

**LA TROBE UNIVERSITY**

**DISABILITY ACTION PLAN**

**2018 – 2020**

## Introduction

La Trobe was founded half a century ago to broaden participation in higher education in Melbourne's north and, later, in regional Victoria. With a history for doing things differently. We have brought higher education to communities previously denied the chance to study at university. As a result, La Trobe today is unique amongst Australian universities in the extent to which we combine accessibility to students and succeeded for many thousands of students who would otherwise have been excluded from the opportunities provided by a university education.

We continue to support access, diversity and inclusivity while undertaking world-class research that aims to address the global forces shaping our world and make a difference to some of the world's most pressing problems, including climate change, securing food, water and the environment, building healthy communities, and creating a more just and sustainable future.

This approach is based on our values of inclusiveness, diversity, equity and social justice while pursuing excellence and sustainability in everything we do and being willing to innovate and disrupt the traditional way of doing things. Of all Australian universities, we are the most successful at combining accessibility and excellence, and have become a place where social inclusion and globally recognised excellence come together for the benefit of our students, our staff and our communities.

While we strive to be exemplars for the sector in our commitment to equity and inclusivity for marginalised groups including people with disability with approximately 7% of the student population identified through the enrolment process as having a disability or registering with the disability support services, our new Strategic Plan 2018-2020 aims to connect more students and communities to the world outside, while meeting the needs of our diverse student body and holding each other to account to work to the highest standards.

This Disability Action Plan covers a number of short term outcomes over the next two years, with diversity as the key strategy in building a high performing workforce and re-orienting students towards learning outcomes.

With a long term goal to transcend avoidance of discrimination to one that strives for inclusiveness and harnesses diversity, the University aims to mobilise our research capacity by recommending a suitable group of experts to guide disability data collection, service delivery, policy and planning.

The University reports annually to the University Council on the outcomes achieved against objectives and targets for each year of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan, its Operational Plan, and the annual Outcomes (outcomes achieved against the Strategic Plan) documents can be viewed on the La Trobe University website: [www.latrobe.edu.au](http://www.latrobe.edu.au).

These documents contribute to the framework for the Disability Action Plan. The Action Plan will be a live document and will be revised from time to time.

## **Format of this Action Plan**

The format of this Action Plan is as follows:

1. Principles
2. Aims
3. Expected outcomes
4. Communication
5. Monitoring and evaluation
6. Review
7. Brief overview of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*.
8. Strategic direction of the University
9. Strategies, method, responsibility and timelines for this Action Plan

## Principles

La Trobe University is committed to a principle of equal opportunity in education and employment. As an employer and an educator, the University seeks to offer an outstanding experience from its inclusive structures and practices affecting staff and students with disabilities.

Within the framework of the DDA, the University aims to take reasonable steps to accommodate the needs of staff and students with a disability, to continue to improve its provision of services to staff and students with disabilities including aiming to be a university where people with disability can thrive and be their best, being a partner of choice and offering an outstanding student experience.

### 1. Aims

This Action Plan builds on the considerable progress the University has already made in regard to people with disability. Over the past few years, the University has contributed significant funds to improving the physical access and infrastructure at all of its campuses and will continue to do so. Through relevant planning and policy documents, increased staff awareness about their responsibilities and obligations towards people with disabilities as required in anti-discrimination legislation, has improved the support provided to people with disabilities. However, from comments from staff and students undertaken as part of the consultation process, it is apparent that there are still some improvements to be made. The strategies outlined in this Action Plan endeavour to address these concerns.

The University undertakes to:

- Provide students with an outstanding student experience in inclusiveness and diversity
- Deliver and mobilise our research capacity to guide disability data collection, service delivery, policy and planning.
- provide staff and students with disabilities the opportunity to realise their potential for physical, social, emotional and academic development through participation in university life;
- provide reasonable adjustments to ensure staff and students do not experience discrimination in employment and education;
- deliver services to staff and students with disabilities in a manner that promotes personal dignity and respects the right of staff and students with disabilities to privacy and confidentiality;
- improve physical access to its buildings and facilities;
- provide information, guidance and support to current and prospective staff and students with disabilities to enable them to make informed decisions and participate in university life;
- continue its program of raising awareness within its community of the needs and rights of people with disabilities and to inform members of the University community of their obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA);
- ensure that planning processes take account of the needs of staff and students with disabilities;
- encourage staff and students with disabilities to use the University's sporting and recreational facilities and ensure these facilities are accessible;

- maintain close links with community and government agencies involved with people with disabilities;
- ensure that occupational health and safety procedures take into consideration students and staff with disabilities;
- increase the access, participation, retention and success of students with disabilities through outreach programs and equity scholarships;
- provide an appropriate level of resources over time for the implementation of this policy.

