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Name:	**Martha Kember**
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Name of Supervisor:	**Dr Josef Ploner**
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THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Representations of Disability: A study of how people with an impairment are portrayed in equality and diversity training in UK Higher Education Institutions

Being a Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Education

In the University of Hull

By

Martha Kember, MSc, FHEA

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This thesis is dedicated to two extraordinary people.

To a woman whose lived experience of significant impairment provides the inspiration for my research, my mum, *Hazel*.

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Glossary of terms

ADI	Assistance Dogs International
BIS	Department for Business Innovation and Skills
BOS	Bristol Online Surveys
CDS	Critical Disability Studies
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DCDP	Derbyshire Coalition of Disabled People
DET	Disability Equality Training
DfT	Department for Transport
DSN	Disabled Staff Network
E&D	Equality and Diversity
ECU	Equality Challenge Unit
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulations
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
IGDF	International Guide Dog Federation
LFHE	Leadership Foundation Higher Education
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
NEYSDF	North East and Yorkshire Staff Development Forum
OS	Online Surveys
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SDF	Staff Development Forum
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UPIAS	Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation
US	United States

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1. Introduction to the study

The aim of this doctoral thesis was to consider how, if at all, professional staff development practitioners in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in the United Kingdom (UK) design and deliver equality and diversity (E&D) training which encapsulates and recognises the lived experience of people with an impairment. The thesis is written in such a way as to engage with two principal audiences. The first being the academic community, specifically those researching in the field of Disability Studies, (the field is subject of further exploration in Chapter two) for whom the thesis aimed to contribute new knowledge. The second audience is the professional staff development practitioner in Higher Education (HE) who might be inspired to review their own practice in light of this research.

An introduction frames the study, providing context and articulating the main research question and secondary research methods. Chapter one, therefore, considers the vocabulary of E&D used in Disability Studies research and within this thesis, aiming to answer, in part, the question ‘What is disability’? The ‘Sociological Imagination’ (Wright-Mills, 2000) is introduced as a thread which conceptually frames this thesis and is accompanied by a brief overview of the key literature for later discussion in Chapter two.

1.1 Social construction within institutional contexts

This study focusses attention on how, if at all, E&D training in HE represents and explores the lived experience of people with impairments and considers how such representations are viewed by people who define themselves as impaired. The rationale behind this research is supported by Ewens et al.’s (2011: ii) assessment that “Disabled staff still experience inequality of opportunity and, in some instances unintended discrimination”, going on to suggest “There is no place for such a waste of human potential in our institutions”. Moreover, Kikabhai (2018: 176) contends that the “higher education system still serves to under-support, under-represent and marginalise the voices of disabled people”. Soler (2013: 61) also suggests that paying attention to the voices of those with impairments provides “alternative and diverse perspectives” with the “potential to address assumptions” in the education sector.

The “emerging body of critical scholarship that frames disability as a social construct situated in cultural, political and historical contexts” where “disability is positioned as human diversity rather than embodied deficits” (Lalvani & Broderick, 2013: 471), is considered in the literature review which follows. An understanding of social constructions of disability and impairment (these terms will be formally introduced in section 1.4) can assist in drawing attention to the importance of eliminating negative attitudes of those with an impairment for whom society might prove disabling (Hannon, 2007). The study will, therefore, consider how models of disability have both influenced, and been influenced by, evolving societal attitudes.

HEIs were the subject of the National Association for Mental Health (Mind) inquiry (1999) which highlighted the need for increased awareness and understanding of people with a disability through training and education. The inquiry identified a need to “generate specific mental health input, [mental health defined as a disability under the Disability Discrimination Act (1995)] into research, policy and practice” (1999: 1). Despite the Mind review, studies which explore the experiences of staff in HEIs who have an impairment, in particular how they are portrayed in E&D training in UK HE, are limited (Ewens et al., 2011; Kirton & Greene, 2016). Studies which have been conducted tend to focus on the professional development of staff as a way of understanding and promoting the needs of impaired students rather than the needs of all individuals with impairments (Murray et al., 2009; Murray et al., 2011; Kendall, 2016; Wynants & Dennis, 2017; Brown & Leigh, 2018b) providing significant scope for further research. Furthermore, with regards to E&D training in HE, Moriña and Carballo (2017: 81) suggest that “studies are required that conduct a thorough analysis of training courses offered by universities”. The literature endorses the need for further research into how E&D training for staff in HEIs is designed and facilitated, specifically studies which are broader in scope than those focussed on the needs of students with impairments (Brown & leigh, 2018b; Kendall, 2018).

Any study of social constructions in institutional contexts through the lens of impairment should explore disability from a sociological standpoint starting with an exploration of everyday life and the conditions in which those with impairments live.

What distinguishes sociology from other disciplines of human behaviour, among them naturalistic and individualistic explanations, is the emphasis on how human behaviour is shaped by social influences. Max Weber, one of the founding figures of sociology, believed the basis of sociological analysis was “the meaning that individuals give to the social world and their situation in it” (Clarke, 2012: 49). This study contributes to such a developing sociological understanding of the lived experience of those with impairments.

Introducing his exploration of the sociological imagination Wright-Mills (2000: 6) suggests that “no social study that does not come back to the problems of biography, of history and of their intersections within a society has completed its intellectual journey”. Alternative conceptualisations of common objects, constructs and phenomena in social life provide both richness and diversity in what Wright-Mills (2000) called ‘The Sociological Imagination’. Wright-Mills argued that, once created, knowledge should be useful and transformative, providing both context and an invitation to the social researcher and professional practitioner. Reflections through the lens of the sociological imagination are found in the concluding chapter of this study. Adopting an original methodological approach to disability studies this study will engage with historical, social and biographical experiences to explore and challenge commonly held views and assumptions made about people with impairments.

1.2 Context and overview of the literature

The literature review, which follows in Chapter two, aims to make “sense of phenomena and experience in the social world” (Cameron, 2014d: 98), exploring “knowledge positions from which to address and refute disablism” (Goodley, 2011: 10). It considers the invitation from Wright Mills (2000: 4) that the sociologist considers how the “personal troubles” of individuals occur in relationship to others alongside the “public issues” affecting institutions such as HEIs. In considering both the personal and the public, the study explores how institutional arrangements and the nature of society through time have impacted upon individuals with impairments noting that “historical understanding” and sensibility is an “essential precondition” (Barton, 1996: 9) for a sociological engagement with the issue of disability. The literature review considers the historical evolution of the medical and social models of disability, explores the emerging narrative around what will later be proposed as the affirmative model, and explores how each is influenced by, and interacts with the others.

The study briefly acknowledges recent theoretical developments and the influence of other social theory including intersectionality (Osborne, 2019) given their particular connection to critical disability studies. Stemming from feminist theory and attributed in part to Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, intersectionality examines the connections and interdependencies between multiple inequalities, for example impairment with gender and race (Walby et al., 2012; Buitendijk et al., 2019). Pioneering research by Crenshaw (1989), which examined the intersection between distinct categories, reveals the complexity of the lived experience viewed not just through one lens but from multiple perspectives. Relevant to the main aims of this study, intersections between, for example gender and impairment, are considered and provide scope for further research, presented in Chapter eight.

The literature is explored through the lens of the organising construct proposed by Finkelstein (1991), a "model with three phases of historical development" (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 54) with the industrial revolution as its historical foundation point. Furthermore, Chapter two provides a contextual location for exploring the field of disability studies and considers how an appreciation of the lived experience of impairment and disablism can, in turn, lead to tangible consequences for those who live with impairment (Brown & Brown, 2003).

1.3 Aims of the study and research questions

The aim of this doctoral study was to explore, using a qualitative research methodology, how, if at all, an understanding of, and appreciation for, the lived experiences and narratives of people with impairments working in UK HEIs might contribute to improvements in the design and delivery of equality and diversity training in HE. To frame this exploration, the main research question asked:

- How does the portrayal of people with impairments in equality and diversity training offered by UK HEIs reflect their lived experience?

