Accessible Information Policy Implementation Report – Year 2013-14

The purpose of this report is to provide feedback to the Equality Committee on work carried out in academic year 2013-14 on the implementation of the Accessible Information Policy (www.tcd.ie/about/policies/accessible-info-policy.php). This policy was passed by Board in July 2009 and revised in May 2012. The Disability Service has responsibility for ensuring College becomes compliant with this policy.

Executive Summary

1. Accessibility of College Procurement Process – Discussions with the Procurement Office on the development of a refined request for tender process (RFT) that includes clear questions on accessibility levels of goods and services under the accessible information policy were proposed.

The College Procurement Office are currently enhancing and restructuring the RTF (Request for Tender) procedure. This procedure which is currently paper-based is currently completed by all potential suppliers of goods and services within TCD in advance of the procurement stage. This in development restructured on-line tool aims to simplify this process, leading to 100% electronic web-based application for completing a tender process.

The Disability Service have worked with the Procurement Office in the current academic year to ensure key questions are applied within the new process that establish the accessibility standards of goods and services ensuring compliance with the Accessible Information policy guidelines (see appendix A). At present accessibility guidelines are
hosted via the Procurement website, the proposed online procedure intends to comply all potential suppliers to complete all questions of the process including accessibility highlighting their legal obligation on providing accessibility goods and services (as per Section 27 of Disability Act) before submission is accepted.

**Action:** The Procurement Office to implement a revised Request for tender procedure.

2. **College Branding** – Collaboration on the development of accessibility guidelines within the TCD branding toolkit took place between the Disability service and the Communication Office. Following on from work carried out in November 2013 with Custodian (The college preferred print supplier) an Accessible information guidelines sign off document was proposed (see appendix B) ensuring any print or web based documents made available for publication must be compliant with accessible information print guidelines ([http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/TIC/accessible-info/word/](http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/TIC/accessible-info/word/)). The intention of the guidelines document is to ensure that the TCD staff member on creating the content must sign off on compliance with the accessible information policy before commissioning a print request from Custodian. The draft guidelines are to be made available via the new TCD branding toolkit currently in development by the Communication Office intending to incorporate a range of College policy including the accessible information guidelines via range of pre-designed templates.

**Action:** The Communication Office to publish the TCD branding toolkit which will incorporate accessibility guidelines.

3. **Accessible Information Training** – An annual accessible information training event was ran in December 2013. This event was open to all staff and academics to attend and was publicised to all school administrators/ academic liaison officers & executive officers within administrative areas. This event was attended by 12 members of staff. Further department specific in-house training was held for staff of the Human Resource area covering the main areas of the policy with a focus on ensuring content for public domain is created in an accessible format.
**Action:** The Disability Service to continue site visits (as requested), training and remote support on accessibly queries on the creation of print communication ensuring compliance with College Accessible Information Policy.
Full report – Accessible Information Policy implementation

1. Access to Services (Disability Act - Section 26)

"Service" means a service or facility of any kind provided by a public body which is available to or accessible by the public generally or a section of the public and, without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, includes-

(a) "Where practical and appropriate", ensure that the provision of access to the service by persons with disabilities is integrated,

(b) "Where practical and appropriate", provide assistance, if requested, to persons with disabilities in assessing the services if it is satisfied that this is necessary to comply with (a) above, and

(c) "Where appropriate", ensure the availability of persons with appropriate expertise and skills to give advice to the body about how to ensure that its services are accessible to persons with disabilities.

College Events

The Accessible Information policy provides clear guidance for all College organizers of events to ensure accessibility is taken into account as part of the planning of such events. These guidelines have been included in the Communication Office guide on organizing events, see: Communications Office guide on organizing events which also links to the Accessible Information policy: Accessible Information Policy. Disability Specific guidance has been added to the Disability Service web page to give added information on ensuring event organizers understand all disability requirements.

Due to the high number of events (which includes College Committee meetings), and multiple organizers these guidelines are not always adhered to leading to some complaints from disabled persons that accessibility was not considered. Raising awareness with organizers to the importance of ensuring accessibility is required.
**Issues outstanding:**

There is a confusing array of booking systems in College for booking rooms and no one central systems. The main public buildings include the Exam Hall, Regent house, the Dining Hall, IIS, Long room hub, the Senior Lecturer pool (managed by the Enquiry Office); others include the Chapel, the GMB, the Long Room/Old Library, Biosciences, and the Science Gallery and so on. Information on accessibility of venues is publically available but organisers are not being pro-active in ensuring accessibility leaving themselves open to complaints.

**Action required:** Organisers should be asked to ensure they follow good practice guidelines for organising college events as outlined in the Accessible Information Policy:  
[https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/accessible-info-policy.php#events](https://www.tcd.ie/about/policies/accessible-info-policy.php#events)

**ISL Provision**

The Disability Service was tasked in 2012-13 with developing guidelines for the provision of Irish Sign Language Interpretation services in College, particularly ensuring Deaf staff and students were allowed access to all relevant College work and other activities they attend as part of being a member of College.

