

ROUTLEDGE REVIVALS

Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

Edited by
Alan Hurst





Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

*For Claire, John
and Carole*

Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

Edited by
ALAN HURST
University of Central Lancashire
Preston

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 1998 by Ashgate Publishing

Reissued 2018 by Routledge

2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017, USA

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

Copyright © A. Hurst 1998

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Notice:

Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

Publisher's Note

The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original copies may be apparent.

Disclaimer

The publisher has made every effort to trace copyright holders and welcomes correspondence from those they have been unable to contact.

A Library of Congress record exists under LC control number: 98071960

ISBN 13: 978-1-138-31915-8 (hbk)

ISBN 13: 978-0-429-45401-1 (ebk)

Contents

<i>Preface and acknowledgements</i>	vii
<i>Notes on the contributors</i>	ix
Introduction	1
1 Disability services in Australian universities <i>Des Power</i>	15
2 “A fair go” - the impact of the Disability Discrimination Act (1992) on tertiary education in Australia <i>Jenny Shaw</i>	27
3 Supporting students with disabilities in Belgium <i>Myriam Van Acker</i>	37
4 Policy and provision of support services in Canadian universities <i>Joan Wolforth</i>	45
5 Canadian universities: the status of persons with disabilities <i>David A. Leitch</i>	61
6 Students with disabilities in higher education in Finland <i>Liisa Laitinen</i>	79
7 Students with disabilities in German higher education <i>Renate Langweg-Berhorster</i>	83
8 Disabled university students in Greece <i>Despina Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou</i>	91
9 Disabled students and higher education in Ireland <i>Carmel O’Sullivan</i>	101
10 Including students with disabilities in higher education in Lithuania <i>Adolfus Juodraitis and Juozas Petrusevicius</i>	107
11 Students with disabilities in the Netherlands <i>Willem Temmink and Piet Vriens</i>	115

vi *Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches*

12	Supporting students with disabilities in the Slovak Republic <i>Elena Mendelova</i>	121
13	Students with disabilities in higher education in Spain <i>Maria Pilar Sarto Martin</i>	127
14	Students with disabilities and learning difficulties in higher education in Sweden <i>Majken Wahlstrom</i>	139
15	Students with disabilities and learning difficulties in higher education in the United Kingdom <i>Alan Hurst</i>	149
16	Disability awareness-raising and disability awareness-training in higher education in the United Kingdom <i>Alan Hurst</i>	167
17	Higher education and disability in the United States of America: the context, a comprehensive model, and current issues <i>Betty Aune</i>	183
18	Serving students with disabilities in higher education in the United States of America <i>Cheryl T. Saucier and Gayle V. Gagliano</i>	205
19	Students with disabilities and international exchanges <i>Alan Hurst</i>	227

Preface and acknowledgements

The idea of compiling the collection of papers which are contained in this book was prompted by my participation in a number of international conferences concerned with the development of policy and provision for students with disabilities in higher education since 1992. Over the years, colleagues with similar interests and working in other countries have become friends and it is to them that I owe a great deal. There is little point in listing them here since their names appear at the start of every chapter. They have been totally supportive of my efforts throughout the production of this book. For many, my requests coincided with busy times at work and yet they responded with speed and interest. Some of them have had to struggle with writing in a language which is foreign to them. As editor I have tried to adapt their own words sometimes in order to ensure fluency in English. In doing so I hope that I have done nothing to harm the original meaning and intention. If this has been the case, then the shortcomings are mine. I hope that all the contributors feel that their efforts have been appropriately recognised by the publication of this book.

There are some others whose help and support has been unstinting despite pressures from elsewhere. It is only fair to name these “unsung heroes” of the struggle to complete the book. I owe a huge debt to those I work alongside at the University of Central Lancashire both in the Department of Education Studies under the relaxed and friendly leadership of the Head of Department, Ken Phillips and also in Student Services where John Greer has always been equally warm and welcoming. Colleagues in the Disability Services Section led by Catherine Badminton have been supportive in ways which they perhaps did not recognise but which I value enormously. Outside the University, members and staff of Skill : National Bureau for Students with Disabilities first under the direction of Deborah Cooper and more recently Barbara Waters have also provided me with ideas. I have been grateful especially to Skill’s Assistant Director, Sophie Corlett, for her suggestions.