Sub questions were also posed which, having been explored through a range of primary and secondary data collection methods, assisted in answering the main research question.

The sub questions asked:

- What is disability and how do, or should, models of disability inform professional learning and development practice in HE?
- What is the nature and purpose of equality and diversity training in HE and how is it defined and delivered?
- How, if at all, does equality and diversity training for staff employed in HEIs provide space to explore the lived experience of people with impairments?
- What level of engagement do learning and development professionals in HEIs have with people with impairments when designing equality and diversity training?
- What are the perceptions of people who have a protected characteristic, specifically disability, towards the way they are portrayed in equality and diversity training in UK HEIs?

1.4 Defining Disability, Equality and Diversity

Academic disciplines create their own language, definitions and arguments which "become authoritative and are assumed to provide generalized explanations" (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 11); as Johnstone (2001: 11) writes, "disability studies is no exception". If disability is a social construction (see Chapter two) can E&D training in HE be effective in reducing the social barriers and attitudes which exclude those with an impairment from full participation in society? In considering this question, and given the suggestion that the word 'disability "hints at something missing" (Goodley, 2011: 1), it was first important to understand the language of disability, in particular that of 'disablism'. This study was particularly concerned with the impact of ill-considered or ill-informed use of language and aimed to explore the "construction of a more appropriate vocabulary of empowerment" (Thompson, 2001: 127) in E&D training in HE. The power of language to impact on the individual becomes particularly poignant when one reads the words of the Disabled People's Movement (A coalition of people with impairments, subject of further discussion in Chapter two).

> To begin with, we are not 'the disabled'. We are disabled people or even people with disabilities. The effect of this is a depersonalisation, a sweeping dismissal of our individuality, and a right to be seen as people with our own uniqueness rather than the anonymous constituents of a category.
>
> (Thompson, 2001: 126)

Lawson and Priestley (2017: 7) discuss how an alignment with particular terminology can locate the disability studies researcher within a particular frame noting "those who adopt a social model approach favour the language of 'people with impairments' and 'disabled people'" (the term 'social model' will be explored later in Chapter two with an exploration of researcher positionality in Chapter four). Thomas (2014: 9) cautions that, while useful, simple explanations or definitions which provide "analytical separation" for the reader, can however, be unhelpful and even propagate a binary separation of this more complex and subtle area of study. This section is intended to provide for the reader a guide to the terminology associated with disability, as used throughout this study and more widely in HE, in an effort to initially explain both such simplicity and interconnectedness.

Acknowledging that alternative terms are used in many differing settings this study was confined to exploring definitions of ‘disability’ and ‘impairment’, ‘disablism’ and ‘ableism’, providing a guide to the language of ‘equality’ and ‘diversity’ in an HE context. The terms disability, impairment and disablism are presented here as an introduction to assist the reader with further discussion in the literature review in Chapter two.

The term impairment as described by Hannon (2007: 27) is an “objective concept” meaning that “aspects of a person’s body do not function or function with difficulty”. Cameron (2014a: 75) expands this by defining impairment as a “loss or limitation of physical, mental or sensory function on a long term or permanent basis”. Meanwhile Priestley (2003: 3) writes of disability as “the many ways in which people with perceived impairments are excluded from full participation in society due to physical and social barriers”. Illustrations of exclusionary behaviour, where individuals with impairments encounter disabling barriers (Goodley, 2011) are considered in Chapters two and three.

Thane et al. (2007: 153) outline a short lived “attempt in the 1990s to popularize (sic) the term ‘differently abled’ in place of ‘disabled’”. However, Davis (1995: xiii) was among those to challenge the term ‘differently abled’ suggesting it “strictly needs to be applied to everyone, since all people are differently abled” and the term ‘disablism’, introduced by Abberley (1987) and now widely used in disability studies, became acknowledged as the preferred choice. Further complexity is introduced by Thomas (2014), whose research is focussed on understanding disablism, who suggests it unwise to use the term ‘disability’ other than as a general reference given the “confusing mix of imprecise and varying meanings” both within disability studies and more broadly in society. Davis (1995: xv) agrees writing that the term ‘disabled’ is “a product” and should only be used when discussing the “object created by an ableist society”.

Thomas (2007: 13) speculates that the understanding of disablism in both academia and by society “is easily grasped because its sister (sic) concepts – racism, sexism and ageism – are so familiar and well understood” although Thompson (2001: 112) invites caution suggesting that “the introduction of another ‘ism’ does seem trite and could lead some less sensitive people to dismiss it as an academic fad”.

Thomas (2010: 37) further suggests that disablism “refers to the social imposition of avoidable restrictions on the life activities, aspirations and psycho-emotional wellbeing of people categorized (sic) as impaired by those deemed normal” (this will be further explored in Chapter two). Thompson (2001: 111) adds to the debate here noting that disablism is the “systematic discrimination and prejudice against people with disabilities which produces a milieu of oppression and degredation” (explored further as part of the social model of disability discussion in Chapter two).

While those who conduct research in the field of disability studies could be suggested as being broadly familiar with the language of disablism, society is, it seems, unable or unwilling to move away from the term ‘disabled’. In recounting her experience of contemporary air travel, Yates (2018: 19) writes of the physical barriers to those with an impairment when recounting the “frustrated tears” which formed when she was “crawling down the aisle of a massive plane” to use the toilet as the airline had failed to provide the advertised in-flight wheelchair. The airline and the Government websites referenced in the article both use the term ‘disabled’ when offering support and guidance for the “disabled traveller” (Yates, 2018: 19), acknowledging that, in 2018, the term ‘disabled’ is in widespread use. Thompson (2012: 124) adds further depth to the discussion when describing disablism as a “combination of social forces, cultural values and personal prejudices which marginalizes (sic) disabled people, portrays them in a negative light and thus oppresses them”. In defining this powerful construct Thompson (2012) suggests that the act of disablism denies people with an impairment the opportunity to fully participate in the social world.

The term ‘ableism’, an attitude or societal construct which impacts negatively upon people with an impairment, focusses attention on personal prejudice and specifically refers to “negative assumptions about the nature of living with a disability and uncritical beliefs about the superiority of the able-bodied existence” (Lalvani & Broderick, 2013: 471). Brown and Leigh (2018a: 36) invite a dialogue within HE, suggesting that “ableism is the pervasive normalisation of the academic workplace visible only to those who experience it”.

Brown and Leigh (2018a: 36) question the way in which universities seemingly promote equality and diversity yet fail to embed the “spirit” of this ideology and “challenge academia’s existing notions of able-bodied perfection”. They further suggest that an “internalised ableism” and lack of understanding of the needs of people with impairments in HE leads to “ticking the box” and “stigmatisation” (2018b: 987). Their suggestion that compliance takes precedence over the lived experience of those with an impairment is explored in further detail later in Chapter three. While there is widespread acknowledgement within the disability studies community that disabling attitudes remain a significant problem there is little empirical research in this regard (Beckett, 2013).

This study explored, using an online survey and observations of four training events, the way in which people with impairments are represented in E&D training in HEIs. To provide context for the reader the terms ‘equality’ and ‘diversity’ are now considered as, according to The Equalities Review (2007: 94), “There is still a lack of awareness and understanding about what equality means, how it relates to what organisations do”. The review also suggests that “equality can be seen as unimportant and peripheral to an organisation’s main objectives, particularly challenging for public sector organisations” (2007: 94).

The term ‘equal opportunities’, referenced by Bagilhole (1997: 52) as “a political phenomenon” which leads to increased bureaucracy in organisations, can be traced back to the post second world war era. The 1942 Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services, more commonly known as the Beveridge report, importantly recognised people with an impairment as a group having a specific identity and provided for the rehabilitation of those returning from war. Service personnel wounded in combat were deemed to have been afforded equal opportunity in terms of employment as a result of the enactment of the Disabled Persons (Employment) Act 1944. The Act required employers to provide work for disabled people by introducing a fixed quota, of those named in a national disabled persons register, in what could be described in modern parlance as positive action. Positive action, although not a legally defined term, is a measure or process designed to reverse a structural disadvantage within an organisation or wider society which “assists members of a protected group” (Lewis & Sargeant, 2007: 85). Examples of positive action include the targeted recruitment of people with an impairment and female only shortlists for political party selection.

