

# Disability Equality Scheme

**Bord Na Gaidhlig**

**April 2007**



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## **Our Commitment**

Bòrd na Gàidhlig works to promote Gaelic, and strives in partnership with the Scottish Executive, the people of Scotland and the Gaelic organisations to improve the status of the language. It is a priority for Bòrd na Gàidhlig to increase the number of Gaelic speakers and users, and that Gaelic and its culture are respected and esteemed throughout Scotland.

Bòrd na Gàidhlig is committed to promoting and mainstreaming equality and diversity in all our activities. The 3 main aims for Bòrd na Gàidhlig are:

- to increase the number of persons who are able to use and understand the Gaelic language;
- to encourage the use and understanding of the Gaelic language; and
- to facilitate access, in Scotland and elsewhere, to the Gaelic language and Gaelic culture.

We will achieve these aims and meet the needs of all individuals regardless of age, colour, disability, ethnic or national origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or a a deeply held philosophical belief.

As Chief Executive, I will ensure that our commitment to this Disability Equality Scheme leads to real improvements in the lives of disabled people who come into contact with Bord Na Gaidhlig. I will ensure that all staff and Board members are given the support and training required to raise the awareness and deliver the improvements.

**A Graham**

**Acting Chief Executive**

# **Policy Statement**

## **The Purpose of our Disability Equality Scheme**

The new Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 (amended the DDA 1995) and gives Bord Na Gaidhlig what are known as 'general' and 'specific' duties to promote disability equality. Disability equality is about making things fairer for disabled people.

Producing a Disability Equality Scheme is one of the 'specific duties' of the new DDA 2005.

Bord Na Gaidhlig undertakes to ensure that the requirements of the Disability Equality Duty as contained in the Disability Discrimination Act 2005 are fully implemented in all areas of the Organisation.

Bord Na Gaidhlig will ensure there is no discrimination in the execution of any of the policies and practices as laid down by the Organisation.

## **Scope**

This policy covers all current employees, all applicants for employment, all visitors to the premises of Bord Na Gaidhlig and all people involved in the development of the Gaelic Language and the delivery of the National Plan.

## **Responsibility for the Scheme**

The Chief Executive or Accountable Officer is responsible for ensuring that this scheme is put into practice within the Organisation

## **Development of Bord Na Gaidhlig Disability Equality Scheme**

Bord Na Gaidhlig has consulted locally with Highlands and Islands Equality Forum on how to access groups and individuals who would be interested in forming a consultative group with the express purpose of helping us in implementing fully our obligations under the Disability Equality Scheme.

Employees have attended Road shows on Equality Legislation.

Bord Na Gaidhlig has worked with our public sector partners, specifically SNH and CNPA to produce the Disability Equality Scheme. This has resulted in sharing of good practices and resources, particularly relating to addressing training needs of our employees.

Bord Na Gaidhlig has recently employed two members of staff with disabilities and these have been consulted in the production of this scheme.

### **The purpose of our Disability Equality Scheme is to:**

- Show how we have involved disabled people in decisions we have made.
- Find out what barriers are faced by disabled people and take steps to remove them.
- Find out disabled people's priorities.
- Make sure we meet our legal duties.
- Tell people what our responsibilities are.
- Explain how we make things fairer for disabled people.
- Show how the Scheme links to other equalities objectives and priorities.
- Provide information about our involvement, assessments and training arrangements.
- Work in partnership with other disability organisations to prevent ignorance and prejudice in the wider community.

- Show what has changed as a result of involvement and set out our three-year disability equality action plan on how we will put the Scheme into practice.
- Monitor and check what we are doing and report each year.

### **To achieve our purpose we undertake:**

- To promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons.
- To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- To eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- To encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- To take account of disabled persons disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

The general duty builds upon the duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 including the duty to make reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled people are not placed at a disadvantage when accessing (or receiving) employment, goods, facilities, services, functions and premises.

### **Operating Practice**

Bord Na Gaidhlig advertises for staff across a wide selection of publications. All positions are open to applicants with disabilities.

We will continue to acknowledge the skills and abilities of disabled people who apply for jobs and are employed by Bord Na Gaidhlig

We will continue to explore ways in which to widen recruitment advertising to ensure we are not excluding people with disabilities.

Bord Na Gaidhlig are flexible in the ways of working with personnel working from home or working part time in addition to working from the office. Adjustments will be made to accommodate an employee with a need for flexible working due to a disability.

### **Retaining our Disabled Employees**

If an employee becomes disabled or their disability gets worse we would look at what reasonable adjustments we can make to assist them stay in their current job. If they cannot do their current job then we look at how we can keep the person in an alternative job.

### **Public Access**

Any public meetings or events wholly organised by Bord Na Gaidhlig ensure that access is available for any disabled person and that arrangements are made to cater for people who may have hearing or sight impairment.

### **Physical Access**

Access to the office premises is currently limited due to heavy fire doors and this is being reviewed on the action plan and in conjunction with other building occupants.

Internally the building is suitable for wheelchair operation with a review required on access to the Boardroom.

No visual alarm is available to alert hearing impaired to the possibility of a fire or need to evacuate the premises.

Bord Na Gaidhlig will always ensure that when public consultation meetings are held to consult on any issues connected to or governed by the Gaelic Language Bill, that the meeting venue is accessible to disabled people.

Where possible use will be made of a hearing loop to help those with hearing impairments.

Bord Na Gaidhlig will make sure there is adequate parking for disabled people and accessible public transport provision.

## **Access to Literature**

The annual report and accounts can be made available in large print if required although this is not published automatically.

General leaflets and brochures about the Organisation could be produced in Braille if required.

We undertake to ensure that all publications can be available in a range of formats with appropriate use of language to ensure it can be accessed and is useable by people of all abilities.

## **Staff Development**

Bord Na Gaidhlig will aim to ensure that all staff are aware of the impact of the policy relating to Disability Equality and that this should be a consideration in all dealings with groups and individuals in the course of carrying out their duties.

Training will be ongoing and comprehensive records will be maintained to ensure training is current and any new employees are covered.

All policies within Bord Na Gaidhlig will be impact assessed on an ongoing basis to test how disability equality is being incorporated.

## Action Plan

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	TARGET DATE	PROGRESS	OUTCOME
To work in partnership with local groups promoting the needs of disabled people to ensure that in both employment and public consultation all our responsibilities are met.	Alex Graham	Ongoing		
To involve a disabled representative in reviewing the building to gain an insight as to whether any further reasonable alterations are required.	Alex Graham	May 2007		
To discuss with building landlord on the feasibility of fixing a bell to the front door at an accessible height for use by wheelchair users.	Alex Graham	May 2007		
To install a visual alarm system tied in directly to the fire alarm system.	Alex Graham	August 2007		
Publication of this scheme on our Web Page. To review and update as points are actioned	Alex Graham	May 2007		

All staff and Board members will undertake formal training to ensure they fully appreciate and embrace the ethos of the Disability Equality Scheme and will at all time promote equality.	Alex Graham (in conjunction with SNH)	TBA		
Visit to premises of HIEF to carry out training for employees and to advise on any further requirements of the ongoing Disability Equality Scheme.	Alex Graham	TBA with HIEF / May 2007		

## Monitor and Review

All applications for employment will be monitored for information on race, gender and disability.

A report will be compiled annually on numbers of applicants noting in particular those who have declared a disability as defined in the Disability Discrimination Act.

A note will be kept, as permitted by the Data Protection Act on employees who consider themselves to have a disability as defined by the Act.