### **Selection, admission and enrolment**

The University undertakes to:

- ensure application processes and minimum entry requirements are transparent, equitable and clearly communicated to prospective applicants
- encourage participation from persons who have experienced disadvantage and groups underrepresented in higher education
- provide information about course requirements in order for students to make informed decisions about their abilities to meet the essential components of a course;
- admit any student who meets the necessary entry requirements for a course and who is able to perform the essential elements of that course;
- take account of disadvantage experienced as a result of disability in assessing applicants for special entry;
- acknowledge a student's right not to disclose the fact that he or she has a disability or any details of this disability, at enrolment or any time later;
- include information about its provisions and support for students with disabilities in appropriate University publications.

### **Teaching and assessment**

The University undertakes to:

- ensure that appropriate academic needs of students with disabilities are met with the focus on good quality learning outcomes and experience.
- provide professional development for staff members on issues relating to inclusive teaching and learning
- modify existing academic programs or provide reasonable adjustments to accommodate students' needs, providing such modifications or adjustments do not compromise the academic integrity or the essential requirements of the academic program. **Physical access, facilities and services**

The University undertakes to:

- improve access to its current buildings and facilities by installing ramps, lifts, automatic doors, or making other changes to capital works, where appropriate;
- ensure that all new buildings, refurbishments or redevelopments comply with the regulatory Building Code of Australia and relevant Australian Standards covering disability access

## **Staff**

The University undertakes to:

- employ staff who are interested in building a high performance workforce around inclusion and diversity
- employ staff who are able to perform the inherent requirements of each position and who best meet the selection criteria;
- ensure that any discussions involving accommodations or adjustments for a staff member shall take place in consultation with the staff member;
- make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the needs of staff with a disability. Such adjustments might include:
  - Ensuring staff are provided with relevant adaptive equipment, software, furniture or accessible offices
  - allowing the staff member flexibility with working hours to take account of the effects of his or her disability or of medication or the disability of an associate;

### **3. Expected Outcomes**

The University aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- deliver a consistently high quality experience for all students
- continually improve access, participation, retention and success rates of students with disabilities;
- satisfactory understanding of accessibility and inclusive approaches for people with disabilities in planning, policy and budgetary development at all levels;
- reasonable accommodations are provided to staff and students with disabilities
- a University environment that is inclusive, safe and respects the diversity of all of its constituents.

### **4. Communication**

A copy of the Action Plan, when approved by Council, will be lodged with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission and provided to senior officers of the University, Heads of all budget areas, and a copy will be available on the University website. Further, reference to the Action Plan will be made at all relevant information sessions and workshops.

A copy of the Disability Action Plan will be available in an alternative format on request.

### **5. Monitoring and evaluation**

The Heads of Departments and Divisions on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor, will receive regular reports from the various senior managers responsible for the implementation of sections of this Action Plan.

### **6. Review of Action Plan**

The Action Plan will be a live document which will be revised from time to time.

## 7. Brief overview of *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) was primarily introduced as part of the government's social justice policy with its focus being to provide a fair go to all Australians. The DDA requires that people with disabilities be given equal opportunity to participate in and contribute to the full range of social, economic, political and cultural activities, of our society, ie, the aim of the DDA is to remove physical and attitudinal barriers that prevent people with disabilities from enjoying equal opportunities on the same basis as those people without a disability. The DDA thus seeks to protect people with disabilities (and their associates) from unfair or unfavourable treatment based on their disability.

As indicated by the recent Productivity Commission<sup>1</sup> review of the first ten years of the DDA, the social, economic and cultural environment for people with disabilities has changed considerably. With this change, more opportunities are now available for people with disabilities to progress through the mainstream education system, into higher education and into meaningful and rewarding employment. It is important therefore that the University has the policies, processes and appropriate support in place to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

The DDA provides a broad definition of disability which includes physical, intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, neurological and learning disabilities. Physical disfigurement, and the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease (eg HIV) are also covered by the DDA. The DDA protects people who have now, have had in the past, might have in the future, or are believed to have a disability.

