

DSSG MEMBERSHIP

Purpose

1. Since the DSSG was established in January 2004 the membership of the group has increased from 17 to 22. The purpose of this paper is to determine whether or not the current membership of the group is reflective of the sector.

Background

2. As a result of the Funding for Learners review, the Disabled Students Stakeholder Group was established to consider and address issues relating to the support available to learners with disability related additional needs in further and higher education. The Group comprises the key stakeholders and delivery partners and its objectives are:

- to consider the issues identified during the analysis of the current support arrangements and institutional funding related to students with special educational needs;
- to consider proposals and make recommendations on future policy development;
- propose actions to eliminate duplication and inconsistency;
- promote greater co-operation and common understanding between those representing students and assessing their needs and those developing and implementing government policy to address those needs.

3. The Group's original membership contained 17 different organisations, these included:

- Scottish Executive
 - Adult Education and Access
 - Funding for Learners
 - Equality Unit
 - Post School Psychological Services
- SAAS
- Scottish Disability Team
- SKILL Scotland
- BRITE
- University of Dundee Access Centre
- Motherwell College Access Centre
- Aberdeen College Access Centre
- SFC
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- Simin Abrahams, Universities Scotland
- Association of Scottish Colleges
- Scottish Further Education Unit
- National Union of Students
- Open University
- Strathclyde University

4. Within the DSSG's original remit and membership paper it was stated that other stakeholders, experts or interested parties may be invited to contribute on an ad hoc basis on specific issues.

Current Membership

5. There is currently now 22 organisations who are members of the DSSG, however it should be noted that the organisations/members highlighted with an (*) have indicated that they may be unable to attend the majority of the meetings and will therefore only tend to receive DSSG papers. The actual current membership includes:

- Aberdeen College
- Association of Directors of Education in Scotland (ADES)*
- Association of Director of Social Workers (ADSW)*
- Scottish Colleges (ASC*and SFEU)
- BRITE
- Equality Forward
- Jobcentre Plus
- Motherwell College Access Centre
- National Union of Students (NUS)
- Open University (OU)
- Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)
- Royal National Institute for the Deaf (RNID)
- Stevenson College Access Centre
- Student Awards Agency for Scotland (SAAS)
- Scottish Funding Council (SFC)
- Scottish Government (SG)
 - Higher Education and Learning Support Division
 - Equality Unit*
 - Post School Psychological Services
 - Social Work Division
- SKILL
- Strathclyde University
- University of Aberdeen
- University of Dundee Access Centre
- University of Edinburgh
- Universities Scotland (US)

6. Depending on the agenda other stakeholders, experts and interested parties are still invited to attend DSSG meetings.

Discussion

7. Members are asked to discuss the following:

- a) Should there be a limit on the membership numbers?
- b) Is there any organisation missing from the membership list that should be invited to join the DSSG?

- c) Should there be a rolling invite to disability advisers to attend the DSSG for example two representatives from the college and university sector could be invited to attend one of the meetings in a rotational basis?
- d) Should disability advisers and other stakeholders continue to be invited to participate in specific DSSG sub groups? For example Glasgow School of Art participated in the diagnosis and Evidence Sub Group as their disability adviser had a specific interest in this area.