Research Project: Improving outcomes and experiences for disabled students at Scotland’s colleges and universities

## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in participating in this research conducted by Lead Scotland and Advance HE. In order to take part in the research you should be based within a college, university or student’s association located in Scotland, or work for Sparqs.

The purpose of this survey is to research and explore the full range of current practice and initiatives taking place across the Scottish college and university sector on student disability support approaches and measures, with the aim of identifying initiatives with some evidence of impact.   
  
Advance HE will then commission further research to evaluate the evidence and initiatives to consider effectiveness, success, and potential wider benefit for the sector, specifically linked to disabled students' experiences and outcomes. The aim of the project is to make recommendations for good practice, and for addressing any identified issues, gaps or concerns.  
  
As this research aims to identify and make recommendations for sharing good practice, we would encourage institutions to share all relevant information where possible.  However, institutions that prefer information to remain anonymous in any published reports will have the option for anonymity at the publication stage of the research.            
  
The survey asks about the following topics:

* About a practice or intervention your institution has used to attempt to improve the outcomes and experiences of disabled students. We ask about what you did, who was involved, what resources you required and what your aims and objectives were.
* How you measured and evaluated the project, successes, indicators of positive impact, learning, reflections, outcomes and unintended impact.
* About you and your organisation.

The survey has been designed to save your responses as you go. As long as you use the same computer, you can exit and return to the survey at a later time to complete it.  
  
While we hope that you answer the survey in full, you are free to stop answering questions at any point or skip any questions without an asterisk (\* denotes questions that must be answered to continue in the survey). However, the survey submits data at the end of every section so your data may be used even if you do not reach the end of the survey.

Benefits and risks of participating  
  
A report will be written summarising the findings of the survey, which will inform the second stage of the project. In the second stage, a research organisation will analyse and evaluate the evidence of impact for each intervention. This will allow us to draw conclusions and make recommendations for best practice of interventions and projects that have robust evidence of positive impact, and have the potential to be replicated, adapted or used on a wider scale. Ultimately, your participation could lead to supporting staff and improving outcomes and experiences for disabled students at Scotland’s colleges and universities.  
  
The survey may raise sensitive topics related to disability and long term health conditions. If you experience a negative emotional reaction to some questions and would like signposting for further support, please contact Lead Scotland by emailing Rebecca Scarlett, [rscarlett@lead.org.uk](mailto:rscarlett@lead.org.uk) or calling 0131 228 9441.

## Data confidentiality

All personal data and information that you share will be held confidentially by Lead Scotland and Advance HE in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. At no point will the information you provide be shared in a way that would allow you to be personally identified, unless you have indicated you are happy for this information to be shared.  
  
 All information about participants will be handled confidentially by the researchers.  
  
Participants will not be personally identifiable in any report arising from the research, unless you have indicated you are happy for this information to be shared.  
  
Participation is voluntary.   
  
Information that you provide in the survey will only be stored for as long as we require it to complete this project. For more information, please see [Lead Scotland’s Privacy Policy](http://www.lead.org.uk/aboutlead/privacy-policy/) and [Advance HE’s Privacy Policy](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/privacy).

Research ethics and storing data    
  
Advance HE has robust research ethics and data storage policies, copies of which are available to participants on request. All personal and/or special category data are held securely in accordance with the Advance HE Privacy Policy.   
  
The [Advance HE Privacy statement for Research](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/research-privacy-statement) states how they collect and use your personal information when you consent to be a participant in a research project. Advance HE is responsible for how your personal information is held and used and is required under data protection legislation to notify you of the information contained in this policy. [Advance HE's full privacy statement](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/privacy) can be found on their website, with information on how they are committed to protecting your personal information as well as your rights in connection with personal information.  
  
If you would like to receive the survey in an alternative format, please contact Rebecca Scarlett, 0131 228 9441, [rscarlett@lead.org.uk](mailto:rscarlett@lead.org.uk)

## Consent

In order to participate in this project, Lead Scotland requires your consent. Please read the following then select 'Yes' if you agree:  
  
I have read the information provided and understand the purpose of the research.   
  
I understand that I can stop the survey at any time, though it submits data at the end of every section that I complete, so my data may be used even if I do not reach the end of the survey.  
  
I understand that my personal information will be processed only for the purposes of this research. I understand that such information will be treated as strictly confidential and handled in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Please note: At no point will the information you provide be shared in a way that would allow you to be personally identified, unless you have indicated otherwise in the survey.   
  
I understand that the information I share, including anonymised direct quotes, may be included in any resulting report.   
  
I understand that my data will initially be stored on servers located in the United States via SurveyMonkey. To comply with European personal data export requirements, this arrangement is certified under the EU-US Privacy Shield Program. Whilst it is being processed, it will be stored securely on the cloud, and after this it will be anonymously stored in accordance with Advance HE’s Privacy Statement on a secure drive.  
  
I have read and understood Lead Scotland’s Privacy Policy and Advance HE’s Privacy Policy and consent to the researchers processing my personal data accordingly.    
  
I agree that the project named above has been explained to my satisfaction and I agree to take part in this research.  
  
Research Questions

1. \* Do you agree to all of the above terms?
2. Yes
3. No (you will not be able to proceed if you select No)

## Part 1: About your practice, project or initiative

In this section, we would like to find out more about what you did or what you are doing to improve the experiences and outcomes of disabled students.