It might be argued, however, that the Government quota introduced after the war was neither equal nor did it provide opportunity for all, which the term itself intimates, with some employers “giving the impression that this was a charitable and paternalistic gesture (Humphries & Gordon, 1992: 124). The Act did, however, pave the way for rehabilitation and training for people with an impairment and led to the creation of a National Advisory Council whose role was to “advise government on the employment needs of disabled people” (Roulstone & Prideaux, 2012: 27). The strength of disability activism, at its height in the 1970s and discussed in greater detail in Chapter two, gave a voice to the shifting understanding of the term ‘disabled’. In particular, activism stemming from the perceived inadequacies of residential care highlighted in the Le Court Cheshire Home case (Campbell & Oliver, 1996), discussed in further detail in the literature review.

Article 1 of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) espoused the principle that people with an impairment have “full and effective participation and inclusion in society on an equal basis with others” (2006: 5). In enabling such accessibility, the Equality Act (2010) adopted the terms equality and diversity to encapsulate the political and social narrative. However, the “kaleidoscope of choices” (Hylton & Totten, 2013: 44) of definitions and interpretations can be difficult to navigate.

Clements and Jones (2008: 13-14) present perhaps the most succinct definition of diversity as “avoidance of mono-culture” and the promotion of “otherness” while Pringle (2009: 76) offers the alternative definition of diversity as “membership in social and demographic groups and how differences in identities affect social relations in organisations”. Özbilgin (2009: 2) suggests the term diversity “draws attention to the multiplicity of strands of difference” while equality refers simply to “relations of power at work” acknowledging the interconnectedness of both terms as seen in the way HEIs combine these when promoting training. The most succinct definition of equality is recorded by Thompson (2011: 7) as “equal fairness” while Hannon (2007: 38) chooses to define equality as “the imposition of benefits or burdens, and the process of setting the terms of entry and participation in the mainstream” which may require “accommodation towards some”.

Equality is not the act of treating every individual in exactly the same manner but is the provision of alternative approaches, treatments, policies and practice that, when embedded in society afford “real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose, so that everyone can flourish” (The Equalities Review, 2007: 109). Paying attention to the individual and understanding difference could be said to be that of contemporary society with the terms equality and diversity bound together in common language and being used in HE to denote fairness, the term ‘equity’ “often used interchangeably” (Hylton & Totten, 2013: 43) with ‘equality’. Yet universities could be suggested to accommodate and, perhaps even tolerate, the exclusion of those who have controversial opinions related to issues of diversity. Take, for example, the exclusion of Germaine Greer, a highly regarded, although controversial author, by Cardiff University in 2015, from giving a speech titled ‘Women and Power’ which she had been invited to deliver. The controversy followed a campaign by students who suggested that Greer “demonstrated misogynistic views” (Quinn, 2015: online) towards transgender women. In a time where legislation invites, and indeed expects, equality of opportunity and the promotion of diversity, could Universities themselves be described as ableist institutions? This question and the rationale for, and practice of, E&D training in UK HEIs are explored in Chapter three.

1.5 Summary

Chapter one introduced the sociological imagination (Wright-Mills, 2000) as a guiding theme for exploration throughout this research study and has clearly articulated the main aim and research questions that have been explored in this thesis. The chapter briefly introduced the literature themes which are explored in greater detail in Chapter two and went some way to answering the research question ‘what is disability?’ through the exploration of the language associated with disability, specifically that of disablism and ableism.

The thesis contains eight chapters. The introductory chapter is followed directly by a review of the literature with Chapter three focussing on equality and diversity training in HE. Chapter four presents a discussion about researcher positionality, reflective and reflexive approach and explores how the ethical considerations which framed the study were managed throughout the course of the research. This chapter also explores how a non-impaired researcher can and should contribute to the field of Disability Studies.

Research design is the subject of Chapter five where three primary research methods, an online survey, document analysis in the form of a series of observations and artefact creation and semi-structured interviews are discussed in detail. The sampling strategy which was adopted and univariate approach to data analysis are also discussed as part of the research design. The primary research findings from the online survey, workshop observations and semi-structured interviews are comprehensively presented in Chapter six. The main and subsequent research questions are answered in Chapter seven where an analysis of the primary research findings, and synthesis with the literature, are presented. The main conclusions arising from the study and the contributions to knowledge, professional practice and the field of Disability Studies are offered in Chapter eight. Finally, the thesis ends with a short reflection on the limitations of the study and proposes a number of developing opportunities for future research.

2. Exploring Models of Disability

A helpful starting point for this exploration of models of disability was to consider Wright Mills (2000: 4) when he suggests that the sociologist examine how the “personal troubles” of individuals occur in relationship to others alongside “public issues” affecting institutions. In considering both the personal and the public the researcher might explore how institutional arrangements and the nature of society through the ages have impacted upon individuals. Furthermore, Barton (1996: 9) writes that “historical understanding” and sensibility is an “essential precondition” for a sociological engagement with the issue of impairment and disability. Shakespeare (2014: 67) agrees that “phenomena like disability are not fixed, but historically and culturally contingent” encouraging the disability studies researcher to appreciate how evolving societal contexts have impacted, both positively and negatively, upon those with an impairment.

In exploring how attitudes to impairment and disability have altered over time it was also useful to consider the organising construct proposed by Finkelstein (1991), a “model with three phases of historical development” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 54). Finkelstein suggested that, when related to people with impairments, history might be categorised in terms of accommodation, containment, compensation and citizenship. Finkelstein noted that in feudal society, prior to the Age of Enlightenment (an intellectual movement which advanced ideas of tolerance, liberty and the separation of church and state), those with an impairment were accommodated within pastoral life. Finkelstein goes on to suggest that, with the advent of mechanisation at the time of the industrial revolution, the majority view was to segregate and contain those who were impaired, both physically and psychologically. Oliver and Barnes (2012) suggest the former, accommodation and containment, be assigned to what they describe as phase one and the latter, compensation to phase two.

Finkelstein noted that compensation, as seen in the enacting of the Beveridge report (1942), discussed in the introductory chapter, was a demonstration of society adopting a more paternalistic view with soldiers returning from war being compensated for their injuries and supported to return to gainful employment.

As the final element of his construct, phase three, Finkelstein focusses attention on citizenship and the attendant rights of all in society. This organising construct proposed by Finkelstein acts, in part, as a frame for this literature review with each attendant component, or phase, being used to explore the historical and societal context in further detail.

An initial exploration of the conceptual models of disability reveals a plethora of both historical and contemporary views regarding people with an impairment and how they may have become disabled by society (Goodley, 2011). The impact of industrial and societal change in creating new conceptual models of disability provides the reader with both the historical context and the way in which the concept of disability has formed and changed over time. As Barton (1996: 9) suggests “the benefits of historical understanding are one of the essential preconditions of an effective struggle for change” as will be seen later in the activism associated with the social model of disability.

Partially answering the research sub questions concerning models of disability and the lived experience of people with impairments the study acknowledges that disability studies researchers attribute alternative names to a variety of models (Goodley, 2011). This literature review will be confined to an exploration of three models of disability, the medical, social and affirmative, the literature providing the basis for this three-fold classification. Furthermore, pertinent to this study is an understanding of how, and by whom, such an examination of personal troubles (Wright Mills, 2000) will contribute to the academic debate and sociological literature around impairment and disability. A latter section of this literature review is, therefore, dedicated to understanding alternative approaches to disability studies offering some insight into the debate around whether a non-impaired person can, or should, conduct disability studies research which is discussed and explored further in Chapter four. The literature review concludes with a section concerning the embodiment and lived experience of people with impairments, an understanding of which is fundamental to the main research question posed in this study.

