

Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF SCOTLAND
DEFINING MOMENTS IN HISTORY

December 2009



George P MacKenzie
Keeper of the Records of Scotland

Introduction by George MacKenzie, Keeper of the Records for Scotland

This is the 2009 Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report for the National Archives of Scotland.

We first published our [Disability Equality Scheme](#) in December 2006 and much progress has been made since then, namely the full opening of the [ScotlandsPeople Centre](#).

The opening of the Centre, our participation in [Homecoming Scotland 2009](#) and our [Famous Scots Exhibition](#) has focussed us on the service we provide. This report will therefore concentrate on what we have done and will do with our customer service, taking into account disability issues and requirements.

GEORGE P MACKENZIE
Keeper of the Records of Scotland

1. Attendance Management Policy

1.1 NAS is an Associated Department of the Scottish Government (SG). Our staff follow SG HR policies and procedures. A recent policy change involved an updated Attendance Management Policy. The focus of the policy is to provide staff with support in the form “keeping in touch” arrangements and Return to Work Interviews. The policy also makes it clear where absences are attributable to disability that staff and managers are aware of their responsibilities in terms of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and their requirement to make “reasonable adjustment”.

We ensured that all NAS staff participated in a half day Attendance Management Workshop. The Workshops not only brought to staff’s attention the changes to the policy but clarified those aspects of the DDA relating to employment and that “reasonable adjustment” was not just about providing appropriate equipment but could also include other types of support including alternative working patterns.

2. Deaf Awareness

2.1 Our Reader Services Branch works with the public to make available historical and legal records. They also deal with commercial enquiries. At their request staff recently participated in a “[Deaf Awareness](#)” Workshop provided by the Royal National Institute for the Deaf. The Workshop aims to raise awareness of the barriers faced by deaf and hard of hearing people and how staff could offer an equal service to those customers. Staff now feel that they are more able to provide a better customer experience when dealing with deaf people.

3. Dyslexia

3.1 NAS is responsible for selecting, preserving and making available the national archives of Scotland in whatever medium to the highest standards.

As part of our mission to promote public access to the information in the records, we are providing staff with a Dyslexia Awareness Workshop both to improve their understanding of Dyslexia and to find the best medium to present information to customers who are dyslexic.

4. Health & Safety

4.1 Disability Equality remains a standing item on the Agenda of our quarterly held Health and Safety Committee meetings. From these meetings and from suggestions taken from customers we refurbished the reception area of our premises at West Register House to provide improved access to the smaller exhibitions that are held

there. We do, however, ensure that our major exhibitions are held in General Register House for better access and facilities for all.

5. Conclusion

5.1 We will continue to pay attention to our visiting customers' needs to better their customer experience of NAS.

In the meantime, the Equality Bill, combining all of the existing legislation on discrimination into one single statute, was published on 27 April 2009 and we will continue to work towards the key targets of our Disability Equality Scheme until the outcome of the Bill is known.