The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of disability in a number of public areas including: employment, education, access to premises used by the public, provision of goods, services and facilities, accommodation, land, clubs and incorporated associations, sport, and the administration of Commonwealth laws and programs.<sup>2</sup>

Section 61 of the DDA provides for a service provider to develop a Disability Action Plan and lodge this Plan with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC). A major reason for the development of an Action Plan is to examine current policies and practices and act as a vehicle to produce systemic change required to eliminate disability discrimination whether it is direct or indirect, and regardless of whether it is intentional or otherwise. As the development of an Action Plan includes a detailed a review of current policies and procedures, setting of goals and targets, evaluating strategies, the allocation of responsibility and communication of policies and programs, an education provider may reduce the risks of having complaints made against it under the DDA. An Action Plan will also assist a tertiary education provider to meet its objective of providing high quality educational services to the whole community. In developing an Action Plan, Section 61 of the DDA stipulates that it must include:

- (a) the devising of policies and programs to achieve the objects of this Act; and
- (b) the communication of these policies and programs to persons within the service provider; and
- (c) the review of practices within the service provider with a view to the identification of any discriminatory practices; and

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<sup>1</sup> Productivity Commission. *Review of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. Report No. 30: Productivity Commission; 2004.

<sup>2</sup> The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*; sections 22-29.

- (d) the setting of goals and targets, where these may reasonably be determined against which the success of the plan in achieving the objects of the Act may be assessed; and
- (e) the means, other than those referred to in paragraph (d), of evaluating the policies and programs referred to in paragraph (a); and
- (f) the appointment of persons within the service provider to implement the provisions referred to in paragraphs (a) to (e) (inclusive).

## **8. Strategic direction of the University**

This Action Plan is based on the Strategic Plan 2018–2020 which incorporates the following strategic direction of the University:

- connecting the students and communities we serve to the world outside,
- tackling the big issues of our time to transform the lives of our students and society,
- striving for excellence in everything we do,
- holding each other to account and working to the highest standards,
- caring about what we do and why we do it, because we believe in the power of education and,
- research to transform lives and global society.

## **9. Strategies, method, responsibility, and timelines**

The University undertakes to take reasonable measures to ensure that the following strategies will be either maintained or improved over the period of this Action Plan. These strategies will be revised from time to time to reflect the continuing consultation with University staff and students.

## Teaching and Learning

| Strategy   | Method  | Responsibility  | Timeline                |
|--|---|---|-------------------------|
| <p>Developing and implementing effective strategies for accommodating and supporting students with disabilities through a flexible approach to teaching, learning and assessment, whilst ensuring academic standards are maintained.</p> | <p>Include a general statement of support for people with disabilities in College and other relevant University publications.</p> <p>Ensure all College publications and other relevant publications are available in an accessible alternative format.</p> <p>Provide professional development for staff on inclusive teaching practices and assessment.</p> <p>Ensure that course and subject design meet the standards set out in <i>How Inclusive Is My Subject</i> developed by the Inclusive Resource Development (IRD)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Support)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (SHE)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (ASSC)</li> <li>• Heads of School</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> <li>• staff (all campuses)</li> </ul> | <p>2018 and ongoing</p> |
| <p>Encourage staff members who have demonstrated effective innovations in teaching and inclusive curricula, and those who have supported students with a disability, to share information and strategies, both informally formally.</p>  | <p>Colleges to develop a program where staff have the opportunity to showcase their achievement.</p> <p>Develop a proposal to reward staff who demonstrate inclusive curriculum design in their teaching</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Support)</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> <li>• Human Resources</li> </ul>  | <p>Ongoing</p>          |
| <p>Ensure the various learning support programs continue to provide assistance to students with disabilities.</p>  | <p>Staff will continue to liaise with the Disability Advisory Team with regard to specific needs of students with disabilities.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor</li> </ul>  | <p>Ongoing</p>          |