2.1 Accommodation and Containment: The medicalisation of people with impairments

Oliver (1996b: 31-32) suggests in his essay ‘A sociology of disability or a disablist society’ that the dominant theory, known as the medical or individual model of disability (described hereafter as simply the medical model), is that of personal tragedy, one in which disability is viewed as a “tragic happening”, a random occurrence impacting individuals, leading to a sense of personal isolation and a life “blighted by tragedy”. The medical model, described by Vehmas et al. (2009: 2) as a “common nickname for a one-sided view that attributes the cause of the individual’s deficits either to bad luck, to inadequate health practices, or to genes”, has at its core the assumption that social disadvantage is a direct consequence of individual impairment, something “unwanted that lurks” which “must be rooted out or managed” (Titchkosky & Michalko, 2014: 102). The assumption, promulgated through the medical model, was that people with impairments had ‘special needs’, while society, environment and institutional culture were, themselves, not issues of concern (Swain et al., 2003).

Prior to the rise of disability activism and the emergence of the social model of disability, discussed in a later section of this chapter, many policy makers, service providers and members of the public viewed individuals with an impairment as victims, dependent on the state and the subject of pity (Barnes et al., 1999). In their reflections Barnes and Mercer (2010: 185) note the “disabling stereotypes” within the media at the time of the advent of mechanisation and draw particular attention to the way those with an impairment were portrayed, devoid of any social, historical or political context, as having “weak and unattractive personalities” (2010: 189). Avery (1999: 116) agrees, drawing parallels of representations of people with impairments in art and literature to “the Picassoesque figure that cries out in anguish and terror”. Oliver and Barnes (2012: 35), following the Western tradition, acknowledge that “the exclusion of people with physical impairments from the mainstream of community life is not practised in all societies”. Furthermore, they suggest that such “dominant cultural images not only violate the actual experience of disability” but are particularly distracting and unhelpful in “breaking down prejudice amongst the rest of the population” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 104).

The emphasis attributed to the medical model was to alter the individual, resulting in the confinement in institutions and the medicalisation of people with an impairment rather than societal level changes being made to accommodate all, regardless of circumstance (Shakespeare & Watson, 1998). Culture, the values or norms which a given group recognise, identify with and follow, establish the criteria for what might be considered ‘normal’ or ‘abnormal’. Goffman (1963: 151-152) suggests that the “exotic differentness” of minority groups “could easily lead to imbalance of treatment” and that those who deviate from the assumed norm become stigmatised and suffer “special indignity” as a result. Davis (1995: 2) agrees, noting that disability is “part of a historically constructed discourse, an ideology of thinking about the body under certain historical circumstances”. In his research Goffman (1963) identified three important features of stigma, context, negative classification and socially mediated process. He suggested that, while stigma is prevalent in all social relationships, the effect of prolonged isolation, such as being institutionally confined, and the pursuant negative characterisation, leads to impaired individuals being allocated not just a different status but a deviant one.

This attention to the alteration of the individual to conform to what was perceived as normal is consistent with the emerging social norms of the post-enlightenment industrial revolution, which became “relatively organized (sic) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” (Davis, 1995: 3). While the idea of the healthy body as a dominant image of society has roots preceding the industrial revolution, at that time society and the increasing mechanisation of work required that all should be able to make a full and disciplined contribution to the national manufacturing output. A person with an impairment would have been considered as “disruptive, unproductive and dependant” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 39) and contrary to Parson’s (1951) account of social order which presumes that an efficient social system relies on individuals being able to perform their social roles. (Talcot Parsons (1951) is credited as the first sociologist to analyse the role of the medical profession in modern society and his work is thought to have influenced sociological disability research). These changes in the values of society were “paralleled by the rise of the medical profession” (Korman & Glennerster, 1990: 8), enabled by the optimistic faith of the public, leading to doctors being “successfully promoted” as the sole providers of treatment for the physically and mentally impaired. Oliver and Barnes (2012: 83) explore how the “medicalization (sic) process of exclusion” was facilitated by doctors and those in associated professions, a group to whom Finkelstein (1991) ascribed the acronym ‘PAMs’ (professionals allied to medicine).

Brown and Brown (2003: 61) compare the industrial revolution to a “giant machine” which aimed to “perfect and produce an ideal and efficiently run society”. As people with impairments were considered outside the norm and one of the “less effective parts” (Brown & Brown, 2003: 61) of the machine they were “lumped together in Dickensian workhouse wards” as “their appearance and behaviour was often seen as disturbing or offensive” (Humphries & Gordon, 1992: 66). The 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act gave rise to the building of such workhouses which were intended to provide accommodation for paupers and deter “public scroungers” (Oswin, 1971: 21). One function of these Poor Law workhouses was to accommodate people who were perceived as mentally subnormal, mentally and physically ill. Although designed to accommodate, the workhouses, according to Oswin (1971: 17), were, in reality, custodial and “intended to be uncomfortable places” of a “harsh and punitive nature” which did little to help those with impairments. In an edited volume of medico-sociological studies, which was suggested would be “of service to medical members of the Poor Law and Prison Services” (Kelynack, 1914: vii), contributors collectively described people with impairments who lived in workhouses as “human derelicts” for whom the “haven of quiet” (Shaw, 1914: 62) provided by the state was seen as the logical solution with “elaborate medical and surgical methods” being employed to study the afflictions of those with impairments. In an effort to “find cures” these institutions became places where “experiments, demonstrations and clinical opportunism occurred” (Brown & Brown, 2003: 62) creating a society which became “less familiar with disability”. The prevailing representation can be seen in the words of Shaw (1914) who wrote of:

> The leper of this country, to be avoided as a dangerous thing. Many would like to blow him up as an obstructive, though there may be others who, in a kinder spirit, would tow him away to a harbour of refuge, there to lie neglected until he rots away in a forgotten desuetude (sic).
>
> (Shaw, 1914: 58)

A stark portrayal of this violation of the self, as adopted in institutions as late as the early twentieth century, is provided by Humphries and Gordon (1992: 68) when they write of how “newcomers were deloused, their hair was shaved, their clothes were taken from them and they were issued with the institution’s uniform. They were also given a number. This was their new institutional identity”.

In his work on stigma and the asylums Goffman (1961) argued for the closure of what he described as the colonies, in which those with an impairment were housed by the state, encouraging disability studies researchers to “reposition disability as a sociological – rather than a functionalist psychological – problem” (Goodley, 2011: 54). Goffman (1961) analysed the relationships between inhabitants and staff and the social structure of these asylums and institutions finding four dominant characteristics which defined what he termed as the ‘total institution’. Observing inmates being housed together, strictly controlled by a single authority and required to work as a collective, Goffman argued that people with an impairment created a new identity in response to their confinement.

> In total institutions, territories of the self are violated. The boundary the individual places between his (sic) being and the environment is invaded and the embodiments of self profaned.
>
> (Goffman, 1961: 29)

One school of thought, adopted from the educational theories of the time and, perhaps, inspired by post-Darwinian eugenicist ideology, was for male and female inmates of these institutions to be segregated thus reducing the possibility of contact leading to reproduction. People with an impairment were viewed by the authorities as “the lowest grade of institutional inmate and the most dangerous threat to racial purity” (Humphries & Gordon, 1992: 102). Shaw (1914: 68) agreed with the view at that time suggesting “it may be too much to hope that a complete system of eugenics will ever find much favour”. Shaw (1914: 70) went further, writing that “preserving the integrity of the race by the elimination from it” of people housed in asylums and workhouses because of their physical or mental impairment would be “far reaching” with “much good to be anticipated”.

Francis Galton, founder of the English Eugenics Education Society, a cousin of Charles Darwin and influenced by his theories of evolution and natural selection, was among the first to write of what became known as eugenics. His ideas were provided “scientific legitimacy” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 92) by post-Enlightenment thinkers including Darwin and Malthus, the latter writing of the need for “moral restraint” to limit population growth and thus conserve natural resources and food supply.

