Department of Accounting and Finance

Teachability – Creating an Accessible Curriculum for Disabled Students

1. Background information about the department

The department of Accounting and Finance (A&F) is committed to working within the ethos of the Strathclyde Business School and the wider university with respect to its teaching, research and knowledge exchange. A&F offers undergraduate and postgraduate (taught and research) programmes.

The department is located in the Curran Building on levels 3 and 4. Access is by stairway or lift which are adjacent to the Orbit refectory. The lift is spacious with ample room for a wheelchair. There are toilet facilities for women on level 3 and for men on level 4. Both have facilities for physically disabled students.

Undergraduate teaching consists of two full-time principal subject degree programmes BA Accounting and BA Finance. Also students study A&F combined with the BSc degrees in Maths and Statistics, IBML and TBS. The A&F department also delivers a number of Masters programmes in Finance, Finance and Banking, and International Accounting & Finance.

The reference points for academic standards are:

- The QAA (2007) subject benchmarking statements for Accounting, and for Finance
- Qualifications Framework for Scotland (January 2001)
- Professional Advisory Panel
- External Practitioners comments
- Standards necessary for accreditation by AACSB and EQUIS (undergraduate Finance was specifically examined in the recent reaccreditation visit).
- The undergraduate Accounting programme is fully accredited for entry to the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland (ICAS) and receives and annual accreditation (as well as offering exemptions to other professional bodies, e.g. Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA) and Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA))
- All summative work is assessed with regard to the Universal Marking Guide (Assessment Descriptors) provided by the University

Everything that appears in the following report applies equally to undergraduate and postgraduate students.

The department’s teaching and learning strategy employs a variety of approaches. Students learn through directed reading, independent reading, formal class contact in lectures, practical workshops, and the use of electronic resources. All classes contain a coursework element. This may consist of class tests, individual assignments, group projects and empirical research projects. The assessment is supported by tutorial work and computer labs.
Our classes are devised and delivered in a manner so that, as far as possible, all students have an equal opportunity to achieve the required competence standards.

Teaching and learning in the department does not include any field work or placements, apart from an annual visit to BAE by Accounting students in year 4, which may potentially pose some access problems given the rigorous health and safety requirements on the BAE site. There have been no difficulties so far but should an accessibility issue arise we would engage in full discussion with BAE to make arrangements to overcome it. If a particular site poses problems that cannot be overcome then we would arrange for a visit, by all students, to an alternative venue offering with equivalent academic benefits.

We are aware that there are other aspects of the teaching and learning process that could potentially place disabled students at a disadvantage, and have therefore taken steps to remove any barriers to teaching and learning, both in a proactive manner and with guidance from the University’s Disability Service, and with regard to the requirements of individual students that are outlined on Pegasus.

All members of staff and tutors have been informed of the relevant legislation and the University’s Disability Equality Scheme. Though it is left to individuals to read the legislation, the key points have been emphasised and discussed in departmental teaching committee meetings. All staff and tutors have been informed (and are regularly reminded) of the Pegasus system which outlines the adjustments that should be made for disabled students in their classes. The DDC provides a strong backup by checking through all classes on Pegasus, and then ensuring that all relevant staff and tutors are aware of the requirements. In practice most staff rely on the DDC to take the lead in providing the necessary information and reminders. Teaching staff are required to make a statement on Teachability in their annual reviews of the classes they have taught. (Examples from 2008/09 are in Appendix 1).

If staff, or the DDC, are unable to manage a particular situation or require additional resources and/or advice, then the matter is discussed with the Head of Department. The HoD has made it clear to all staff that he wishes to be consulted on these matters.

We try ensure that all students are aware of the departmental support that is available in the following ways. All hardcopy information are available electronically on the department’s website or on LearnOnline.

1. Department student handbook: All first year students are given a department handbook which contains information regarding provisions for disabled students and who they should contact if they wish to discuss any requirements they may have, whether or not they are registered as disabled. These meetings are carried out in private, on a one to one basis with the DDC.

2. E-mail: The DDC sends the following e-mail to every student at the start of each academic year, and repeats it periodically:

‘Dear All
I am emailing all students taking any classes in the Department of Accounting & Finance, academic year 2008-09.

If you have any specific requirements that you would like me to be aware of or if you require any teaching material in alternative formats etc please feel free to contact me by email at
any time. If you would like to come and see me to discuss any requirements you may have please email me to make an appointment to see me.