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|  |   | (Student Support) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disability Advisors</li> <li>• Deaf Liaison Officer</li> </ul>   |                     |
| Any newly developed or curated materials are presented in a format which is accessible by all students.  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Support)</li> <li>• Chief Information Officer</li> <li>• Inclusive Resource Development</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (SHE)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (ASSC)</li> <li>• Heads of School</li> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Disability Advisors</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> | Ongoing             |
| Develop and implement web accessibility standards for online courses.                                    | Improve compliance of the Learning Management System with Web content accessibility guidelines (W3C)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Information Officer</li> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> <li>• Disability Advisors</li> </ul>   | 2018 and continuing |
| Develop College-Based schemes to encourage students with disabilities to undertake postgraduate studies. | Establish appropriate mechanisms to identify such students and undertake a suitable program (eg mentoring) to assist students in their transition to postgraduate study. Appropriate schemes could include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> </ul>   | 2020                |

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Scholarships targeted at students with disabilities</li> <li>▪ Awareness training for supervisors of postgraduate students with disabilities</li> </ul> <p>Explore what other avenues may be available to assist students with disabilities to undertake postgraduate studies</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Support)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (SHE)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (ASSC)</li> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> |  |
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## Information and Communications Technology

| Strategy   | Method  | Responsibility  | Timeline            |
|--|---|---|---------------------|
| Develop, implement and appropriately resource a plan to provide supporting and responsive institution-wide accessible ICT infrastructure and services. | Finalise development and commence implementation of ICT Strategic Plan.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Information Officer</li> </ul>   | 2018                |
| Improve staff understanding of disability access and inclusive approaches in relation to ICT.  | All staff will be required to undertake staff development training  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Information Officer</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellors</li> <li>• Heads of School</li> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Chief Marketing Officer</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> <li>• Disability Advisors</li> </ul> | Ongoing             |
| Strengthen IT support for students and staff with disabilities to improve access difficulties.   | <p>Access features, wherever possible, will be incorporated into the web and course design.</p> <p>New computer systems and software purchased will conform to best practice accessibility standards.</p> <p>All computer laboratories for general student access will have an accessible workstation available for students with disabilities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Information Officer</li> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Heads of Schools</li> </ul>   | Ongoing             |
| Ensure University websites are compliant with W3C guidelines at levels 1 and 2 and meet best practice accessibility standards.                         | <p>La Trobe University websites will be redeveloped to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the development and implementation of W3C compliant templates for all University websites.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief Information Officer</li> <li>• Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> </ul>  | 2018 and continuing |

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ provide relevant training to all staff who develop and maintain websites.</li> <li>▪ web-based services such as library holdings, online enrolment, online courses will be designed and modified to comply with best practice accessibility standards.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Support)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (SHE)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (ASSC)</li> <li>• Heads of School</li> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Chief Marketing Officer</li> <li>• All staff</li> </ul> |            |
| Increase knowledge of assistive technology available for students with disabilities through collaboration with Disability Advisory Team | Liaison with external agencies such as RVIB, Quantum Technology, and Spectronics, to keep abreast of latest assistive technology will continue.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul>   | Continuing |

## Library

| Strategy   | Method   | Responsibility   | Timeline            |
|--|--|--|---------------------|
| <p>In consultation with staff and students who have disabilities, the Library will continue to improve its current level of Library services.</p> <p>Improve accessibility of Library facilities and services to people with disabilities.</p> | <p>Ensure that online services are accessible to people who have a disability. For example, items in e-reserve will be available in print and large print format on request.</p> <p>Library staff will review computer equipment and adaptive technology required to support staff and students with disabilities on a regular basis.</p> <p>Library staff will participate in the University Web Usability Group.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Librarian (or nominee/s)</li> </ul>                                 | 2018 and continuing |
| Ensure that people with disability are more aware of specialised Library support services.   | <p>Increase the publicity on the range of Library support services available to staff and students with a disability.</p> <p>Advertise new or changed services</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Librarian (or nominee/s)</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |

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|   | <p>available to meet the needs of students and staff with a disability, via a section in the existing Library News, and/or a separate flyer available on request.</p> <p>Library tours will include information on resources and services available for students with disabilities.</p> <p>Orientation sessions for groups of students with disabilities will be arranged on request prior to the start of semester.</p> <p>Update information on Library services available to people with a disability via the Library website.</p> | Centre  |            |
| Develop guidelines on the provision of Library services to people with a disability to ensure consistency across campuses.                    | <p>Guidelines will identify boundaries and responsibilities. The following support services will form the basis on which further support may be added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Library staff will assist in the conversion of Library materials to large print.</li> <li>▪ all students with a disability have access to extended loan periods, on request.</li> <li>▪ assistance with photocopying, searching and location of books on request/by appointment.</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Librarian (or nominee/s)</li> </ul>  | Continuing |
| All Library staff to have access to information about their roles and responsibilities in assisting students and staff who have disabilities. | <p>All Library staff will participate in the Equity Staff Development Program with specific content on their roles within a Library context when assisting staff and students who have disabilities.</p> <p>Staff development sessions will be provided on supporting students with a disability in libraries from Royal Victorian</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Librarian (or nominee/s)</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> | Continuing |