The role played by educational institutions, including universities, in informing, or indeed, influencing public opinion is also a factor in the historical development of perceptions of disability. Contested ideas about industrial progress, the betterment of society and eugenics were initiated, debated and theorised in universities, places where the social elite were gathered. An example of this collective debate being the 1912 International Eugenics Conference (Burdett, 2014) dedicated to Francis Galton who had died a year earlier.

Defined by Brown and Brown, (2003: 64) eugenics "was the science and practice of purposely influencing the genetic makeup of a society in ways that seem to improve it". The belief at the time was that "society would make what was then regarded as progress, because it would have more able members and fewer members who were thought to hamper development" (Brown & Brown, 2003: 64). Galton was particularly interested in what he described as "negative eugenics" (Quarmby, 2011: 55) and used the term to "express the science of improving the stock" in order to "give the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had" (Galton, 1883: 24). Galton proposed the prevention or restriction of "recessive genes from reproduction by restricting the rights and opportunities of disabled people to breed" (Quarmby, 2011: 54), a practice adopted in many institutions where people with impairments were living.

Support for the eugenics movement steadily increased following the 1920 publication '*Permission for the Destruction of Life unworthy of Life'* in which Binding and Hoche wrote of the logic of mercy killing to prevent "irrational emotions like pity as responses to impairment" (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 94). Eugenics was widely embraced with the Holocaust, as Quarmby (2011: 54) suggests, being the "logical conclusion". The Nazi state sponsored sterilisation programme and the "murder box" (Quarmby, 2011: 67) transportation of people with an impairment led to 200,000 adults and children being 'euthanised' by the end of the Second World War. While the Nazi regime is considered as having the most extreme application of eugenics and, although the practice "quickly faded as a social philosophy" (Brown & Brown, 2003: 65) after the second world war, some evidence suggests that the "affirmation of disabled people's citizenship" (Drake, 1999: 95) in social policy has yet to be fully realised. Medical advances in gene manipulation and gene therapy raise ethical and moral questions about individual identity and potentially pose a danger of returning to the era of negative eugenics (Quarmby, 2011).

Drake (1999: 12) likewise argues that the contemporary science of genetics and genetic control assumes simple “malfunctioning physiology”, placing differing “social values to human beings” according to their genetic makeup which, in his opinion, leads to continued “disquiet” among people with impairments.

In considering the medical model of disability Goodley (2011: 6) notes that the medical perspective “views disability as pathology”, in that it is the impairment, be it physical or mental, which is itself the limiting factor. Two parallel themes, the biological and the psychological, provide alternative avenues of enquiry (Priestley, 2003). The biological frame focusses attention on how the physical and cognitive functionality of the human body is measured whilst the psychological view attends to the “negotiated aspects of individual identity and adjustment” (Priestley, 2003: 15). As Barton (1996: 8) notes, “labels such as ‘invalid’, ‘cripple’, ‘spastic’, ‘handicapped’ and ‘retarded’ all imply both a functional loss and a lack of worth”. These labels could be suggested to have legitimised the medical model and compounded the perception among ‘normal’ people that those with an impairment were both physiologically and biologically inferior.

Foucault, with a clear interest in the relationship between systems of knowledge (discourses) and power, “argued that medical discourses determine what is abnormal and deviant” (Thomas, 2007: 37). Foucault proposed that such knowledge should provide the instruction for how “abnormality must be prevented, treated and corrected” (Thomas, 2007: 37). In striking a note of caution Titchkosky and Michalko (2014: 103) suggest such a narrow focus on “elimination, cure or overcoming”, as promoted in the medical model of disability, disregards the individual and suggests their “lifeless” existence is less valuable than that of those without impairment. Thompson (2011: 114) concurs when he suggests the medical model failed to “acknowledge disability as a social division”, that “consequently efforts are directed towards making people feel comfortable, as if to compensate for their impairment”.

Corker (1999), among other poststructuralists, rejects the individualistic, medical pathological approach, as seen in the medical model, asserting that disability has “no fixed, absolute and essential qualities; rather disablist practices stem from the operation of powerful systems of knowledge in society” (Thomas, 2014: 12), a reference to what Foucault would describe as knowledge/power. Such is the historical legacy of the medicalisation of the individual that Maynard (2014: 299) contends “disabled people still experience the limitations imposed by the medical approach in almost all areas of life”.

Indeed, some medical sociologists (Williams, 2001; Scambler, 2004) acknowledge that the absorption with the “failing body” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 50) as inculcated within the medical model leads to a failure to acknowledge disabling barriers erected by society and experienced by people with impairments. Such stereotypes could be suggested to further reinforce negative responses from some who are themselves impaired, a justification for the way they believe they are viewed by society, and a making sense of their resulting self-imposed exclusion from society, reinforcing their deviant or derelict status. Despite modern medical advances society cannot eradicate the chance that people will be born with an impairment or have a life altering experience later in life. Although society might, however, consign the personal tragedy of the medical model to history, as it fails to reflect the lived experience of those with impairments, one has to consider the strong and lasting impact the medical model has on western society and institutions.

2.2 Compensation and Social Activism: The emergence of the Social Model of Disability

Having considered the accommodation and containment of people with impairments in asylums and workhouses this section of the literature review moves on, both historically and sociologically, to the compensatory stage of the organising construct proposed by Finkelstein (1991). The term disablism, first introduced in Chapter one, will be further explored through the lens of disability activism, the rise of the disabled peoples movement and the emergence of the social model of disability. As Brisenden (1986: 20) suggests, the medical model of disability is “rooted in an undue emphasis on clinical diagnosis, the very nature of which is destined to lead to a partial and inhibiting view of the disabled individual”.

Disablism is described here by Thompson (2012: 124) as a “combination of social forces, cultural values and personal prejudices which marginalizes (sic) disabled people, portrays them in a negative light and thus oppresses them”. While not ignoring the actuality that those with an impairment may well require medical interventions and support during their lives, Oliver (1996a: 139) describes the medical model as one with “in-built positivistic assumptions which see disability as individual pathology”. In *The New Politics of Disablement* Oliver and Barnes (2012) are highly critical of the medical and psychological approaches to disability for their underlying premise that it is the individual who must adjust to their impairment rather than society needing to accommodate their needs. Vehmas and Mäkelä (2009: 2) add to the growing criticism of the medical model arguing that the bias it inculcated led to “practices and social arrangements that oppress people with impairments” which rely on interventions to “improve or repair” rather than promoting wholesale environmental and sociological change.

The social model of disability “became the central concept around which disabled people began to interpret their own experiences and organise their own political movement” (Oliver, 1996b: 26) challenging “conventional wisdom that the history of disabled people is one of general progress and improvement in their social condition” (Humphries & Gordon, 1992: 155). While noting that some consider the social model to be a particularly British research tradition (Vehmas & Mäkelä, 2009), it does provide a lens through which to consider what it means to be disabled. One interpretation suggests “disability is not caused by impairment, nor constructed by society – it is created by society” (Lawson & Priestley, 2017: 5) with the social model considering the way in which social factors create and lead to the disadvantaging and marginalisation of people with an impairment. In reviewing the social interpretation of disability Priestley (2003) suggests the concern is not about individual impairment but rather the impact of society and societal process on those with an impairment. Meanwhile Kirton and Greene (2016: 106) write that the social model “increases the visibility of inequality on the basis of disability and challenges its legitimacy”. Shakespeare and Watson (1998: 14) describe the difficulties encountered by those with an impairment as “the result of a society which fails to address their needs both in the delivery of services and its social organisation”. Titchkosky and Michalko (2014: 102), reflecting on Oliver’s work, agree and describe “disability as a social phenomenon produced by society’s failure to respond adequately to impairment”, acknowledging that the social, cultural, political, institutional and economic barriers to participation in society form the foundation of the social model of disability.