As the production process gathered speed others have been helpful beyond what might reasonably be expected. The editorial staff at Ashgate Publishing and especially Jo Gooderham and Anne Keirby have been incredibly understanding when deadlines have had to be put back as other more pressing responsibilities have had to take precedence. I would like to thank Valerie Polding for her very conscientious editorial work and helpful comments on achieving consistency between the papers. The final production of the text has been the responsibility of Joanne Kirk. I can say nothing which conveys accurately my debt to Joanne who has had to cope with almost every eventuality and has done so with a smile

and a willingness that was undeserved. At a late stage Katie Pethiyagoda made a valuable contribution despite her other commitments. Finally I must mention the members of my family to whom I dedicate this book. I am sure that in the months and weeks leading to the final version of this book, they would have it to be called “The Lost Weekends” but that seems too much like another text. I hope that they feel that their sacrifices have been worthwhile.

To everyone associated with the book in any way whatsoever I offer my very sincere thanks.

Alan Hurst
February 1998

Notes on the contributors

The editor

Alan Hurst began his career in teaching after completing a first degree in history and sociology and a PGCE at the University of Hull. His first post involved teaching history in a grammar school in the Manchester area. He became Head of the History Department at the School and, having had a year's secondment to complete a Master's degree in Education, he started teaching in higher education at the Poulton-le-Fylde College of Education. This became part of what was then Preston Polytechnic and is now the University of Central Lancashire. Even whilst working at Poulton Alan became involved with a working group concerned with students with disabilities and became a member of what was then the newly formed National Bureau for Handicapped Students and is now Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities. Since those early days his involvement with disabled students has grown. He completed his doctorate in 1990 at the University of Lancaster and was awarded the title of Professor in recognition of his work with disabled students. He has been invited to give presentations and chair conferences throughout the UK and in other parts of the world. His first book called 'Steps Towards Graduation' was published by Avebury Press in 1993 and looks at how people with disabilities gain access to higher education. He has contributed papers and book reviews to many other publications. He is a member of the Higher Education Funding Council's Advisory Group on Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities and was elected to the chair of Skill in 1996 and 1997. More recently he has been invited to become a member of a new standing committee on equal opportunities, access and widening participation which is being set up by the Higher Education Funding Council for England following the recommendations of the Dearing Committee.

Other contributors

Betty Aune was formerly Assistant Director of the Disability Services Office at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, and is now a lecturer at the College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Minnesota, USA.

Gayle V. Gagliano is Director of the Training, Resource and Assistive Technology Centre at the University of New Orleans, New Orleans, USA.

x Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

Adolfus Juodraitis is a Dean of Faculty at the University of Siauliai, Lithuania.

Liisa Laitinen is an adviser for students with disabilities at the University of Helsinki, Finland.

Renate Langweg-Berhorster works for Deutsches Studentenwerk, Bonn, Germany.

David A. Leitch is a lecturer at St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Elena Mendelova is a lecturer in the Department of Mathematics, the Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovak Republic.

Carmel O'Sullivan is Dean of Women Students, University College, Dublin, Ireland.

Juozas Petrusevicius is a lecturer in the Department of Languages at the University of Siauliai, Lithuania.

Des Power is Professor in the Centre for Deafness Studies and Research in the Faculty of Education, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia.

Maria Pilar Sarto Martin is a lecturer in the Department of Pedagogy and Research in the Faculty of Education, University of Salamanca, Spain.

Cheryl T. Saucier was formerly working in the Training and Rehabilitation Service at the University of New Orleans, New Orleans, USA and is now Director of the Hoover Eye Institute, Baltimore, Maryland, USA.

Jenny Shaw works in the Regional Disability Liaison Unit located at Deakin University, Malvern, Victoria, Australia.

Despina Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou is a careers counsellor at the University of Athens, Greece.

Willem Temmink is a professional social worker and is a study adviser/counsellor with Handicap and Studie in Utrecht, the Netherlands.