I hope your studies are going well'

3. In lectures: The following slide is put up in the week 1 lectures (Powerpoint, Ariel 32 font):

‘Any students who feel they have individual requirements or are registered as disabled should go to see Jillian D'Agostino in the Department of Accounting and Finance on the 3rd floor of Curran Building as soon as possible.

Alternative formats of teaching materials are available on request. Please contact the departmental office as above’

The lecturer talks through the slide, and repeats its message in weeks 2 and 3 for students who missed the first class or who have changed classes.

4. Class outlines are handed out in lectures. There is a footer on every page stating:

‘Please contact Jillian D'Agostino in the departmental office of Accounting and Finance if alternative formats of teaching materials are required or if you need any other assistance’

5. The department encourages students, when necessary, to seek the support of the University Support Services, including the Disability Service and the Student Advisory & Counselling Service. Information on all the University Support Services is included in the Departmental Handbook.

2. What data (qualitative and quantitative) did your department have about possible barriers facing disabled students in teaching and assessments before your department’s review of accessibility of teaching and assessment?

The table shows the number of registered disabled students on our courses for the last three academic years.

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<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
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<tr>
<td>First Year</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>Second Year</td>
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<td>Third Year</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>Honours</td>
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<td>MSc (Postgraduate)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
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The required adjustments for these students were checked on Pegasus. Some of the students responded at various times to the DDC’s e-mails, and private meetings were arranged.

On the basis of the Pegasus information and meetings with students, arrangements were made so that barriers were removed, or were overcome, as discussed elsewhere in this report. The ways in which staff and tutors are informed of the adjustments that should be made are outlined under heading 1 of this report, and the various steps that were taken are outlined under heading 4, and exemplified in the class reviews (see Appendix 1).

3. Outline the procedure you used to conduct your review of the accessibility of your curriculum design and delivery for disabled students.

The department holds staff-student committee meetings on a regular basis, at least once per semester, to receive feedback from all students on the teaching process. Student representatives attend these meetings having canvassed the views of students in the class. The DDC also e-mails students who may not have expressed their views to the class representatives. This ensures the views of disabled students are taken into account should they wish to express any. The minutes of the meetings and the staff responses are posted on the department’s website.

Departmental teaching committee meetings are held throughout the academic year to discuss important issues that may have arisen, including teachability. However, it is always on the agenda at the meetings held at the start and at the end of the academic year. At the start of the year meeting, staff are reminded of their responsibilities with respect to disabled students, the relevant legislation, the University’s DES, the information on Pegasus, and that they will be required to report on this in their end of year class reviews (examples in Appendix 1).

The reminders sent to staff include an overview of accessibility are structured along the following lines.

Accessible lectures

After checking the requirements of disabled students each lecturer will make arrangements to overcome as far as possible any barriers that might arise from the teaching process. This varies between classes, but in the main it involves some or all of the following:

- Providing lecture notes in advance, and in an alternative format if requested.
- Providing all the notes electronically on LearnOnline
- Stating at the end of the lectures in weeks 1-3, and periodically thereafter, that if any student has struggled with the form of the overhead slides, the notes, or any other aspect of the lecture material, they can meet with the lecturer in office hours to discuss how best their needs can be met (or this can be done though the DDC if preferred).
- Microphone used by lecturer if required
• Students permitted to use dictaphones if required (after consulting the lecturer who is aware of any requirements in that respect).
• Requesting access to large font textbooks in the library – see Appendix 3 for more information on this.
• Permission for note taker in class

The above provisions are relatively straightforward. Students with more profound disabilities may pose a greater challenge to the teaching process. For example, if a student is unable to attend all the lectures due the physical effort of regular attendance then one-to-one meetings with the lecturer are arranged to bring the student up to date with the progress of the class, and to resolve any other problems that may have arisen from the lectures. Occasionally the DDC will attend these meetings along with the lecturer. A large number of students in this category could potentially pose resource difficulties but it has not imposed an excessive strain on the department, and the extra effort of the staff is matched by the commitment of the students.

When disabled students require helpers to assist in movement around the campus, and in note taking, it is essential to liaise with the helpers, and also with the carers at home. This recently involved, for example, a student sitting some, or parts of, examinations at home. This could potentially conflict with University Regulations, and it would not work without a strong relationship between the department and the parents, or other home carers. This arrangement has only been required for one student so far, and justifiably so. Clearly the department ensured that rigorous supervision was in place to ensure the work was the student's own. Similarly, a student will exceptionally be allowed to take examinations at a later date – although the exam questions are different they cover the same material at the same level as for all students. The department provides a quiet room and appropriate hardware, software, scribe - as required.