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|  | <p>Institute for Blind (RVIB) and National Information Library Service (NILS). Library staff will continue regular liaison with RVIB, NILS and other relevant external agencies.</p> <p>Library staff will consult with Equity and Access Unit when there is a need for specific information/staff training on assisting people with a specific disability.</p> <p>Staff development sessions will be provided on communicating with people who are Deaf or hearing impaired.</p> <p>A member of staff on each campus will have a basic understanding of adaptive technology by the end of 2020.</p> |  |                     |
| Library staff will establish informal networks with people who have a disability as one way to identify areas for improvement. | <p>At least one representative from:</p> <p>Equity and Diversity Centre<br/>Staff member with a disability</p> <p>will be invited to an annual review and planning meeting with Library staff to review current services as an integral part of the Library's commitment to quality and continuous improvement.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Librarian (or nominee/s)</li> </ul> | Continuing          |
| Review the use of the Equity and Diversity Centre facilities within the Libraries.   | <p>Establish and implement a process to review the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ numbers of students who use the computer equipment and adaptive technology; and</li> <li>▪ software and equipment used.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Librarian (or nominee/s)</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |

## Internationalisation

| Strategy  | Method   | Responsibility  | Timeline   |
|---|--|---|------------|
| <p>Marketing of La Trobe University to international students to include information about support services available to students with disabilities.</p> <p>Ensure Agents who are engaged off-shore by La Trobe University are aware that they are also governed by the <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>.</p> <p>Ensure students enrolled in La Trobe University courses off-shore are aware of the support services available for students with disabilities.</p> | <p>All promotional material for international students includes information on support services available for students with disabilities.</p> <p>All Agents engaged by La Trobe University to be made aware of the support services available to students with disabilities.</p> <p>Encourage students to seek advice prior to enrolment about what support services are available to assist students with disabilities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (International)</li> <li>• Chief Marketing Officer</li> <li>• Executive Director, Student Services and Administration</li> <li>• Senior Manager, Student Operations and Improvements</li> <li>• Student Admissions Officer</li> <li>• Student Exchange Staff</li> <li>• Study Abroad Staff</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre Coordinator</li> </ul> | Continuing |

## Infrastructure and Operations

| Strategy  | Method   | Responsibility  | Timeline   |
|---|--|---|--|
| <p>Ensure a safe and accessible physical environment for staff and students at all campuses.</p>  | <p>Communicate temporary and permanent physical access changes to staff and students.</p> <p>Establish a schedule for routine maintenance checks and devices (eg, press button to automatically open heavy doors) in place for assisting people with disabilities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Infrastructure and Operations</li> </ul>   | Continuing   |
| <p>Ensure that all building works (refurbishment, alterations and new buildings) and infrastructure (ie, external paths of travel, external lighting, signage, carparks, etc) meet best practices for people with disabilities.</p> | <p>The design and construction of new building works comply with relevant legislative, regulatory and standards relating to access requirements for people with disabilities as detailed in La Trobe University Standard Brief No. 9.</p>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vice-Chancellor</li> <li>• Executive Director, Infrastructure and Operations</li> <li>• Capital Management Advisory Committee</li> </ul> | La Trobe University Physical Access Audit to be implemented within the University's annual budget to |