Myriam Van Acker is Head of the Student Advice Service at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium.

Piet Vriens is a student counsellor working in the Student Advice Centre at the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Majken Wahlstrom is the National Co-ordinator for Disabled Students based at the University of Stockholm, Sweden.

Joan Wolforth is the Co-ordinator of the Office for Students with Disabilities at McGill University, Montreal, Canada.



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Introduction

Within the plethora of published materials about aspects of education, one group of learners appear to have been neglected. These are students who have disabilities and/or learning difficulties and who enter higher education. In some ways this is a surprising omission. At the level of schools and the compulsory education sector there are a number of research studies and other works about integration of learners with disabilities in mainstream provision. For those with an interest in inclusive education, they would find that within higher education, inclusion already occurs. There is little if any discrete provision along the lines of that found in other sectors. Moving on up the age scale, the debate on learning support for students in further education has been prominent for many years and has been given added momentum in the United Kingdom since the publication of the Further Education Funding Council's report called "Inclusive Learning" (The Tomlinson Report - FEFC 1996). In recent years the higher education sector has had a strong interest in improving access for and widening the participation of under-represented groups. Even here, it is only during the decade of the 1990s that some detailed attention has been given to people with disabilities (see Hurst (1993) for a list of sources and Hurst (1996) and also Cooper and Corlett (1996) for a discussion of policy developments since 1990). What is equally interesting is that a similar level of neglect can be found in other countries although it is only recently that this common feature has become more evident. This has resulted from those with an interest in developing policy and provision for students with disabilities meeting each other more frequently at international conferences and being in closer, more immediate contact through developments in information technology such as electronic mail.

The origins of this collection of chapters can be traced back to some particular conferences. In 1992 there were three significant meetings. In chronological order, the first of these took place at the Sorbonne University, Paris and was organised by the French government. A small number of participants from outside France gave papers although the main focus of the meeting was on the experiences of students with disabilities in French universities. Soon afterwards, there was an international conference organised by Waseda University, Tokyo. This was very similar to the French event in that there was a relatively small number of participants from outside Japan. The third meeting was organised by the University of New Orleans and used the facilities of the University of Innsbruck in Austria. Whilst there was a preponderance of plenary sessions and workshops delivered by colleagues based in the United States, there was an important series of meetings involving staff from other countries. This first

2 Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

conference was very successful and it was repeated in 1995, this time with an increased number of participants from outside the United States. (There is to be a third conference in Summer 1998.)

Alongside these world-wide gatherings, there have been international developments on a smaller scale. Within Europe, under the auspices of an international forum on student guidance (FEDORA), a group of colleagues from several countries have met regularly, spent time visiting each other, and developing materials which could be useful to students with disabilities (see the chapter by Hurst on international exchanges which comes later). There is a general feeling that knowing more about what happens in other countries is extremely valuable for both personal professional development and also for prompting progress and improved practices to support students with disabilities. Because of this and because this valuable information was in danger of either being restricted to those able to attend the meetings at best or being totally lost at worst, the idea for this collection emerged. Invitations were sent to a large number of colleagues in many different parts of the world. Many have responded and the results can be read in the following chapters. Unfortunately, many others could not find the time to respond. Thus, sadly there are no accounts of developments in several European countries: Austria, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, and Portugal. It should not be inferred that what is happening in these countries is not interesting and that there are no initiatives. In fact, it would be possible to compile a second collection to include contributions from colleagues working in these countries. There are some other important gaps. No accounts were forthcoming from colleagues working in the African, South American and Asian continents. Again, it would be useful to find out more about how policy and provision is developing in countries which themselves are starting to change.

The accounts that follow result from the willingness of many colleagues to respond to my request for contributions. When making the request, a number of possibilities emerged. Apart from being of interest to those working to develop policy and provision for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, the collection might appeal also to those with an interest in comparative education. To meet the needs of this group, it might have been better to insist that contributors followed a standard brief. For example they should be asked to include details of the structure of their national education system including factual information about age gradations, qualifications etc. To impose such uniformity might have been helpful but it might have stifled much of the originality of approach which can be found in the accounts and which, in my view, makes them more stimulating.