Guidelines for working with Irish Sign Language Interpreters were developed and piloted in 2013-14. These guidelines outlined how to support Deaf staff, students and visitors when they require an Irish Sign Language Interpreter (ISL) and explain how to book this service and who will cover the costs of such a service -  

**Person to person communication –**

All portable loop systems within all administrative areas were serviced and checked for use. These devices provide a vital link for staff and students who are hard of hearing. The devices allow a conversation to be amplified via the loop system to the user’s hearing aid.
Locations of such devices have been added to the College maps at http://www.tcd.ie/Maps/map.php

2. Accessibility of Services Supplied to a Public Body (Section 27 Disability Act)

This section of the Act requires that, with effect from 31 December 2005, where a service is provided to a public body, it shall ensure that the service is accessible to persons with disabilities. Services provided to a public body might include, for example, a scheme, which is administered, under a contract, on behalf of a public body by another agency or a private company.

Key activities

The College Procurement procedures

This procedure was amended in 2010-11 to ensure that all procured goods are compliant with the Disability Act 2005 (and the College Accessible Information Policy). From communication with the Procurement Office a lack of awareness of staff responsibilities to ensuring goods and services were of an accessible and compliant with the Disability Act was raised. Guidelines were posted to the procurement website 12-13 and they were asked to ‘police’ the ensure compliance.

Following on from this work, the Procurement Office engaged in a request for tender project (RTF) to revise this process in full to ensure all aspects of College policy were accounted for. The aim of this project is to host all procurement information within an online portal to ensure potential suppliers comply to all key questioning on compliance with College policy which includes the accessible information policy guidelines. Sample text on the area of accessibility were proposed to the Procurement Office under three main headings in-line with good practice and guidelines produced by the National Disability Authority (see appendix A).
This project is still active with work on final components of the RTF process still in development. A proposed live date has not been provided by the Procurement Office to date.

**Issues and future work**

A lack of awareness of responsibilities surround the Disability Act and the College Accessible Information policy guidelines continues to be a concern.

The Procurement Office is in a process of overhauling its suite of ‘Request for Tender documents to ensure compliance is an important step in increasing awareness of accessibility concerns. The recording of preferred suppliers and penalties for noncompliance allows for a clearer process visible to all staff on awareness significantly improving access with the college.

The question of how to administer/police this RFT process and ensure purchasers of goods/services follow is a serious concern. The advent of a noncompliance charge and with the introduction of the online RTF portal (inclusive of all College policy) aims to combat poor inaccessible procurement.

**Accessible Information Training:**

Annual accessible information training event was ran in December 2013. The event was open to all staff and academics to attend and was publicized to all school administrators/academic liaison officers on executive officers within administrative areas. The areas covered online include:

- Microsoft Word 2007 / 2010
- Microsoft PowerPoint 2007/2010
- Adobe Acrobat Reader & Adobe Acrobat Professional
- Web accessibility via Dreamweaver
- Accessible e-mail formats
- Use of the TIC tool
- Use of CAPSL/ Disability service online resources
3. Access to Information (Section 28 Disability Act)

This section requires public bodies to, "as far as practicable" to have in place arrangements for events for the communication of information in Braille, sign language or audio format or in a format requested by an aurally or visually impaired person. This section also requires public bodies who, for example, communicate by e-mail or publish information on the web, to ensure that, "as far as practicable", such information is transmitted or published in a format that is compatible with adaptive technologies used by visually impaired people.

Key activities

College Branding Tool-kit:

Discrepancies were found in the accessibility of current College branding in academic year 12-13. College branding currently varies from print to electronic with no formal procedure in place for end users to follow. On the appointment by the Communication Office of a Marketing manager - Beibhinn Coman, discussions on the non-compliance of current College branding was raised as an item for addressing in the current academic year 13-14. A College Identity Committee to formally advise on rebranding which the Disability Service Director Declan Treanor currently sits on was formed.

From discussions with the Communication Office accessible guidelines were presented by the Disability Service to ensure the toolkit takes into account items covered by this policy - http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/TIC/accessible-info/word/. The Accessibility guidelines were developed in 2009 in line with good practice & co-operation with JISC UK (Joint Information Systems Committee) who aim and goals are to champion the use of digital technologies in UK education and research. Further to this work collaboration with the current TCD print & design supplier Custodian instigated a short sign off document for all TCD staff to complete in advance of print work (See appendix B).

The Communication Office has ensured that accessible guidelines including the sign off document will form an integral part on the publication of the toolkit ensuring a clear process for staff to adhere to on the creation of print and electronic documents. However
on the development of the draft TCD logo type the use of a Utopia serif font was recommended. On querying this use of font type and the issues it will create, the Director of Communications and Marketing Bernard Mallee assured that the Utopia font will only be used in image logo files (logotype) and not as text (typography) for Trinity.

Such directives leads to a mixed signal on font type on embedding of the accessible policy guidelines.