Oliver is credited by many in the disability studies academic community (Priestley, 2003; Goodley, 2011; Cameron, 2014b) as the first to fully develop the social model of disability. Oliver (1996b: 23) writes that disability is a “restriction of oppression” and challenges the researcher to consider a new perspective, distinct from “medical or physical abnormality” in noting that “disability is produced”. Oliver (2004: 8) observed dependency as “created by the social, economic and political system in which disabled people live” and was careful to remind his reader that the social model of disability is concerned with the “collective experience of disablement”. His work was “profoundly influenced” (Oliver, 1996b: 26) by the Union of the Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS), a “collective of disabled people” (Oliver, 1996b: 25), whose fundamental principles, published in 1976, built on an emerging discourse focussing on the causes of exclusion of disabled people and which, crucially, identified a clear distinction between impairment and disability. While this binary distinction is described by De Poy and Gilson (2011: 35) as an “effort to clarify what is meant by embodied deficit and then to guide the concomitant responses to this condition”, Priestley (2003: 12) suggests the emergence of the social model of disability was influenced by a “radical reappraisal of disability issues” which “developed within disability activism”.

> In our view, it is society which disables physically impaired people. Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society. Disabled people are therefore an oppressed group in society.
>
> (UPIAS, 1976:3-4)

The critical rejection of the medical model by what became known as the Disabled People’s Movement introduced a “new, politicised approach to meeting the needs of disabled people” (Thompson, 2001: 111) and led to the emergence of international journals including *Disability & Society.* Disenchantment with the dominant approach to disability research, suggested by Shakespeare (2014: 1) as reliant on an “overly narrow and reductionist conception of disability”, became particularly acute following a case involving the Le Court Cheshire Home in the 1960s. Residents of the home, among them Paul Hunt, a founding member of UPIAS, expressed a sense of alienation which, in part, resulted from a research study conducted by the Tavistock Institute. The researchers, Miller and Gwynne, had been invited to the home by the residents to observe the group dynamics between themselves, staff and professional practitioners.

Following a three year study the researchers concluded that the residents should not be afforded greater control over their own lives which led to claims that they (Miller & Gwynne) were “following their own agenda” and were “parasites” (Barnes & Mercer, 1997: 2). It could be argued that the residents failed to appreciate the subtleties of the research which suggested that, as those with an impairment were defined by society as “socially dead” (Finkelstein, 1991: 21), consequently, the primary purpose of such institutions was to help residents manage the transition from social exclusion to death. Had the recommendations of Miller and Gwynne been to fundamentally challenge the notion of institutionalisation, rather than propose a “humane and efficient death” (Thompson, 2001: 120), their research may well have been welcomed by disabled activists. Whether Miller or Gwynne were themselves impaired is unknown yet, regardless, their report became a driving force in the founding of both UPIAS and numerous coalitions of people with impairments in the UK, most notably the Derbyshire Coalition of Disabled People (DCDP).

Thompson (2001: 124) notes that “The Disabled People’s Movement is a generic term used to describe the politicisation of disability issues” which consolidates a politically informed approach that “undermines the traditional (medical) model”. While referred to by some as the Disability Rights Movement (Smith, 2009: 15) the aim of the movement was to “offer an alternative paradigm for understanding disability”, to reconstruct the way society as a whole view people with impairments, promoting an understanding that all people, regardless of circumstance, require some form of support to lead a full and purposeful life.

The dehumanisation and dismissal of the individual, as witnessed through the experiences of those housed in the Poor Law workhouses and associated institutions, “inherent in disablism” (Thompson, 2011: 126) became an “important target” for those involved in the disability rights movement. Those involved in this “new social movement”, described as such because it was “peripheral to conventional politics” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 173), were determined to fight for the humanisation and attendant rights of people with impairments and profoundly influenced disability studies researchers. One particularly prominent academic, Oliver (Campbell & Oliver, 1996: 186) recalled, in his interview with Postance, how the UPIAS fundamental principles document “really spelt it out for me”, that “it encapsulated all that I thought and that I still think about disability”.

Founding members of UPIAS, Vic Finkelstein and Paul Hunt, are described by Thomas (2007) as motivated innovators, radicals and disabled activists. Barnes (1996: 46) characterises Hunt as a disability studies researcher for whom “people with impairments are unfortunate because they are seen as unable to enjoy the material and social benefits of modern society”. Barnes goes on to suggest that Hunt, himself a person with an impairment who had been institutionalised at a young age, wanted to “avoid sentimental autobiography” and the “preoccupation with the medical and practical details of a particular affliction”, instead wishing to focus attention on the relationship between disabled people and wider society (Barnes et al., 1999: 77).

Hunt and Finkelstein drew attention to the plight of people with an impairment suggesting that, as they were regarded as less able to contribute to the economic prosperity of a community they were, therefore, marginalised and even oppressed. Finkelstein and Stuart (1996: 170) recognised “the deficit interpretation of disability was so absolutely unquestioned” that it could pave the way for a radical reappraisal of the medical model, providing a recognition that the social interpretation of disability could be a “legitimate alternative”. Hunt compared the isolation resulting from such prejudice of others to the discrimination and oppression of other marginalised groups including people from minority ethnic backgrounds. Just as Oliver (1996) was influenced by UPIAS thinking so the social model of disability was itself influential and became the “knowledge base which informed the development of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Lawson & Priestley, 2017: 3).

As with his exploration of the medical model, seen earlier in this chapter, Priestley (1999) describes two emerging lenses through which the social model is framed, as cultural and structural. Priestley (1999: 30) writes that “discourses of personal tragedy and functional limitation serve to individualise disability and thus to obscure its social and economic causes”, going on to suggest that “it is not sufficient to identify disablist values unless it can be shown how they become disabling”. Thompson (2001: 113) continues this theme suggesting that social division and disablism is manifested in, for example, the construction of buildings and services which are, in part, inaccessible to those with an impairment so that “they (people with impairments) are not seen as part of the ‘general public’”.

Humphrey (2000: 63), while finding some virtue, does however conclude that the social model has flaws in both design and implementation when “interpreted in a way which undermines the very communities, politics and studies it was supposed to enhance”. Shakespeare (2006), a prominent critic of the social model, similarly acknowledges the way in which the model has prompted improved self-esteem through opportunities to engage in meaningful work among people with impairments. He also agrees that the social model has provided a rationale for, and active encouragement of, political debate, increasing the pressure for legislative reform to provide further protections for people with impairments. Has, however, the social model become a “sacred cow” (Quarmby, 2011: 89), a “barrier free Utopia”? Such a utopia was envisioned by Finkelstein in his simple illustrative parable of a village designed for wheelchair users.

One such environment in the Netherlands, Het Dorp, translated simply as ‘The Village’, designed and built specifically for people with severe impairments, is the subject of a study by Zola (1982: 5), himself a disabled activist, providing a thought provoking narrative around the complexities of such an “unusual experiment in living”. Constructed in 1964 the architects of Het Dorp worked with the principle that the village “should be built as an integral part of a city and not as an isolated community” (Klapwig & Bijleveld, 1972: 54). Also imagined in 1964 was what has become known as the L’arche international community. Jean Vannier, the founder of L’arche, started the movement by inviting two individuals with learning impairments to leave their asylum and join him in founding a community, one in which people with and without learning impairments could live, work and commune together. Tate and Lee (1983: 100) however, suggest that the building of such communities signals a failure of “normal society to cope with severely disabled people”. The question of whether complete integration is, in fact, possible or desirable is raised in a survey published in a design guide from the British Centre on Environment for the Handicapped (sic) which suggested “few disabled people felt they would enjoy a special village like Het Dorp” (Tate & Lee, 1983: 102). Reflecting on the utopian parable, Klapwig and Bijleveld (1972: 61) write that “whatever Het Dorp may be it is certainly not a kind of heaven on earth. It is a typically earthy community with typically human shortcomings”. Although desirable, and despite some real world examples, including Het Dorp and L’arche, the “concept of a world in which people with impairments are free of environmental barriers” (Shakespeare & Watson, 2010: 62) is difficult to both imagine and to construct, as such utopian spaces fail to appreciate the multiplicity of needs and the individual lived experience of those with an impairment.