Despite the breadth of coverage, the contributions do contain a number of themes which are common and which are of international concern and interest. In the second part of this introduction, attention will be drawn to some of these.

However, before moving on it is important to acknowledge that policy and provision for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties does take place within different national contexts and different educational structures and systems.

Systems and structures of higher education: some basic comparisons

One significant difference is that between what have been described as systems based on “sponsored” and “contest” principles (Turner 1961). In brief, an analogy might be with a race. One system selects the runners carefully with the intention that all will have a chance to complete it successfully. The other allows anyone to enter the race and recognises that not all will finish it. Education systems which fit the former are those which exercise a significant degree of selection at a number of points throughout the learner’s educational career. Taking England as an example and moving back in time to try to make the point more clearly, not too long ago children were selected for different types of secondary schooling on the basis of an examination taken when they were 11 years old. At the end of compulsory schooling, other examinations were used to determine access to different forms of education after the age of 16. The route with the greatest status was into the sixth forms of grammar schools which was then the key to entry to higher education. Even here, the use of the General Certificate of Education Advanced level examinations (GCE ‘A’ levels) allowed universities to select their students. Elements of this system remain although with the growth of comprehensive secondary education and widened access to higher education, perhaps they are less obvious. On the other hand, the end result of the selection procedures is that when students do enter higher education, the failure rate at the end of the first year of studies is low compared to other countries. The comparison is evident if one looks at systems where “contest” principles operate. Here there is much less concern with selection. Learners themselves choose to continue in the system and leave it only when they have to. For example, in many countries, there is a high drop-out rate at the end of the first year of university studies. Because students have obtained the basic matriculation requirements, they go to university but then find that they are unsuccessful.

Perhaps the most useful, recent comparative summary of European education systems has been provided by Tony Raban (Raban, 1997). He opens by discussing terminology which is important if misunderstandings are to be avoided. In particular he draws attention to the different meanings of the term “Diploma” which in some countries is the equivalent of what in England would be called a degree. Also, whilst many European countries refer to cycles of study, one of which is the third cycle, in England this would be called

4 Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

postgraduate study (and graduate study in the USA). In the United Kingdom, there are two cycles: one leading to a first degree which is where most students leave the system and one leading to a more advanced qualification. In some European countries - Germany, France and Spain would be good examples - there are three phases. The first consists of a broad programme of introductory studies, the second is more specialised and which is the level attained by most students, the third involves more advanced study, often including research and leading to the award of a doctorate. One other source of confusion must be noted since it is particularly relevant to the chapter on the Netherlands. Those who graduate from the non-university higher vocational education institutions are awarded a bachelors degree and yet, strictly speaking, this is not the equivalent of the English or American qualification.

Raban continues by discussing elements of the structures: method of entry, length and level of course, qualifications, control, and entry to employment. When discussing method of entry he notes the importance of selectivity in some countries along the lines outlined earlier. He draws attention to the fact that even within systems based on "contest" principles, some courses do have restricted entry since there is tight control on the number of places available. He comments that where the system is highly selective, there are other implications. For example, because students have to compete for places to study, they often go to universities away from their homes whereas when entry is open to all who matriculate, many will choose to study at the university nearest to their home and continue to live at or near home. From the point of view of students with disabilities and those working to develop policy and provision for them, this is of some significance. Also significant is the fact that in some countries, for example in England, restrictions on student funding have influenced choice of university with some students now choosing to study in the institution nearest to their home because it is less costly.

The lengths and levels of courses vary between countries although sometimes the length of a course cannot always be equated with the time taken to complete it. Raban gives examples of courses which last for four years but which take six years to complete. The additional time might be needed in some countries for work placement or indeed for military service. In all countries, financial pressures on both students and on state resources have led to a shared concern to complete courses in as short a time as possible. Some efforts have been made to introduce greater flexibility into the system. In England, there has been a move towards semester-based systems with modular structures and credit-based frameworks. Again, for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, these changes have not always been helpful. In modular structures, there is often the necessity to take formal examinations at two points during the year and so

setting up any special facilities now has to be undertaken twice as opposed to just once under the old regime.