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|  | <p>The design and construction of building works to incorporate the recommendations made in the <i>La Trobe University Physical Access Audit</i> (all campuses).</p> <p>All building works aim for best practice in the educational arena.</p>                           |   | achieve full compliance by 2020. |
| Ensure that adequate accessible car park spaces in suitable locations are available on all campuses.                                     | An audit of car parking for people with disabilities will be undertaken and additional accessible spaces made available where appropriate in accordance with relevant Australian Standards.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director, Infrastructure and Operations</li> </ul>                                       | 2018 and continuing              |
| Increase the priority given to building refurbishment to ensure accessibility.   | Implement a space management plan which includes a schedule of phased accessibility upgrading of all buildings and all campuses.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Space Planner, Infrastructure and Organisation</li> <li>Other relevant University staff</li> </ul> | Strategic Plan 2018-2020         |
| Ensure that people with disabilities are provided with up to date physical access information.   | <p>Develop physical access maps for all campuses to be upgraded on an annual basis.</p> <p>Develop physical access maps for all libraries on all campuses.</p> <p>Physical access maps to be available on relevant University websites as well as in printed format.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director, Infrastructure and Operations</li> </ul>                                       | 2018 and continuing              |
| Ensure that transport services within and externally from the campuses are accessible and support the needs of people with disabilities. | Liaise with external transport providers to ensure that transport is accessible and that drop off and pick up points are safe and meet relevant legislation requirements.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director, Infrastructure and Operations</li> </ul>                                       | 2018 and continuing              |
| Ensure the Bundoora campus Glider bus is   | Explore the cost of converting current   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director,</li> </ul>   | 2018                             |

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| available for people with disabilities at all times.   | Glider so as to have wheelchair accessibility. | Infrastructure and Operations<br>• Equity and Access Unit |      |
| Ensure that students and staff with disabilities have access to University charging system for copying and printing required to ensure equitable access. | Review current University charging system.     | • Executive Director, Infrastructure and Operations       | 2018 |

## Academic Services

| Strategy   | Method  | Responsibility   | Timeline            |
|--|---|--|---------------------|
| Ensure that access to the wide range of academic services reflect the diversity of students that seek and gain enrolment at La Trobe University.                                   | <p>Maintain links with Equity and Access Unit and encourage the regular exchange of information to ensure that policies and procedures reflect the diversity of its student population.</p> <p>Review all policies relating to selection, admission, enrolment and graduation to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities are included.</p> <p>Continue to engage with students with disabilities where appropriate to ensure that electronic access is achievable, eg, Student Online.</p> <p>Ensure that all policies relating to selection, admission and enrolment are available in alternative formats and available in a reasonable timeframe.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Student Services and Administration</li> <li>• Deputy Director, Student Administration</li> <li>• Senior Manager, Student Operations and Improvement,</li> <li>• Admissions Committee</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |
| Ensure that administrative procedures and facilities for graduation are accessible for students with disabilities, especially ensuring wheelchair access to graduation ceremonies. | <p>Sufficient information regarding access to the venue and details of the ceremony and procedures is provided to students with disabilities.</p> <p>Information to be provided in alternative formats when requested.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior Manager, Student Operations and Improvement</li> <li>• Disability Advisors</li> </ul>  | Continuing          |

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|  | Identify any possible difficulties prior to the ceremony and implement reasonable adjustments where necessary to enable students with disabilities to participate. |  |  |
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## Course and Careers Services

| Strategy   | Method   | Responsibility   | Timeline            |
|--|--|--|---------------------|
| Ensure that all information sessions and publications are accessible to people with disabilities seeking information about undergraduate, postgraduate programs and research degrees | <p>All information sessions to be held in accessible venues.</p> <p>Information to be available in alternative formats.</p> <p>Auslan interpreters to be available for Deaf students as requested.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Careers and Employability</li> <li>• Engagement and Employability Officers</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |
| Ensure that staff members in the Office for Prospective Students provide informed advice to prospective students with disabilities.  | <p>Information sessions presented at school visits, information sessions, exhibitions, seminars include information of support services available to students with disabilities.</p> <p>Staff to maintain links with Equity and Access Unit.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Careers and Employability</li> <li>• Engagement and Employability Officers</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |
| Ensure that all information sessions and publications are accessible to people with disabilities seeking information about careers and employment                                    | <p>All information sessions are to be held in accessible venues.</p> <p>Information to be available in alternative formats as required.</p> <p>Auslan interpreters to be available for Deaf students as requested.</p>                           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Careers and Employability</li> <li>• Engagement and Employability Officers</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |
| Ensure Career Counsellors are aware of specific needs of students with disabilities to enable them to provide appropriate  | Disability awareness training sessions to be provided for Career Counsellors.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Careers and Employability</li> <li>• Engagement and</li> </ul>   | 2018 and continuing |