Crow (1996), active in the disabled people's movement, writes of the need for researchers to take a fresh look at the complexities of the social model in order to effect societal change. While the social model approach to understanding disability reflected the growth of the disability movement Shakespeare and Watson (2010: 57) suggest it had become a "litmus test", a means of researchers themselves being identified with disability activists and thus perceived as "disability studies scholars". The challenges for the disability studies researcher will be explored in more detail in section 2.4 of this chapter. Degener (2017: 33) is more forceful suggesting the social model "is the heuristic venture of a rights-based approach to disability". Furthermore, by distancing itself from the medical model of disability, the social model discouraged discussion about rehabilitation and medical intervention, surely not the intention of UPIAS and its founding members.

Lawson and Priestley (2017: 7) express concern that a social model approach disembodies "discussions of disability, with the result that the unique experiences" of people with an impairment may be overlooked. Swain et al. (2003: 36) agree, noting that the exclusive focus on the binary medical and social models has denied the "embodied experience of disability". Shakespeare (2006) is fairly strident in his position when he postulates that the very few people with impairments identify with the social model. In a much later interview with Times Higher Education, Shakespeare (2018: 19) reaffirms his position that disability studies research is more than a simple binary choice between the medical and social models; he suggests instead that it is "more complicated than that. Disabled people have medical and psychological issues as well as the social barriers they face".

2.3 Citizenship: Emerging models of disability

The social model, while providing a lens through which to consider the social causes of inequality experienced by people with impairments, is largely rejected by Shakespeare (2006: 2) who proposes an alternative view. He suggests that exploring the lived realities of people with impairments "neither reduces disability to an individual medical problem, nor neglects the predicament of bodily limitation and difference". The social model tradition acknowledges the "existence of individual difference" although recognises that the "reality of impairment" (Lawson & Priestley, 2017: 7) is an issue which warrants further exploration.

Swain et al. (2003: 25) are in agreement here arguing that a more "complete understanding of disability and impairment as social constructs" should be considered and that recognition of the individual lived experience is fundamental to this emergent approach. Degener (2017: 32) reflects on this shift in thinking and offers the "human rights model" as an alternative frame, a development of the social model, through which the lived experience of people with an impairment could be considered. In facilitating conversation in which prominence is given to the individual, or lived experience of people with an impairment, the social change demanded by disability activists, so intrinsically embedded in the social model of disability, might be brought about.

Roulstone and Prideaux (2012: xv) suggest the social model of disability has "served as the conceptual glue" for social policy change; an example of which can be seen in the Disabling Society programme offered by the Open University in the 1970s, the title making "explicit its social model foundations" (Barnes & Mercer, 2004: 8). The extent to which the social model has "truly penetrated policy is a moot point" with some disability studies researchers (Shakespeare & Watson, 1998, Corker & French, 1999; French & Swain, 2008; Goodley, 2011) seeking to "disrupt and explode epistemological positions" (Goodley, 2011: 63) and break new boundaries in the "post-conventional or postmodern debate". Shakespeare (2014: 92) suggests the principles of "emancipatory research" should be "accountable to the priorities and organisation of disabled people" and is particularly critical of the disability rights movement preferring instead to advocate the conceptualisation of liberation and a link between culture and prejudice. Corker and French (1999: 6) likewise relate their unease with the "current frame of disability theory" describing their concern that it fails to "conceptualize (sic) a mutually constitutive relationship between impairment and disability which is both materially and discursively produced".

In suggesting that the social model is limited to orchestrating binary solutions, either to the socially constructed barriers facing people with impairments or to the physical impediments they face, Swain and French (2000: 569) challenge the limitations of the social model and advocate a "non-tragic view of disability and impairment which encompasses positive social identities". In considering the citizenship phase of the organising construct proposed by Finkelstein (1991) Swain and French (2000: 569) recognise the "benefits of life style and life experience of being disabled".

Swain and Cameron (1999: 75), writing of their personal experience as men with impairments, share their concern that “even discourses around integration serve to problematize disabled people”, suggesting that society, in general, is still unwilling to accept people with impairments for who they are. Thomas (2007: 182) similarly acknowledges the need for advancing sociological ideas to “play a part in overcoming disablist structures, systems, discourses, attitudes, practices and behaviours”.

Meanwhile, Goodley (2011:113) observes a subtle yet significant shift in focus, as suggested by Tremain (2002), and re-imagines the definition of disability, promoting the need for equal treatment and the right to “take part in the normal life of the community”. An example of this shifting discourse can be seen in comments made by the recent Transport Secretary, Chris Grayling, about how revised parking guidance from the Department for Transport (DfT) to Councils would now include people with invisible disabilities. Grayling is reported to have said “As a society, we don’t do enough for people with hidden disabilities. I hope this change will make a real difference to people’s lives” (Swerling, 2019: 1). Oliver (1996b: 27) suggests “the sociological imagination has arrived”, acknowledging the intersection between disability studies and the multiple lenses through which inequality in social life might be viewed.

In considering the citizenship component of the organising construct proposed by Finkelstein (1991) the literature suggests, while there are a number of shared concepts, there is no single theoretical frame which others might recognise or adopt as a single point of academic reference. The Medical and Social Models are widely accepted in Disability studies yet the emerging citizenship debate has yet to be assigned a common epithet. This study, therefore, proposes a fresh interpretation which draws upon the emergent approaches and seeks to present a new model of disability, described hereafter as the Affirmative Model of Disability.

The Affirmative Model builds on the invitation from Shakespeare (2006: 2) that researchers explore the “lived realities” of people with impairments. The model provides a lens through which to further explore and research the life style and life experience, equal treatment in society (Degener, 2017) and positive social identity (Swain & French, 2000) of people with impairments.

A conceptual map of the Affirmative Model of Disability is shown, in figure 1, as a series of concentric circles with affirmation at the centre. The first circle denotes the life style and lived experience of the individual. The second circle frames the "social imaginary" (Taylor, 2004: 23), the way in which people with impairments experience themselves in relation to others. The outer enveloping circle provides the political and legal context in which those with impairments are provided "full and effective participation and inclusion in society on an equal basis with others" (United Nations, 2006: 5).

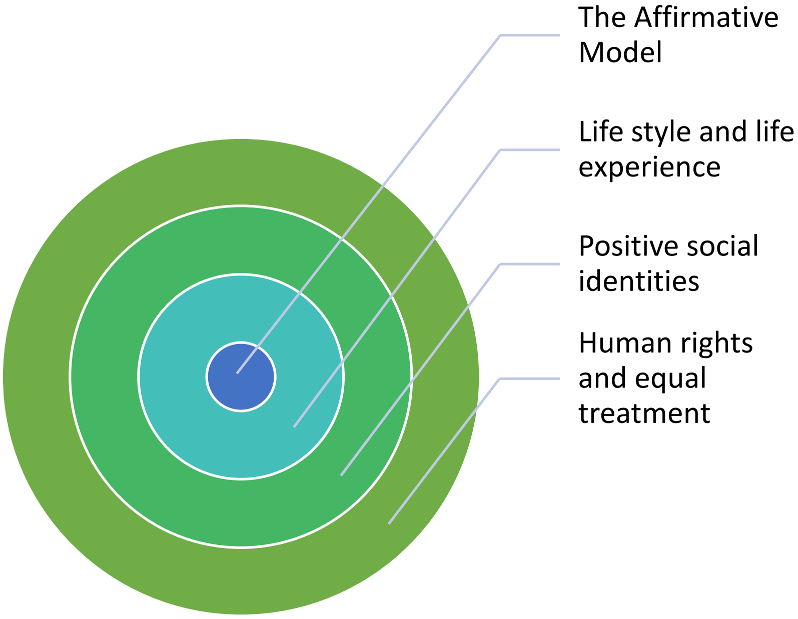

Fig. 1 A conceptual map of the Affirmative Model of Disability (Kember, 2019)

2.4 Locating Disability Studies: Traditional and emergent views

This section considers the academic discipline of disability studies providing segue into the later debate, in Chapter four, about the role of both the impaired and non-impaired researcher. As Shakespeare (2014: 223) suggests, "Disability studies should work to provide rich empirical studies of how disabled people experience barriers, and how they experience their impairments", it should be "pluralist, valuing analytical rigour and open debate". Disability studies as an emergent field with intellectual roots in the social and rehabilitation sciences "made its presence felt in the 1980s" reflecting the "movement *of* rather than *for* disabled people" (Thomas, 2010: 41); with the social model, developed within the disabled people's movement, forming the "foundations of the interdisciplinary field of disability studies" (Lawson & Priestley, 2017: 4).