1. \* Did the practice, project or initiative relate to disabled students in general or students with a specific impairment type?
2. Disabled Students in general
3. Asperger's or other Autistic Spectrum Disorder
4. Blind, visual impairment or sight loss
5. Brain injury or cognitive impairment
6. Deaf, hearing impairment or hearing loss
7. Deaf/British Sign Language User
8. Learning Disability
9. Complex and profound multiple needs
10. Long term health condition/illness
11. Mental Health Difficulty
12. Physical impairment or mobility issue
13. Specific Learning Difficulty such as dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia or AD(H)D
14. Speech, Language or Communication needs
15. Multiple impairment types (please specify if this related to a specifically targeted intervention)
16. Other (please specify)
17. \* Did you involve or consult with students when developing the practice, project or initiative?
18. Yes
19. No

Please provide further detail about your answer

1. \* What area did the, practice, project or initiative relate to (Select all that apply):
2. Access
3. Participation and the student experience
4. Progression onto an advanced course
5. Progression into employment
6. Other (please specify)
7. \* What was the practice, project or initiative connected to? (Select all that apply)
8. Marketing, outreach and pre-application support and information
9. Disability disclosure
10. Transition into college or university
11. Inductions, freshers’ week, student societies and social clubs
12. Proportion of disabled students across the institution
13. Proportion of disabled students in a specific school/subject area
14. Retention/completion/attainment
15. General support systems, approaches and policies (including approaches to funding, inclusion policies or measures)
16. On course and academic support
17. CPD for academic and teaching staff in disability related areas
18. CPD for all staff in disability related areas
19. Student health and wellbeing
20. Developing student soft skills (e.g confidence, assertiveness, resilience, self-advocacy)
21. Progression onto advanced course
22. Approaches to inclusive teaching and learning practices
23. Approaches to inclusive or alternative assessments
24. Approaches to technology support
25. Processes for dealing with interruption to studies for reasons related to an impairment
26. Processes for dealing with complaints and issues related to disability support
27. Student voice and engagement to influence change
28. Institution buildings, estates and student accommodation
29. Approaches to using non-medical personal help/human support
30. Work placements or study abroad
31. Measures to enhance employment opportunities, skills, transitions and outcomes
32. Support after graduation or course completion
33. Other (please specify)
34. \* Why did this work happen? What was the theory, rationale or driver behind the intervention? What challenge was being addressed?
35. \* Describe the practice, project or initiative implemented, including what aims and outcomes you hoped to achieve.
36. \* Were there any unexpected or additional outcomes (positive or negative) beyond the original aim(s)?

1. \* Who was responsible for the intervention and/or provided resources or input?
2. Did you work with any partner organisations as part of the project?
3. Yes (please specify)
4. No

1. How often did you do it? How much did it cost and what was the scale? Describe any approaches or resources used for training and monitoring. Do you know how many students were involved or impacted by the work?
2. \* Where did it take place? (geographical location of the intervention and location within the organisation, e.g. Student Support, Disability Services, Human Resources etc)
3. Did you require any modifications or adaptations, either planned or unplanned, in order to do the work? Did you carry out any pilots? Did you tailor it over time or for different situations?
4. If information about this initiative has been published online, please provide a link below.
5. \* What was the time frame for the intervention from implementation to finish (excluding planning)?

1. \* Was the effectiveness of these interventions monitored, measured and evaluated?
2. Yes, evaluation completed
3. Yes, on-going or still in the early stages
4. No (skip to About You section)

## Part 2: Impact and measurement

1. \* How was the effectiveness measured or how will it be measured? (Tick all that apply)
2. Survey/questionnaires
3. Focus group/interviews
4. Monitoring data
5. Case studies
6. Other quantitative/qualitative method (please specify)
7. \* Did you consider this evaluation method effective?
8. Yes
9. No

Please explain your answer

1. \* Describe your evaluation method
2. \* Did you see any of the following indicators of positive impact as a result of the intervention? (Select all that apply)
   1. Improved representation/proportion of disabled students
   2. Improved retention
   3. Increased successful completions
   4. Improved attainment
   5. More successful progressions onto an advanced course
   6. More successful progressions into a job
   7. Improved health and wellbeing
   8. Improved confidence in soft skills
   9. Reduced waiting times to access DSA, disability services or disability related support
   10. Improved staff confidence in competency to support disabled students
   11. Improved staff confidence in using technology that supports inclusion in the classroom
   12. Reduction in disability support related complaints/issues
   13. Increase in disability disclosure
   14. Improved student confidence in disclosing an impairment
   15. Improved student knowledge in rights under the Equality Act as a disabled student or employee
   16. Improved student confidence in discussing support needs
   17. Reduction in interruptions to studies for disability related reasons
   18. Other (please specify)
3. Did you see any indicators of negative impact? Please provide further information.
4. What element(s) of the intervention proved particularly useful or innovative?
5. If the intervention successfully achieved its stated aims (fully or partially), why do you think this was?
6. If the intervention was unsuccessful (fully or partially) why do you think this was?
7. If you were to repeat the intervention, would you do anything differently?
8. Do you have any comments about whether this intervention could be scaled up or applied in a different context?

## Part 3: About you and your organisation

1. \* Name of organisation
2. \* Which option best describes your organisation?
3. College
4. University
5. Further and Higher Education Institution
6. Student union/association
7. Other (please specify)
8. Size of organisation
9. Small (under 50 people)
10. Medium (50 - 250 people)
11. Large (over 250 people)
12. Don’t know
13. \* What’s your name?

1. \* Role or Title
2. \* Would you be prepared to take part in a follow up interview by telephone, virtual meeting or face to face?
3. Yes
4. No
5. Please provide an email address and/or telephone number if you are happy to be contacted
6. \*Would you be willing to share a separate survey for any students who were either involved in the initiative or have been impacted by it, to gather their views?
7. Yes
8. No
9. \*Do you give consent for your personal details and the information you have provided to be shared at a future date as part of any final research report?
10. **Yes,** I am happy for all information provided to be shared as part of any future research report.
11. **No,** I would prefer all information shared to remain anonymous in any future research report.
12. Finally, do you have any other comments?