Appendix 2 contains recent feedback from disabled students. ‘BA student 1 is from a student for whom we made most of the above or equivalent provisions.

Staff awareness of the adjustments that should be made is illustrated in the specific provisions made by individual lecturers. Extracts from the class reviews 2008/09 are in Appendix 1. Class reviews are completed at the end of each academic year. Each class review includes a statement on teachability, stating the possible impediments to access by disabled students and what arrangements were made to ensure these were overcome.

Accessible seminars and tutorials

Alongside lectures, tutorials are an essential part of the teaching process. Students are given questions to prepare in advance of tutorials, and these are discussed in the tutorial. Some of the tutors are PhD students. As with academic staff, PhD tutors are provided with all the information on adjustments that should be made in their tutorial groups, and hence can make the necessary arrangements. No specific mention is made in the tutorial of adjustments that have been made for disabled students, nor are the students publicly identified. The tutor makes a general statement that if anyone is finding difficulty with the delivery of material in tutorials then please to come along in office hours to discuss with either the tutor, the lecturer or the DDC – or to contact one of these by e-mail.
We recognise possible weaknesses here and our plan for the coming academic year is to hold a meeting of PhD tutors to talk through some of the problems that might arise, for example, some students may have difficulty in answering questions or engaging in discussion which are key elements of tutorials. At present, we try to overcome the difficulty some students may have in speaking publicly by placing students in groups. The group works together on the questions and provides ‘group’ answers and discussion as requested. This usually means a spokesperson for the group that normally changes from week to week although a student’s difficulty may mean he/she is never the spokesperson. The experience of a group dynamic is beneficial and enables all students to contribute, eg by helping with calculations and noting down discussion points. It may not resolve the issue of whether a student who has difficulty speaking in a public forum should be left to remain quiet and perhaps be brought on by the group, or whether something else needs to be done to give the student the experience of speaking and engaging in discussion. If disabled students feel undue pressure they may not turn up for tutorials. Hence, we typically do not single out students who never act as spokesperson.

The department runs a number of computer workshops where students are required to work through questions using Excel. This normally involves accessing data using the mouse and the keyboard. There are two departmental IT support staff present at every workshop who circulate and provide assistance as required. These staff are aware of any registered disabled students in the class, and keep an unobtrusive eye on their ability to cope. Students can be identified by ticking them off on the attendance register. Attendance is compulsory. If students are physically unable to attend on a regular basis, and this applies also to tutorials, they are permitted to do the work at home when it is justified by the disability, in a University computer lab at a different time, or in the department’s small lab - exceptionally a private facility will be made available. This has only been necessary in a very small minority of cases, and it obviously deprives the student of the energy of the workshop and tutorial environments. Hence, we encourage all students to attend if they can. As the completion of exercises and projects using Excel is essential to meeting the competence standards of the class students are also permitted, when justified by the disability, to use customised PCs subject to only having access only to the equivalent software and data.

All material required for tutorials and workshops is provided in advance, and is available electronically on the department’s website, or on LearnOnline.

PhD tutors are supported by the class lecturer and the course director to ensure their tutorials are accessible. The accessibility of tutorials, as outlined above, is discussed in detail with the tutors in the meeting that takes place at the start of the academic year. If a PhD tutor is experiencing particular difficulties with a tutorial then the class lecturer or the course director will jointly take a tutorial with the tutor to demonstrate the ways in which the above principles outlined above can be put into practice. This is done unobtrusively in the sense that the tutees are informed it is standard practice for the lecturer/course director to occasionally visit tutorials.

Accessible examinations and class tests
Disabled students are permitted to take their examinations and class tests in private rooms in the department. This is usually necessary when the student requires one or more of the following:

- Extended time, a scribe, a pc with appropriate software (in exceptional cases they may use their own pc), single room, less crowded & more peaceful environment, regular breaks.

The department is careful to invigilate unobtrusively, and as far as possible to use the same invigilator. This has been commented on positively (see Feedback in Appendix 2).

