

**Disability and higher education: the changing
landscape
Tom Ward**

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Summary

- **Changes in Government policy**
- **SHEFC support for institutions in relation to disability**
- **Progress in higher education institutions**
- **Future changes in the landscape**

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Changes in Government policy

- **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001**
 - **unlawful for post-16 education providers to discriminate against disabled students and other.**
 - **certain types of reasonable adjustments to provision where disabled students or other disabled people might otherwise be substantially disadvantaged**
 - **duty to make adjustments involving the provision of auxiliary aids and services**
 - **duty to make adjustments to physical features of premises where these put disabled people or students at a substantial disadvantage by 1 September 2005.**
- **Disability Discrimination Act (Amendment) Regulations 2003**

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Changes in Government policy (continued)

- **Ministerial guidance to SHEFC**
 - **January 2004: “The promotion of equal opportunities for staff and students continues as a matter of priority, as is the institutions’ consideration and action on obligations under disability and race relations legislation”**

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Changes in Government policy (continued)

- **Draft bill for the merger of SFEFC and SHEFC**
 - **“The Council must exercise its functions in a manner which encourages equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunity requirements”**

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SHEFC support for institutions in relation to disability

- **SHEFC corporate plan target to promote good practice amongst institutions in complying with disability legislation**
- **Good practice, advice, guidance and staff development**
 - **Scottish Disability Team**
 - **Teachability**
 - **Equality Challenge Unit**
 - **Various other initiatives**

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**SHEFC support for institutions in relation to disability
(continued)**

- **Disabled students premium**
 - **Introduced 2001-02**
 - **To assist institutions with the additional costs in providing additional materials and services for disabled students**
 - **Increased overall allocation from about £1M when introduced, to £1.4M in 2004-05, reflecting increased number of disabled students**

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Progress in higher education institutions

- **Progress in institutions' support for disabled students**
- **Increased number of disabled students at Scottish HEIs**
- **Further development needed**

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What has changed?

- **Legislation – increasing duties on institutions**
- **SHEFC – increased investment in supporting institutions in relation to disability**
- **Sector –progress in supporting disabled students**

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Future changes in the landscape??

- **New duties for institutions (and for SHEFC) - Disability Discrimination Bill**
- **Further improvements in support by institutions**
- **SHEFC continuing to provide institutions with support in relation to disability**
 - **Currently reviewing our models of support**
 - **Review of our approach to widening participation**
 - **Continuing to consult with the sector on the type of support that is needed**

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