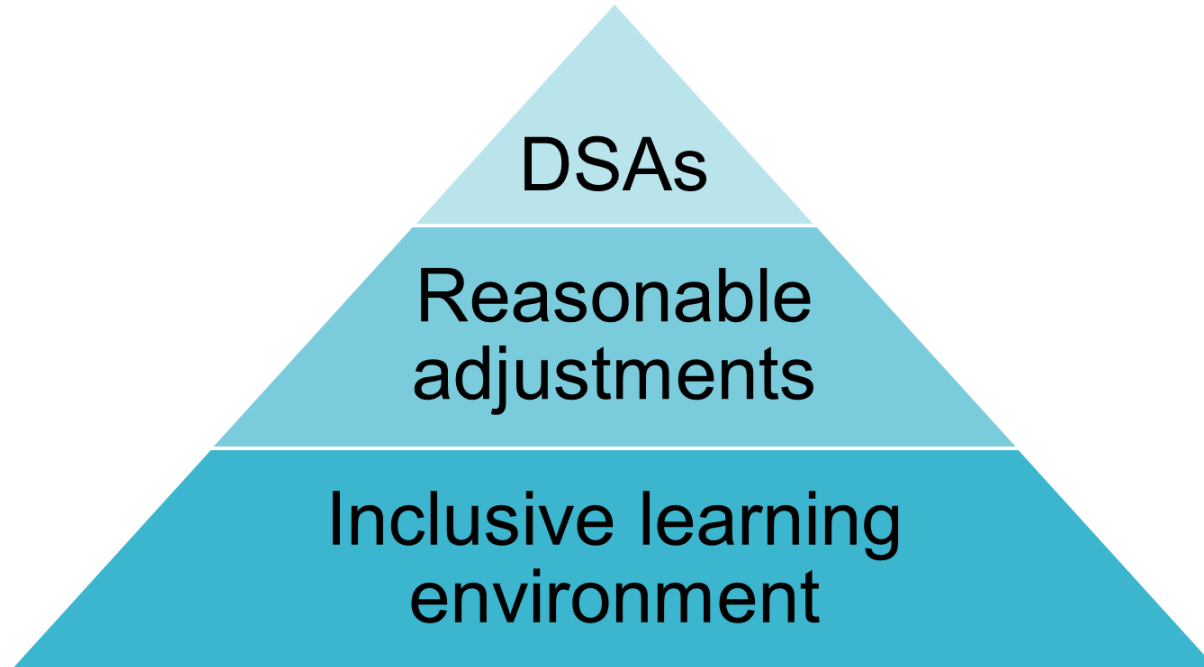- Social mobility a government priority – HE key role.

DSA – A Deficit Model

Student Assessment → Resource (£) → Student Entitlement

The HE 'Triangle Model'

Social Model of Disability

- Disability is caused by the way society is organised, rather than by an individuals' impairment or difference.

- How do we remove barriers that restrict life choices for disabled people? When barriers are removed, disabled people can be independent and equal in society, with choice and control over their own lives.

Inclusive Practice Today

- Inclusive practice is widespread but not consistent.
- Many HE Providers have disability disclosure rates close to 20%.
- Shift in approach needed to one which empowers the learner and is accessible.
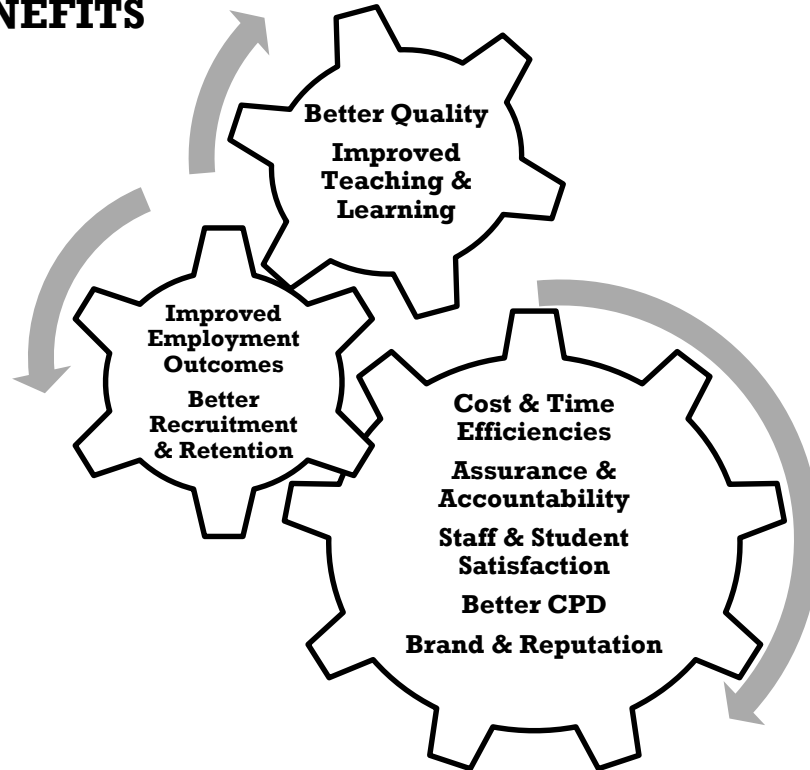- Empower individual learning.

Reasonable Adjustments

- An anticipatory and strategic approach can deliver:
  - A more inclusive learning and working environment.
  - A more inclusive culture.
  - Long term cost and efficiency savings.
  - Independent learners.

INSTITUTIONAL BENEFITS

Better Quality

Improved Teaching & Learning

Improved Employment Outcomes

Better Recruitment & Retention

Cost & Time Efficiencies

Assurance & Accountability

Staff & Student Satisfaction

Better CPD

Brand & Reputation

Good Things Already Happening

- Training and organisation for staff to support disabled students
- Inclusive curriculum design
- Teaching and learning practices
- Support for mental health

Disabled Student Sector Leadership Group (DSSLG)

A range of HE professionals collaborating with Government to improve and incentivise the approach across the HE sector.

- Benefits

- Student Voice

- Inclusive Practice

- Reasonable Adjustments

Inclusive Teaching and Learning in Higher Education as a route to Excellence

January 2017

More Needed incl. Proactive Leadership

- – Commitment and engagement of all senior managers.

- – Proactively promote the benefits of inclusive practice and learning.

- – Support current approaches e.g. HEFCE differential outcomes model in attainment and destination.

- – Use research to inform and enable.

Taking Action & Ownership - ALL

Develop and resource interventions. Review systems and processes.	Adopt the social model. Be holistic and institutional.
Take proactive action and create the conditions to succeed.	Lead by example. Accept long term effect.
Monitor, evaluate and review. Continuous improvement.	Measure in outcomes not spending patterns. Simple actions can effect change.