Written response to the recommendations from University of Strathclyde

1. General Comments

Like other HEIs, the University is heavily involved in developing additional policies and services on behalf of disabled students and staff, the most recent developments being those which relate to the University’s Disability Equality Scheme:

http://www.strath.ac.uk/disabilityservice/disabilitypolicies/

The University has recently employed additional staff in its Disability Service in order to help deliver its Action Plan for disabled students, and various measures are also being taken in relation to the accompanying Action Plans for staff and the University’s estate. A number of the specific recommendations within the Removing Barriers and Creating Opportunities report are reflected in the University’s DES, including Recommendation 39 (stakeholder feedback), Recommendation 40 (legislative awareness), Recommendation 44 (information), and Recommendation 55 (disclosure).

In addition to the specific comments below, the University welcomes the continuing provision of earmarked premium funding from SFC in relation to disability, and was particularly pleased to note that the funding mechanism for the Disability Premium was adjusted in the manner recommended in Removing Barriers and Creating Opportunities (Recommendation 58). The University also welcomes any specific funding support provided in relation to the major challenge of upgrading buildings to meet appropriate disabled access standards.

The Removing Barriers and Creating Opportunities report is clearly wide-ranging in scope, but the University would make the following specific comments in relation to the report’s recommendations:

2. Recommendation 69: Teachability Project

The University had a central involvement in the Teachability Project and believes that the principles and materials developed through Teachability continue to be highly relevant to the core area of disability and the curriculum. The University would be very willing to discuss funded projects which might further develop and disseminate Teachability.

3. Recommendation 70: Residential Facilities

The University has taken steps to make customised accommodation available for disabled students and naturally agrees that any upgrade or provision of new halls of residence should include consideration of including high quality, accessible accommodation for disabled students.
4. **Recommendations 48 and 54: Careers Advice**

The University’s Careers Service fully supports these recommendations and works closely with the Disability Service and other Departments in providing the best possible careers support to disabled students. This will be supported by enhanced data-gathering on the destination of disabled graduates and research into disabled students’ career aspirations.

5. **Recommendation 52: Early Starts and Familiarisation**

The University’s Disability Service already takes various steps to ease the transition into HE of disabled students (e.g. this year a special transition course was provided for students with Asperger’s Syndrome), and continuing discussions are being held with those responsible for recruitment and schools/colleges liaison to explore possible additional steps.

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