In considering control, Raban notes that more systems in the past were controlled centrally with the state setting out the content and level of courses. Some of the accounts in this book provide good illustrations of this - and of the recent shift to greater freedom in running their own affairs. This independence means that it has become more difficult to make comparisons.

This convergence in terms of independence is matched in the area of the transition to employment. In many countries, what students studied at university had direct vocational relevance. In England, this was less obvious and many employers were happy to see graduation as the certification of potential employees in terms of the acquisition of useful skills; employers followed this with their own programmes of more specific vocational training. This has changed somewhat with students and the institutions becoming more aware of the need for vocational qualifications. Where courses do not have a clear vocational linkage, efforts are made to identify transferable skills, for example in the use of information technology. Again, this does have implications for students with disabilities when they graduate. Apart from trying to persuade potential employers of the value and relevance of some qualifications, they might also need to overcome the documented resistance that many employers in several countries have towards employing people with disabilities.

Raban ends his account with a review of different approaches to student guidance, all of which do have implications for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. He identifies a number of times when students need advice and guidance: on entering higher education (choice of courses and of institution), academic advice during the course (subject choice, study-related problems), personal problems (accommodation, finance, health) and careers advice. There is a basic issue to be explored first of all since in some countries universities have not regarded it as their role to be responsible for some of these potential areas of difficulty. Sometimes, they have seen it as the responsibility of the students themselves or other sectors of society (for example schools should offer advice on entry, the state careers service for advice on employment, the state health service for medical advice, and so on).

In connection with the provision of information, students with disabilities and learning difficulties do have additional needs which the general prospectus might not include. There is a requirement too that the information should be available in accessible formats, for example in Braille. Institutions in many countries recognise this and make efforts to provide relevant information. Perhaps the concern which all institutions in all countries have addressed is advice about the curriculum, its structures, modes of delivery, and strategies of assessment. Where there might still be differences are in the allocation of responsibilities. In

6 Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

some countries, for example in England, advice about academic affairs is seen to be a part of the normal duties of members of the academic staff. In other countries, for example in Germany or the Netherlands, responsibility rests with a section of the central services supporting students. Considering this in relation to students with disabilities, the strengths and shortcomings of each method are not clear. In England, as academic staff are faced with more students and less time, providing any extra support for some students becomes more difficult. However, the tutor might well be more familiar with the academic issues involved than a colleague based in a central service. Advice, help, and support with problems of a personal nature such as those relating to finance or health are usually the responsibility of a central student services section although the models on which these are organised do differ both between institutions in the same country and also in terms of typical patterns between countries. Thus, services providing counselling or student accommodation or advice about careers are sometimes part of a fully comprehensive section of an institution and sometimes they operate entirely separately.

One service which has become much more important for many students in recent years has been advice about opportunities to spend time studying at an institution in a different country. Many students benefit from participation in a range of international exchanges and visits. It is important that students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties are also able to take part. In order for this to become a realistic possibility and to try to increase the chances of success, it is necessary for staff working with these students to become more knowledgeable about policy and provision in other countries. This is one of the major justifications for the publication of this collection of papers and it is to these which we now turn. Study abroad is also the focus of the closing chapter.

Higher education and policy and provision for students with disabilities in different countries: an overview

Before offering a brief summary of each of the contributions, it is necessary to say something about the order in which the contributions appear. Having considered a number of ways of organising the chapters and rejected many of them, the simple approach of placing them in alphabetical order by country has been adopted. This also adds to the variety of content and could make the book more interesting for its readers.