Students are not penalised for any errors or difficulties that occur as an unavoidable consequence of a disability, eg spelling mistakes, untidy presentation, assessment based on speaking skills, etc. The University has a policy of anonymous marking for examinations, and we have decided to place a sticker on the front of examination scripts to indicate to the marker(s) that the student is disabled student but which does not identify the person. This will be carried out by the DDC following the examination when the script has been handed in.

As far as possible rooms for sitting exams privately are made available in the department. Should the department run out of room space for this, then the DDC contacts the University’s room booking service to find a suitable room.

**Visit to BAE**

This is a regular visit by 4th year Accounting students to BAE. It is not part of students’ assessment. The students present a case on planning and control, and receive feedback from senior staff at BAE. The visit includes a tour of the site which is governed by highly restrictive health and safety regulations. Although this has not yet occurred it potentially excludes students with physical disabilities. As outlined in section 1 the department will enter discussions with BAE should a problem arise, with a view to overcoming it. If, following discussions, BAE were to deny access to any student then an alternative venue, with scope for generating equivalent educational benefit, will be arranged for all students.

**4. What aspects of course or curriculum design or delivery have you identified as potentially disadvantaging to some or all disabled students?**

Relative to the department most of this is covered in section 3 above.

Individual departments are invariably best placed, in the majority of cases, to identify and meet the specific requirements of students. The department has worked hard to achieve this, especially the DDC.

With regard to overall University arrangements we encourage the centre to recognise more explicitly some of the difficulties students face in moving quickly around the campus, eg location and timing of classes, the layout and accessibility of certain rooms, AV facilities, and the provision of smaller quieter rooms for examinations. We discuss our requirements with the centre whenever the need arises.
5. Outline your department’s plans for improving accessibility of teaching and assessment, with projected timescales.

- Continue to improve the awareness of all staff of the University Disability Equality Scheme and the relevant legislation, and the associated responsibilities of staff. This will be carried out at the Teaching Committee meeting September 2009, and regularly in these meetings at least once per semester.

- Provide more guidance and help to PG and other non-staff tutors. The provision in lectures is universal whether students are registered disabled or not. Customised notes and other class materials are available on request to all students. In tutorials it is not so straightforward, especially when they mainly involve group work and class discussion. A meeting of PG tutors with the DDC and other designated DOs in the department, to discuss all aspects of accessible teaching, will become a regular event prior to the start of the teaching year.

- Improve understanding of staff of the copyright rules in providing material to students, eg the extent to which we can print or provide electronic copies of articles when it otherwise requires disproportionate time and effort for disabled students. Staff will be required to access:
  
  http://www.strath.ac.uk/secretariat/copyright/

  to check that any arrangements with respect to the provision of material to students do not breach copyright law.

- Improve all staff and tutor knowledge of exactly what is available from the centre such as the University Central Scanning Service, and the guidance provided by the Disability Service Notes of Information. This improvement in knowledge will come from staff accessing and reading the relevant information at:
  
  http://www.strath.ac.uk/disabilityservice/

- In addition it may be beneficial to invite a disability equality service representative to visit the department and speak to staff in a teaching committee meeting.

- The department was pleased to receive mainly positive feedback from students but we discussed any issues in the autumn teaching committee meeting. One student’s comment was that some staff were not receptive to the idea of taping lectures. It is a reasonable adjustment to allow a student to tape lectures or to agree an alternative acceptable to the student. The matter will be discussed in the autumn teaching committee meeting with a view to adopting this reasonable adjustment as departmental policy. It should be noted that ‘not receptive’ in the above case did not amount to a refusal, but a clear and straightforward departmental policy is desirable. A comment on making students aware of the levels of support available is covered by the department’s current practice – see Section 1.

- The ‘Teachability’ comments from the class reviews will be discussed in a teaching committee meeting, in particular where there were “no comments” or that there were “no problems”. These comments had mainly stemmed from the belief that no adjustments were required beyond those outlined in section 3. For example, a class
will present no particular problems if its format is a conventional lecture plus periodic tutorials, and there is no indication that any adjustments are required beyond those that are routinely provided (see section 3). The department is keen to be made aware of any additional requirements and will continue to encourage students to contact the department in confidence.

- Identify, by the end of week 1, any problems that might arise due to the location or the facilities of a teaching room, and report back to the DDC.

6. **What future arrangements will be in place in your department for reviewing and monitoring accessibility of teaching for disabled students?**

- Teachability to be on the agenda at every departmental teaching committee meeting, and staff meetings, to continuously develop and raise staff awareness.