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| advice and guidance. | <p>Career Counsellors maintain networks with external disability career/employment support agencies such as Willing and Able Mentoring (WAM) Program.</p> <p>Career Counsellors to maintain links with Equity and Access Unit and the Regional Disability Liaison Officer (RDLO).</p> | <p>Employability Officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equity and Diversity Centre</li> </ul> |  |
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## Marketing

| Strategy  | Method   | Responsibility  | Timeline   |
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| Ensure that all University publications reflect the University's commitment to students and staff with disabilities.          | Continue to update the University's publications with information for students with disabilities.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Marketing Officer</li> <li>College areas</li> <li>Heads of School</li> <li>Marketing Officers</li> </ul>   | Continuing |
| All publications to ensure that appropriate terminology to be used in reference to disabilities and people with disabilities. | <p>Equity and Diversity Centre to conduct workshops for staff involved in the preparation of material used in publications about sensitivities of language to be used when referring to disabilities and people with disabilities.</p> <p>Statement to be included in all publications that material can be provided in alternative format upon request.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chief Marketing Officer</li> <li>Equity and Diversity Centre</li> <li>Manager</li> <li>Disability Advisory Team</li> <li>Marketing Liaison Officers</li> </ul> | Ongoing    |

## Student Support

| Strategy  | Method  | Responsibility  | Timeline   |
|---|---|---|------------|
| Promote awareness and understanding of mental health issues to students and staff | <p>Develop mental health promotion campaign for students and staff in conjunction with Equity and Access Unit.</p> <p>Weekly "drop in" outreach program established to assist students in residential colleges with mental health issues.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Director, Student Services and Administration</li> <li>Managers, Counselling Services</li> </ul> | Continuing |

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|  | <p>Workshop for staff on “Responding to distressed students and difficult behaviours” conducted on a regular basis.</p> <p>Information Flyer available to staff on how to respond to distressed students and difficult behaviours.</p>  |  |                      |
| <p>Liaise with students with disability to identify and address issues of communication and access to their course of study.</p> | <p>Liaise with service providers, such as Auslan interpreters and external agencies who provide Auslan interpreting services to identify other issues associated with communication processes for the Deaf and hearing impaired.</p> <p>Undertake research to improve accessibility for Deaf and hearing impaired students in light of the shortage of interpreters to meet the number of Deaf students.</p> <p>Ensure the University community is aware of issues relating to the teaching and assessment of students who are Deaf or hearing impaired through the Equity Staff Development Program.</p> <p>Discuss with relevant areas the provision of appropriate tutoring and literacy support for Deaf and hearing impaired students.</p> <p>Maintain links with external agencies such as VicDeaf.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Support)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (SHE)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (ASSC)</li> <li>• Heads of School</li> </ul> | <p>Continuing</p>    |
| <p>Develop an “Auslan in the Workplace” short course for Bundoora staff dealing with Deaf students.</p>                          | <p>In collaboration with the National Institute for Deaf Studies (NIDS) provide a short course to learn the basic Auslan interpreting skills to communicate with Deaf students.</p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Senior Deaf and Disability Adviser</li> <li>• National Institute for</li> </ul>  | <p>December 2018</p> |

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|  | Investigate the feasibility of offering the course at regional campuses.  | Deaf Studies (NIDS)  |                     |
| Conduct information seminars periodically with staff and students on disability related issues and invite external speakers to conduct workshops and seminars. | <p>Liase with relevant areas on particular disability-related topics that require further information.</p> <p>Liase with the La Trobe Language and Teaching to develop relevant seminars/workshops for academic staff.</p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Disability Advisory Team</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning, Quality and Innovation)</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Support)</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |
| Coordinate a University-wide register of resources and staff expertise in the area of disability.  | Develop a database of staff expertise to be utilised as appropriate.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> </ul>  | December 2018       |
| Ensure the Equity and Access Unit website has relevant information relating to people with disabilities.   | Redevelop the Equity and Access Unit website for students with a disability.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Disability Advisory Team</li> </ul>  | 2018 and continuing |
| Redevelop printed information to assist prospective students or current students with a disability.  | Update the O-Week Guide and Discover La Trobe guide.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> </ul>  | March 2019          |
| Establish links with secondary schools and ensure students are aware of the services and support offered to students with disabilities at La Trobe.            | <p>Liase with the Office of Prospective Students to distribute information to secondary schools and appropriate agencies.</p> <p>Work collaboratively with the Local Learning and Employment Networks to improve understanding of student needs and developing appropriate outreach programs.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Disability Advisory Team</li> <li>• Office of Future Students</li> </ul>   | 2018 and continuing |
| Seek feedback from students with disabilities on services provided to them.  | Establish an online questionnaire for students with disabilities.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Disability Advisory</li> </ul>   | December 2018       |

