

Auxiliary Aids And Services

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New duties under DDA Part IV

- The provision of Auxiliary Aids and Services is a new duty under the DDA Part IV - from September 2003
- Although not defined explicitly in the legislation, it can be taken to mean any item or service which, if provided, would enable disabled students to have access to the services offered by the institution.

Some Examples

- A student with an acquired brain injury finds it impossible to orient himself on the campus. He is provided with a hand-held GPS device which assists him with this difficulty - an auxiliary aid
- Alternatively, he is provided with an assistant who accompanies him and guides him around the campus - an auxiliary service

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Does the Distinction Matter?

Implications for:

- logistics and practical possibilities;
- accounting and the stewardship of public money;
- human relationships.

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Practical issues

- Example - A profoundly deaf student from the US uses American Sign Language. It proves to be impossible to secure the services of an American Sign Language interpreter so the university uses recording technology to provide a transcript of the lecture instead.

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Accountancy considerations

- Accountants will treat objects and services differently as an item will be seen as an asset with residual value whereas a service is nearly always discharged by performance.
- Funding bodies may sometimes prefer to fund a service rather than an expensive item as it only needs to be paid for when it is being used.

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The Human Element

- The choice between an aid and a service is likely to have implications for the student.
- The student's view and his or her preferred learning style should be taken into account when choosing which adjustments to make.

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What is required?

Reasonable adjustments, including AAS, must be:

- anticipated
- agreed
- communicated
- resourced
- reviewed
- publicised and
- defended.

Management Issues

- Recognise the legal responsibility and plan accordingly
- Ensure that policies and procedures do not discriminate against disabled students and that robust systems are in place to respond to students' requirements.
- Identify a realistic budget - allow for fluctuating demands