**Action:** The Communication Office to publish the TCD branding toolkit to incorporate accessibility guidelines.

**College goals of the Accessible Information policy: 2014-15**

Below are the six different areas the policy sets out to address. Listed are areas that College needs to continue to monitor in order for the policy to be successful.

**Print Communication:**

- Work to be completed on the branding toolkit which encompasses Accessible Information Guidelines at its core.

- Continue site visits, training and remote support on accessibly queries on the creation of print communication ensuring compliance with College policy provided by the Disability Service.

- Promote the use of the online resources and online self-evaluation [TIC tool](#) as they provide a ready to use resource on the creation of accessible print content via staff training events.

**College Websites**

- All College Websites administrators (Web-authors) adhere to [WCAG](#) and [College web accessibility policy](#) as set down by the policy. College Web Office to monitor and advice users and ensuring compliance with the policy.
E-Learning

- Academic content created for use via the college e-learning system must be in an accessible format as per policy guidelines.

- CAPSL to promote the use of alternative formats audio/multimedia for use on Blackboard. The use of such formats allows for a more usable platform and gives alternative methods for students to access information.

Person to Person Communication:

- Permanent loop systems will continue to be fitted in core lecture teaching & learning areas. Correct signage in place to make the aware of such devices.

- Disability Service to continue to train and advise staff in the use and position of portable loops systems available in College administrative offices.

- Promotion of the Guidelines for working with Irish Sign language Interpreters and booking systems will continue.

Information Technology Procurement

- The Procurement Office to implement work on the redrafting of the request for tender template made available to all potential suppliers. Such work would ensure that all RFT would have an accessible aspect at the initial project management stage ensuring compliance with policy.

College Organized Events and activities

- All areas to engage with clear information available on the Communication Office web pages on ensuring all events are accessible and are provided at: Event Management Guidelines as advised via the department/ School audit process.
Accessible Information report 2013-2014: Appendices

Appendix A. Procurement Accessible Guidelines –

Development on a request for tender (RTF) sample text under three main heading were proposed to the Procurement Office below in-line with good practice and guidelines produced by the National Disability Authority:

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1. Development process:

Design and implementation should be carried out in accordance with an inclusive, user-centred process, based on Universal Design principles.

Tenders should outline the main features of this process, such as:

• How user requirements including the specific needs of people with disabilities will be gathered and used.

• How user needs will be identified and taken into account.

• Methods of consultation with users, including people with disabilities or their representatives.

2. Quality assurance of the product or service

Prior to delivery of the <procured item> should be tested or otherwise evaluated for usability and accessibility as part of the quality assurance process.

Tenders should outline the main evaluation methods to been used, such as:

• Accessibility audit carried out by an accessibility expert - Please state the credentials of the expert who will carry out the audit.

• User testing by representative users, including users with disabilities - Please describe the test environment, procedures and user group characteristics.
3. Training of product or service

The successful tenderer will be required to provide any training necessary to enable staff to maintain the accessibility of the product and its information content. If any such training is necessary, tenders should include proposals and plans for this training.

Further text was provided for any introductory text:

The increasing use of technology presents remarkable opportunities for all people; however information technology presents new accessibility challenges to those who have sensory, mobility, learning, and other disabilities.

To ensure a product or service is compliant with both college tendering and national policy the procurement must fulfil the following criteria at the tendering stage:

• Be technically accessible, in that it is possible for all users to access all information and functionality;
• Be equally usable and universal in design, in that it is not prohibitively difficult or time consuming for users with disabilities to carry out normal tasks;
• Be capable were applicable of being adapted or configured by individual users to meet their specific needs and preferences;
• Be capable were applicable of interfacing with appropriate, widely available assistive technologies employed by users.
Appendix B. College Branding – Sign Off Sheet

The College Accessible Information Policy sets out a formal commitment by the College that all information should be available in an accessible format. Accessible information is far reaching and includes printed information, digital and presentation materials such as PowerPoint and online PDF documentation. Accessible information should be provided in a clear, easy to follow format and enables everyone to access the content of information resources without barriers. Key points include:

For Print and Digital Documents:
Font Style:
• Use a sans serif font (e.g. Arial, Verdana, Calibri).
• Use 1.5 line spacing.
• Preferred text size no smaller than Arial 12 point in printed material
• Avoid underlining or italicising text. Use bold instead.

Font Colour:
• Use a good contrast between the font and background colour.
• Use cream paper rather than pure white
• Avoid using colour alone to highlight issues or provide definition.

For Digital Documents Only:
Heading Styles and Formatting:
• Ensure all headings are styled correctly to give structure and enhanced navigation of the document.

Font Colour:
• Avoid black text on a pure white background.
Images

- Ensure all images have an alternative text description.

Checking the accessibility of your document

- MS Word And Adobe PDF has an in-built tool to allow you check the level of accessibility of your document.

For further guidance on this area please refer the online support pages at: http://www.tcd.ie/CAPSL/TIC/accessible-info/

Tick this box if your document complies with the above guidelines.

Document Title: __________________________

Submitted by: ___________________________
(e.g. John Smith)

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