The collection opens with two chapters from Australia. In the first, Des Power explores several issues of policy which are replicated in other countries. These include the concern for the under-representation of people with disabilities in higher education and the strategies used by central government to provide

funding. He identifies a number of dilemmas faced in other countries. For example, some debate has occurred about establishing what might be described as "centres of excellence" in order to meet the needs of different groups of students with particular impairments. A related issue is about how limited funds might be used to their best effect. On the one hand, there is the case for allocating additional finance to institutions with a proven track record; on the other hand, perhaps increased participation might result from providing financial assistance to institutions which have made only limited progress. Doing this would risk offending those institutions which have already invested in policy and provision out of their own resources. An interesting aspect of the Australian situation is the development of national guidelines on standards of service provision. The trend towards a national approach is evident in other countries and there are signs in England that a similar strategy is emerging. One aspect of the Australian situation shared by many other countries is the introduction of anti-discrimination legislation. The need for this is explored by the second Australian contribution from Jenny Shaw. She explores the social context in which attitudes to disability are formed and reviews the need for programmes to change the attitudes of staff and to develop the knowledge and expertise of those staff working to develop policy and provision for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. This is a concern which is expressed in many other contributions and is taken up in some detail in one of the chapters about the situation in England.

Myriam Van Acker's account of the situation in Belgium explores two major concerns. Having noted the importance of changes in the school sector, she begins by discussing issues relating to finance especially for institutions developing high quality policy and provision. Only a small number of institutions have made progress and this has been undertaken because of their commitment to students with disabilities. It has been done at their own expense; they have been given no additional funds for their efforts. Students with disabilities are aware of where support is available and so they direct their applications only to those places. The consequence of this is that the demand on the limited service is increased and since there is no commensurate increase in resources, the overall quality and effectiveness of the service might be diminished. In her description of the developments at the Catholic University of Leuven, Van Acker outlines the system of personal assistance available to those students who need it. The involvement of non-disabled students on a daily basis can do much to break down prejudice and negative attitudes.

The first of the two chapters from Canada highlights the lack of information about students with disabilities in higher education. As in other countries, Joan Wolforth notes how difficult it is to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data and the importance of having such information for arguing in favour of

8 Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

developments. There are strong parallels with the situation in other countries - for example in relation to anti-discrimination legislation and the development of national standards of service provision. Wolfarth makes the specific point that there is a need for more research and so it does seem appropriate that the second paper from Canada describes a small investigation. David Leitch also takes up the point about the need for statistical data. His investigation is a valuable one and could be replicated elsewhere. His first concern was to discover the numbers of students with disabilities attending courses in higher education institutions in Canada. He found that since there were many different definitions of disabled students and different approaches to collecting statistics, establishing valid and reliable data was very difficult. Equally interesting is the information derived from the attempts of the research worker to make contact with the person responsible for students with disabilities in the various institutions. The problems involved in trying to get in touch with this individual could well be encountered in other countries. More significantly, they could be very discouraging for potential students with disabilities wanting to find out more about policy and provision.

In describing the situation in Finland, Liisa Laitinen draws attention to several concerns which are commented in other accounts. Firstly, she notes that entry to university is selective. Secondly, she points out that many of the buildings particularly at the long-established institutions such as the University of Helsinki are old and present difficulties in terms of access for wheelchair users. The University is also based on a number of sites which adds to the problems. Thirdly, Laitinen makes special mention of issues surrounding support for students who are Deaf and students with specific learning difficulties. Finally, after completing their courses successfully, she highlights the lack of employment opportunities for disabled graduates.

The development of policy and provision for students with disabilities in universities in Germany has been an important feature of the higher education system. Renate Langweg-Berhorster provides a detailed account of what disabled students can expect from the institutions in which they study. This covers finance, living accommodation and advice. The last-mentioned is of particular significance in this chapter since this is the first in which there is mention of a national organisation which is available to help disabled students. As will be seen from later chapters, there are national organisations in a small number of other countries: the Association for Higher Education and Disability (AHEAD) in Ireland and also in the United States although the two are not linked formally, Handicap and Studie in the Netherlands, and Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities in the United Kingdom. The organisation which is described by Langweg-Berhorster is Deutsches Studentenwerk (DSW). It is

different from these others in that it works with aspects of support for all students. The other organisations work only with students with disabilities.