- Permission to audio tape lectures adopted as departmental policy. The tapes would be for the private use of the student only with the intellectual property rights belonging to the lecturer concerned.

- The use of microphones in large lecture theatres to be adopted as departmental policy. In lecture theatres where the microphone has a fixed position the lecturer will ensure all salient points are communicated from that position. Alternatively, the lecturer will use a mobile microphone. In small lecture theatres the use of microphones will not be routine as it can sometimes impair the clarity of communication. This will be determined on a case by case basis, and students are invited to discuss this with the departmental contact.

- Meeting with PG tutors every year before teaching starts, and at least once more during the teaching year, to raise their awareness of teachability, and to talk through their approaches to teaching in tutorials.

- Continue to include teachability as an important element in class reviews, and encourage more feedback and constructive comments from staff regarding the design and delivery of classes.

- Continue with a system of a departmental designated disability contact (DDC), with support from designated disability officers (DDOs) for each UG principal subject (Accounting and Finance) and from the MSc programmes.

- Continue to exhort all staff to check with Pegasus on a regular basis.
Appendix 1  Comments on Teachability taken from individual class reviews 2008/09

AG101 Accounting Fundamentals/AG104 Introduction to Finance

There a few physical access problems for the class teaching facilities. No students are registered on Pegasus as requiring support under disability provisions during the current academic year. Second semester lectures take place in K325 and C133, which have easy elevator access from ground level of the respective buildings. Tutorial workshops take place in a range of teaching rooms across the university and students encountering physical access problems can easily be accommodated by a tutorial room change where necessary.

Students required large print copies of the teaching material are asked to contact the department at the beginning of the class in order that appropriate arrangements can be made. At the same time, class teaching material is typically posted to learnonline one week prior to the relevant lecture, such that students can download this material and make appropriate modifications that they may require if they wish to do so.

AG102 Finance Fundamentals

6 students are registered as disabled, with disabilities including visual, auditory and reading and writing disabilities.

Measures taken in class to assist:

- In the first lecture in both semesters, the slide prepared by Jillian is brought to students’ attention, indicating that if they do require assistance, they should contact Jillian
- All material is provided on learn on-line in typed format and if required by the student, it will be provided in an alternative format
- Lecture slides are prepared using power point
- Microphone is used in class
- Additional requirements for exams are managed by Jillian and brought to lecturers’ attention prior to marking and the nature of disability is also discussed to make necessary allowances for marking exams
- Reading material was identified well in advance of course commencing and it was arranged through the library to have this prepared in large font (including prescribed text books)

AG103 Introduction to Accounting

No teachability comments

AG200 Regulation of Accounting

Teachability:
This class does not create any specific problems for students with special needs. One student required the lecture notes in a different format and these were provided in advance of each week’s lecture.

AG201 Cost Accounting

All class materials - lecture slides, tutorial questions, tutorial solutions, copies of articles referred to in lectures - were made available on LearnOnline for reading or download. The class outline issued in the first lecture stated “Alternative formats of teaching materials are available on request. Please contact Jillian D’Agostino in the departmental office of Accounting and Finance”. There were no disclosed disabled students in the class.

AG202/206 Business Finance/Business Finance (Accounting)

There a few physical access problems for the class teaching facilities. Lectures take place in McCance 1, which has easy elevator access from the ground floor of the building and directly into
the lecture theatre. Tutorial workshops take place in a range of teaching rooms across the university and students encountering physical access problems can easily be accommodated by a tutorial room change where necessary.

Students required large print copies of the teaching material are asked to contact the department at the beginning of the class in order that appropriate arrangements can be made. At the same time, class teaching material is typically posted to LearnOnline one week prior to the relevant lecture, such that students can download this material and make appropriate modifications that they may require if they wish to do so.

**AG203 Value Theories**

The class is delivered as a series of interactive workshop during which the students are required to work in groups. Group activities may involve readings, research, discussion/ debate, design and planning presentations. No task is compulsory for any one students, students are encouraged to negotiate how they will contribute to the group effort. In particular, group work provides students the opportunity to prepare for the mid semester class assignment which is group based (report and presentation). A full lecturer led briefing is provided on working in groups and assessment of individual contributions within the group, this includes reference to working within the skills and constraints of group members and taking into account any potential disabilities (disclosed or undisclosed). Briefing notes on group work are included in the course pack. All class presentations are made available on the Faculty Virtual Learning Environment.

