



Overview of National Disability Legislation in Ireland

Ireland

Case study overview

Higher Education (third level education) in Ireland is provided mainly by 7 Universities, 14 Institutes of Technology, including the Dublin Institute of Technology, 5 National University of Ireland recognized colleges, 7 Colleges of Education and 10 other state-aided institutions [1, 2]. Higher education in Ireland has been going through a number of significant changes over the last number of years. The Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012 established **Quality and Qualifications Ireland** and on quality, QQI is responsible for carrying out a comprehensive range of quality assurance functions across education and training. On qualifications, QQI is responsible for the continued development and implementation of the National Framework of Qualifications. Within Ireland, the **Higher Education Authority** is the statutory planning and policy development body for higher education and research in Ireland. The higher education institutions are accountable for their actions through the **Higher Education Authority** (HEA). As such, they are required to provide information and statistics on their operations. This includes statistics on the number of students with disabilities registered with the institution and details on the disability types. They also follow HEA initiatives (such as the "National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013" and the "National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030") to support and enhance student education. The higher education institutions are required to follow the national legislation as enacted by the **House of the Oireachtas** (National Parliament). The following Acts of the Oireachtas are directly relevant to education and hence on disability support within the universities. The three key acts are the **Employment Equality Acts** (1998, 2008), the **Equal Status Acts** (2000, 2004) and the **Disability Act** (2005):



1. Universities Act (1997)
2. The Universities Act (1997) established the legislation to establish colleges and universities.
3. Education Act (1998)
4. Employment Equality Acts (1998, 2008)
5. Equal Status Acts (2000, 2004)
6. Education (Welfare) Act (2000)
7. Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act (2004)
8. The Disability Act (2005)
9. Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act (2012)
10. Data Protection Acts (1998 and 2003)

References

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