In contrast to the situation in Germany, policy and provision for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties in Greece is at an early stage of development. The chapter by Despina Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou is useful for indicating how much the progress that has been made in some countries might be in danger of being taken for granted and how much of a struggle there is to initiate change. Apart from the shortage of specialist trained staff and the availability of assistive technology, Sidiropoulou-Dimakakou sees the key to moving forward as a change in attitudes. In the Greek context, the change needs to occur not only in staff working in higher education specifically but also within the population in general. In the case of Greece, there is a need to locate the development of policy and provision within the broader social and educational context, one in which disability has been associated with feelings of guilt and embarrassment and kept hidden. A recently published comparative study of inclusive education in Greek and English schools suggests that despite considerable difficulties the process is underway and so the point will come in the near future when learners with disabilities who have passed successfully through the school sector will be looking to further their education at the higher level (Vlachou 1998).

Moving on to consider the situation in Ireland, Carmel O'Sullivan's account is another one in which progress with inclusive education in schools is seen as having implications for policy and provision in higher education. As more children pass through schools successfully, more are likely to want to take up places at universities. However, in contrast, to this, O'Sullivan also has a concern with those who might have not taken up earlier opportunities or indeed were going through the school system when opportunities to enter higher education were extremely limited. This 'second chance' approach is one which can be found in many other countries as efforts have been made to improve access for under-represented groups and to widen participation in higher education. The chapter describes an access programme and its objectives at University College, Dublin.

The chapter by Adolfus Juodraitis and Juozas Petrusevicius on Lithuania is especially valuable since it represents a country which has gained its independence relatively recently and is only just starting to develop its own structures and systems in all aspects of social life. The importance of the broader context cannot be emphasised too much. This would also include the cultural context since the situation with regard to people with disabilities is similar to that in Greece. Since gaining independence from Russia, the country has had to pay special attention to its economy and even after seven years there is still much to be done. Overall, Lithuania is not a rich country and this is reflected at all levels

10 Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

of the education system where there is a clear shortage of resources of all kinds. That does not mean that nothing is being done. On the contrary, there is a strategy emerging which will be interesting to observe. In developing policy and provision for students with disabilities in higher education, the importance of the experiences within the school sector have been seen as important. Also, Juodraitis and Petrusevicius argue that ensuring that there are close contacts with countries in Western Europe is important since they feel that much can be learnt that way. Already, such contacts are having an impact. For example, there are more students with disabilities on courses at their own institution than in the past as the university begins to take into consideration the needs of these students.

The account describing policy and provision in higher education for students with disabilities in the Netherlands echoes many of the concerns expressed by other contributors. Thus, Willem Temmink and Piet Vriens comment on the impact on higher education of changes in the school sector, the lack of staff training and staff development opportunities for those working with disabled students, and the valuable work undertaken by a national organisation, in this case *Handicap and Studie*. They go on to make other interesting observations. For example they note the difficulties in securing employment experienced by many disabled people after they graduate. This occurs despite efforts made to ensure that employers do not discriminate but as Temmink and Vriens point out, one significant employer which does not appear to welcome disabled employees is the government itself. A second important point to emerge from this chapter is about the attitude found in some institutions and which is found elsewhere. There are some institutions which argue that they need not develop policy and provision for students with disabilities since they receive no applications from this group of students. This is an interesting variation on the "which comes first - the chicken or the egg" argument. If students know that they will receive no support they will not apply and so the institutions which do not make any attempts to make progress in recruiting students with disabilities can continue along the same track.

Elena Mendelova's chapter displays strong parallels with the Lithuanian one. The Slovak Republic is a new country and so there is much to be done in all aspects of society. As will be evident from Mendelova's account about Bratislava, some progress has been made. In particular, she describes developments to support students with visual impairments. Perhaps this should not be a surprise. To meet the needs of students with mobility impairments could be very costly indeed in terms of alterations to old buildings etc. Giving high quality support to Deaf students would also be a major problem since there is a shortage of trained interpreters. As with the Lithuanian situation, an important contribution to progress has come through international links, in this case through the TEMPUS programme and working with experienced colleagues from the

University of Karlsruhe in Germany and the Royal National Institute for the Blind in England. For Mendelova, the need now is to develop awareness of disability amongst staff and to provide training.