**AG204 Portfolio Theory**

There was one disabled student noted for this class in Pegasus. There were no problems in providing the necessary requirements for this student in this class.

**40234 Financial Analysis**

All class materials - lecture slides, tutorial questions, tutorial solutions, copies of articles referred to in lectures - were made available on LearnOnline for reading or download. The class outline issued in the first lecture stated “Alternative formats of teaching materials are available on request. Please contact Jillian D’Agostino in the departmental office of Accounting and Finance”. There was one disclosed disabled student requiring extra time and larger font size materials for tests/exams and this was well looked after within the department.

**AG205 Financial Modelling**

There were no disabled students for this class on Pegasus.

**AG300 Management Decision Making & Control**

No teachability comments

**AG301 Advanced Financial Accounting**

The room the class is held in is suitable, there is good access by lift and there is space in the room near the front which would suit most people.

There was one student with special needs this year and she got the class material in advance as required.

**40311 Taxation**

No teachability comments
40318 Accounting Information Systems
No teachability comments

40320 Auditing
This class does not create any particular problems for students with special needs.

AG302 Security Analysis
There were 2 disabled students attending the class. Since one of those students required the class notes and tutorial questions to be available before the lecture, the material was printed and made available to be collected in the department before the Monday lecture. Both students (this is true for all students) had also access to all the class material through WebCT. In terms of examinations both students were entitled to extra time and did their examinations on a specially designated room.

AG303 Empirical Methods in Finance
There were no disabled students for this class on Pegasus.

40334 Financial Markets
No teachability comments

40335 Topics in Corporate Finance
1 student was registered as disabled, with a writing disability.

Measures taken in class to assist:

- In the first lecture in both semesters, the slide prepared by Jillian is brought to students’ attention, indicating that if they do require special assistance, they should contact Jillian
- All material is provided on learn on-line in typed format and if required by the student, it will be provided in an alternative format
- Lecture slides are prepared using power point
- Microphone is used in class
- Additional requirements for exams are managed by Jillian and brought to lecturers’ attention prior to marking and the nature of disability is also discussed to make necessary allowances for marking exams
- Student may use a Dictaphone to record lectures

40361 Treasury Management
There are no particular problems for students who have any disability problems on this course.

On the lecture handouts it is made clear that alternative forms of this information are available.

There was one student who received additional time in the examination and this was provided.
Appendix 2  Feedback from disabled students

The following questionnaire was sent to students

As part of the process of receiving feedback from students could you answer some questions for us please? We are especially interested in feedback from students who are registered with special requirements.

The questions relate to ways in which we teach our classes, and the methods of assessment. Any comments that you have will be greatly appreciated.

1. Were there any aspects of our teaching and assessment methods that posed any problems for you? If so, can you specify what these were please?
2. Do you feel that the department was receptive to your needs in making teaching and assessment fully accessible? Please specify if you can.
3. Do you feel that you were disadvantaged in any way, or that your learning opportunities and assessment requirements placed you on an equal footing with the student body as a whole?
4. What aspects of the department’s provision are you especially positive about?
5. Are there any ways in which you feel the department could improve accessibility to teaching and learning.

Response BA student 1

1. Implications of disability on teaching methods: physical access to lectures/tutorials in terms of both building accessibility and timetabling; note-taking ability during lectures/tutorials.

Implications of disability on assessment methods: ability to complete timed exams within set durations; means of answering exam questions; practicalities of group-working with fellow students; ability to verbally present/discuss issues in tutorial setting.

2. Very much so. Physical access to lectures/tutorials accommodated by re-arranging lectures/tutorials as much as possible to suit my requirements; issue of note-taking during lectures/tutorials resolved by providing more-detailed lecture notes and additional access to lecturers either face-to-face or by email (latter was especially useful) to follow up on topics discussed in previous lecture.

Issue of completing exams within set durations resolved by permitting amount of extra time enabling me to answer questions to satisfactory level of detail, and latterly by reacting to increasing demands of Honours exams by splitting sittings to reduce physical impact; means of answering exam questions accommodated by allowing me to mix written with typed to maximise answering efficiency; group-working resolved by providing option for individual submission; issue of presenting resolved by being flexible and non-pressurising about my contribution to group discussions/presentations.
3. Much leveler playing field once above accommodations were implemented. Total equality impossible, e.g. making room in daily schedule for extra hours required for coursework completion unavoidable burden if degree to be completed within 4 years (my choosing!). However, provisions made by department levelled playing field as much as realistically possible.