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| Continue close collaboration with IRD to improve the provision of alternative format materials for students with a print disability. | Meet regularly with Inclusive Resource Division (IRD) to maintain and further develop an efficient and effective system in collaboration with the La Trobe University Library. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusive Resource Development</li> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Librarian (or nominee/s)</li> <li>• Equity and Diversity Centre Manager,</li> <li>• Disability Advisory Team</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |
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## Staff

| Strategy   | Method  | Responsibility  | Timeline   |
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| Ensure that information about equitable practices in recruitment and selection is provided to all staff through staff development/training programs. | All staff will be required to undertake the Equity Staff Development Program.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Human Resources</li> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellors</li> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> <li>• Heads of School</li> </ul> | Continuing |
| Provide assistance to injured staff through occupational rehabilitation services which provide physical, psychological and financial support.        | Policies regarding support available will be made available via website.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Health, Safety &amp; Environment</li> <li>• Relevant budget areas</li> </ul>  | Continuing |
| Liaise with specialist employment agencies for people with disabilities.   | Attend meetings, conduct forums for such agencies as appropriate.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Executive Director, Human Resources</li> </ul>  | Continuing |
| Provide training to staff involved on selection panels regarding reasonable accommodations and employment strategies for people with disabilities.   | Development of inclusive selection processes already established. All staff will be required to undertake the Equity Staff Development Program. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Human Resources</li> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> <li>• Pro Vice-Chancellors</li> <li>• Library Learning and Teaching team</li> </ul>                            | Continuing |

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|   |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heads, non-College budget areas</li> </ul>   |                     |
| Ensure that reasonable accommodations for staff with a disability are provided in a reasonable timeframe.                                 | Funding is made available for reasonable accommodations as required.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heads, all budget areas</li> </ul>   | Continuing          |
| Identify, utilise and promote where possible, government initiatives to employ people with disabilities                                   | Develop a register of government agencies and resources available from those agencies to assist people with disabilities in the workplace.                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Human Resources</li> <li>• Manager, Equity and Diversity</li> </ul>  | 2018 and continuing |
| Develop strategies and implement return to work programs for staff with disabilities where required.                                      | Successful transition into the workplace following leave directly related to, or as a result of their disability   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Human Resources</li> <li>• Manager, Health, Safety &amp; Environment</li> <li>• All budget areas</li> </ul>  | Continuing          |
| Ensure occupational health and safety procedures, including evacuation procedures, incorporate consideration of people with disabilities. | <p>Review policy and procedures annually.</p> <p>Training of Building Wardens to include specific training on managing people with disabilities in emergency situations.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manager, Health, Safety &amp; Environment</li> <li>• Health Safety Environment Consultant</li> <li>• Building Wardens</li> </ul> | 2018 and continuing |
| Development of a Disability Employment Strategy   | A committee comprising key staff within the University will be established to assist the University prepare the Disability Employment Strategy.                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Director, Human Resources</li> </ul>   | December 2018       |

## Documents consulted

La Trobe 2018-2022 Strategic Plan

La Trobe University Operational Plan

*Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

*Disability Standards for Education 2005*

*Equal Opportunity Act 1995*

Guidance Notes for *Disability Standards for Education 2005*

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission: [www.hreoc.gov.au/disability](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability)

Productivity Commission. *Review of the Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. Report No. 30:

Productivity Commission; 2004.

Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (1996). *Guidelines relating to students with disabilities*. Canberra

Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (2004). *Guidelines on information access for students with print disabilities*.

Action Plans of the following universities:

- Monash University
- University of Melbourne
- Queensland University of Technology
- Griffith University
- University of Technology Sydney

## Consultation undertaken

Email forwarded to all staff seeking input to the Action Plan

SRC Focus Group incorporating students with disabilities

Student Focus Group (students with disabilities)

Staff Focus Group

Major management areas throughout the University

University Colleges are currently under review so consultation not undertaken at this stage.