Spain is another country which is only now starting to improve policy and provision for students with disabilities in universities. Pilar Sarto begins her chapter with a description of the important changes to the education system which have occurred in the last 20 years. Some of these have been implemented only recently and their impact has yet to be felt. Much of Sarto's contribution is about developments at her own university, the University of Salamanca. This is one of the oldest in Spain and its general environment and location within the city contribute to some of the difficulties faced by students. In particular wheelchair users and others with impaired mobility find the steep hills, cobbled streets, and narrow pavements hard to negotiate. Many of the buildings are old and have the protected status of historic monuments which makes improving access difficult. Nevertheless, undaunted by these factors, efforts have been made to make progress. The chapter discusses the survey carried out amongst students to find out their views about the university. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that in contrast to others, little attention is given in this chapter to students with specific learning difficulties.

In describing the situation in Sweden, Majken Wahlstrom provides further evidence that there are issues which are common in many other countries. For example, she comments on the shortage of interpreters and the difficulties of meeting the needs of Deaf students in higher education. A second issue concerns students with specific learning difficulties. Thirdly, she notes that some students with disabilities study on a part-time basis. There are also some unique aspects of the Swedish context. Firstly, there is the role occupied by Wahlstrom herself. The government has established the post of National Co-ordinator for Disabled Students which is intended to bring about a significant level of planned development. Secondly, the system of funding institutions involves a well-established practice of taking a fixed percentage of the annual budget for undergraduate students and using it to support policy and provision for disabled students. Finally, the need for staff training and staff development for those working to support disabled students has been addressed in an original way. Given the lack of appropriate staff development opportunities in Sweden itself, it is planned to organise a seminar with the University of Central Lancashire in England in early 1998 to make use of the programme of specialist courses developed there (see the chapter by Hurst which describes the programme in some detail).

Having mentioned the University of Central Lancashire, this provides a good link with the next two chapters, both of which have been written by Alan Hurst, editor of the collection, and which focus on the United Kingdom. In the first

12 Higher Education and Disabilities: International Approaches

chapter he tries to balance an account of national policy developments with a case study of their impact on policy and provision at one institution, the University of Central Lancashire. In relation to policy a key concern is with the allocation of funding, both to students with disabilities and to the institutions which try to support them. He reviews some recent short term national funding initiatives which have been introduced in England and comments briefly on the developments in Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales where different approaches have been tried. The University of Central Lancashire was one of the institutions which made successful bids for additional funding and Hurst explores the projects which were financed from the special initiatives. A third project is underway and will end in late 1999 and this is also described. It is clear from this chapter that the speed of progress has increased in England and that other developments (for example the extension of anti-discrimination legislation) could ensure that the momentum is sustained. (For a review of developments which have occurred since the preparation of this book see Hurst in press.)

The second chapter has been included because it takes up an important issue mentioned by several contributors to this book. This is the issue of training and staff development opportunities for those working with students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. One of the projects for which the University received additional funding was to devise a programme of courses and qualifications for this group of staff. The ways in which this was approached, especially the close involvement of experienced staff working in other institutions, the structure of the programme, the curriculum content, and the strategies for entry and assessment are discussed in some detail. Linked to this there are the needs of other staff who have contact with disabled students in the course of their daily duties. Thus, Hurst discusses progress with the most recent special initiative project aimed at delivering basic awareness raising for all members of the university before the end of 1999. In many of the accounts, it is suggested that more progress might be forthcoming if attempts were made to provide more information to staff so that they might then change their attitudes. The account from the University of Central Lancashire could be useful to others who are considering ways of promoting more positive attitudes amongst their colleagues.

The two chapters which end the collection of national accounts consider the situation in the United States of America. In some ways, the alphabetical ordering by country has had an important consequence in that the country which is regarded as having made most progress is left until the end of the book where it can come as a kind of climax. What has been done in the USA is often seen as the target at which many should be aiming. Whilst it cannot be disputed that policy and provision in many universities in the United States is far in advance of what can be found anywhere else, the two chapters here indicate that many important issues are still to be resolved. Betty Aune bases her account on her