4. Being very much a two-way process and learning curve for both of us, I was particularly impressed by the department’s on-going transparent communication in monitoring the effectiveness of current arrangements, its responsiveness in adjusting these arrangements, and its pre-emption/planning of potential future requirements.

5. No constructive criticism required for Accounting & Finance department (5 stars all-round!). Felt however that other departments lacked same level of initial awareness and pro-active willingness to identify/accommodate my requirements. My involvement with other departments was relatively brief, thus in fairness, this may have improved through time.

Response BA student 2

1. I found that the issuing of class notes, unlike other subjects, was especially helpful since I was able to concentrate on the lecture without frantically writing things down. I received a dictaphone and that was available to play back lectures. I thank you for allowing me to use it and had no problems in lecture rooms. I had a few problems with the finance part in semester one: I found it harder to hear in John Anderson but easier in McCance. However I will try to address any problems next year and should there be any problems I will contact the department or disability service.

2. I found the department made efforts to help my needs however I do not wish to receive extra benefits I may not need. The department kept in regular contact unlike some others and I felt that all was done and the rest was my responsibility.

3. As shown by my results I believe I could have performed better however I believe that was more down to me than any external problems. As I said earlier I found problems in semester one but I think that was down to me not using what I had available however should I find difficulties again next year I will contact you.

4. As explained earlier I found the regular contact and issuing of class notes beneficial throughout first year.

5. Thanks for your help during the year and I look forward to returning in October.

Response BA student 3

1. I had no specific problems with the assessment methods within the department. I did on occasion find that certain lecturers were less receptive to the idea of their lectures being taped.

2. The department in general were always extremely helpful and accommodating when it came to meeting my needs

3. I never felt disadvantaged with my assessment arrangements, if anything I found the way in which members of the department made me feel relaxed, and their helpfulness, actually advantaged me in assessment sitting

4. It was good that all the assessments took place in the same location and that it was generally the same invidulator as it reduced the feeling of being segregated, and it allowed for a basic rapore to be built.

5. No, I believe the department does everything within their power to help you in your teaching requirements. I just didn't realise the level of help was actually available in my first year of the course. It would possibly have been helpful if all students with
disabilities had meetings with either the department disability person or other students in a similar position as part of their induction to the university, so as to make them aware of the levels of support which is available.

Response BA student 4
1. No i had no problems, I was offered alot of support.
2. Yes, the department provided me with alot of help and provided me with everything I needed.
3. I felt that the help I was provided with made me equal to the other students.
4. I thought it was good that the department provided the efficient requirments that each individual student needed.
5. No I felt that everything I needed was provided.

Response BA student 5
1. I had no problems with any part of the teaching assessment methods
2. Yes, i found the department vary helpful and always willing to make the necessary arrangements
3. I feel that I was on an equal footing as the rest of the student body as a result of my assessment requirements
4. there willingness to make the necessary arrangements
5. No I feel that they have a very successful method of dealing with students like myself

Response MSc student 6
1. No major problems, the only issue for me is taking notes, but I felt the handouts where good enough so this was not a problem.
2. Yes, I had no problems with the department at all. The same was the case for my undergraduate degree.
3. No, I felt I had the same learning opportunities as the rest of my class
4. They provided the facilities I needed quickly and efficient and were very helpful in every aspect.
5. No

Response MSc student
1. No everything was fine
2. Yes they always communicated well regarding extra time and where to sit my exams.
3. Yes I think so.
4. The open communication and Barbara's assurance that I could discuss and needs I might have.
5. Everything without exception should be accessible to download from Learn Online.
Appendix 3 – Large font textbooks

We have limited experience of this as the requests have been few. However, it is possible in some cases to obtain large font textbooks. With the department’s support a student can make a request to the library. The department will support the request if the book is an essential core text. The library will then contact the publisher. The process can take some time however, and depends ultimately on the publisher's willingness to do it.

In the past McGraw-Hill have agreed to do this for one of our core texts, and it seems other mainstream publishers will be willing to do it if pushed by the library. We were informed that considerable advance notice is usually required as it can take anything up to 12 weeks to get the text from the publisher.

Students should therefore make the request as early as possible.