This point is echoed by Johnstone (2001: 153) when he suggests that the "central task of Disability Studies is to promote the exploration of community values using the perspectives of disabled people" who are at the margins of society. Put simply, Finkelstein (1998: 33) defines disability studies as "the study of disabled people's lifestyles and aspiration". Watson (2012) further notes the resonance of disability studies to professional practice suggesting that disability researchers should publish work that is cognisant of individual experience and that will be of practical benefit to those with impairments.

In viewing disability as a cultural and social phenomenon, disability studies considers questions about the social world which are "antagonistic to the popular view that disability equates with personal tragedy" (Goodley, 2011: xi), aiming to dislodge disability from its medicalised origins. Thomas (2010: 42) describes the field as becoming an influential presence in the University sector due to the "volume, range and intellectual sophistication of ideas about disability and disablism". Evidence of the shift from "relative obscurity to a position of legitimate sociological and multidisciplinary debate" (Johnstone, 2001: 1) in disability studies in HE can be seen in the expansion of research centres, journals publishing disability focussed research and an increase in funding for disability studies (Thomas, 2007).

The emerging academic discipline offered a "distinctive critique on contemporary social organisation" (Cameron, 2009: 382) seeking to bridge what was seen as a gap between the "academy and the actuality of disabled people's lives" (Cameron & Moore, 2014: 37). Goodley (2011: 48) provides a simple guide when he suggests that "the sociological study of disability, in Britain, is carved into two main camps: disability studies and medical sociology". Historically, as seen in the earlier discussion about the medical model of disability and medical sociology, "sociologists have tended to accept the dominant hegemony with regard to viewing disability in medical and psychological terms" (Barton, 1996: 6). In what Kuhn (1961) would describe as a 'paradigm shift', discussion became focussed on the social model, a reaction and "counter-movement to the pathologising tendencies of medical sociology" (Goodley, 2011: 48), leading to the emergence of disability studies. Disability studies developed "a social oppression perspective of disablism" (Goodley, 2011: 48) drawing on a range of related academic disciplines, among them, sociology, anthropology, politics, history and psychology.

This “plethora of influences” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 178) raises the question of whether disability studies is, itself, a discipline in its own right or simply a sub-discipline with roots in one of these broader fields.

Of particular relevance to this study is the way in which disability studies should “have a direct impact on the dismantling of disabling barriers” (Cameron & Moore, 2014: 37) through critique of policies and practices which relate to those with an impairment. Specifically, the focus provided by disability studies to “critically contest ideas enshrined in traditional teaching and training courses” (Cameron & Moore, 2014: 38), which resonates with the research questions posed in this study.

Critical to the fundamental essence of the field is the construction of ideas, informed by the voices of those with an impairment which frame and inform policy developments and challenge institutional practice and culture (Booth & Ainscow, 2011).Disability studies recognises that “the personal life experiences of disabled people are not simply the product of individual cognitive psychology, but are deeply embedded in the social” (Priestley, 2003: 16), another core facet of this study being to understand social constructions in institutional contexts. Shakespeare and Watson (2010: 72) suggest that disability studies research should simply “attend to what disabled people say and think, not what we (the researchers) wish they should say and think”.

The emergence of Critical Disability Studies (CDS) to challenge and critique the limitations of the social model, opens up new avenues of academic discourse about disability, disablism and intersectionality (Osborne, 2019). The aim of CDS is to promote an understanding of the social model while taking it in new and creative directions, deconstructing the historical binary labels of ‘disabled’ and non-disabled’ and promoting full participation in society of all individuals regardless of circumstance. In a “more nuanced” (Oliver & Barnes, 2012: 180) approach to disability which focusses on culture, discourse and language, central to CDS is the “deconstruction of the concept of normality”, a theme considered throughout this literature review. The final section of the literature review explores the term ‘lived experience’ given its resonance to the field of Disability Studies and this research study.

2.5 Embodied Lives: Representations of the lived experience of people with impairments

The way in which people with an impairment are represented in art, literature, media and film has been widely researched and “reveals much about how disabled people are seen or ignored” (Rummery, 2012: 265). Representation, or the way in which individual identity is crafted by others, is suggested by Williams-Findlay (2014: 108) to mean “the construction in any medium of aspects of reality” and covers both the process involved and the resulting product. Williams-Findlay (2014: 112) writes specifically of the way in which those with an impairment are represented in news media and suggests that the dominant perspective about “disabled lives” does not “necessarily portray how disabled people see themselves or their lived experiences”. Barnes and Mercer (2010: 189) focus a spotlight on the negative impact of the “one dimensional” characterisation of people with an impairment in television productions, going so far as to suggest that they are depicted as “passive victims, dependent and unproductive”. Darke (2004: 101) adopts a similar stance and is particularly critical of the way in which television productions sanitise “past unpleasantness or objections to extreme examples of abuse against impaired individuals” as if the viewer were, themselves, somehow to be shielded from lived reality. Rummery (2012: 265) pursues the one dimensional theme suggesting that such representations are “usually negative” and often limited to the disabled person in a tragic, freak like or pity inducing role.

In his *Notes on the management of spoiled identity* Goffman (1963: 12) suggests that the sanitised view promulgated by the media reduces the individual to being seen as “tainted” and thus “discounted”. Goffman (1963: 15) further notes that, in assimilating negative representations and biased perspectives, society exercises “varieties of discrimination, through which we effectively, if often unthinkingly, reduce his (sic) life chances”. In response and, as advised by Hannon (2007: 4) who notes the “need for an enlightened, responsible and non-discriminatory media culture”, it is important to consider the individual, how they experience others and how, in turn, others experience them, in order to create a shared understanding and appreciation for how societal change can be effected.

Van Manen (1997: 35) agrees that an understanding of the lived experience of others gathers hermeneutic (the term hermeneutics will be explored in Chapter four) significance and is integral to human science in that it “begins in lived experience and eventually turns back to it”.

At its heart the lived experience could be described as a self-given feeling, a sense of being and consciousness of life, “awareness, unaware of itself” (Van Manen, 1997: 35), which becomes objective only in thought. In considering the lived experience of people with impairments, Brown and Brown (2003: 57) write simply that “people with disabilities live with their disabilities every moment of their lives. It is a personal experience”. As such Brown and Brown (2003: 57) contend it is not possible for people without impairment to appreciate “fully the experience of disability” regardless of how much that individual learns, reads and attempts to understand. They do, however, suggest, in a nod to the utopian village imagined by Finkelstein and the real communities of Het Dorp and L’arche, that an appreciation of the lived experience of disability can “dramatically affect what happens to people with disabilities” (Brown & Brown, 2003: 57).

A lived experience (adopted from the French *le vecu* meaning real life) is, by its very nature, unique to every individual, capturing the essence and reality of every dimension of life, informed and shaped by the diversity of physical, psychological and sociological experience. Taylor (2004: 23) provides an interesting perspective suggesting the lived experience is informed, in part, by what he terms the “social imaginary”, how individuals experience life and how they imagine “their social existence” in relation to others. Taylor (2004: 23) posits that the social imaginary is predominantly expressed through “images, stories and legends” shared among groups to create common understanding, purpose and “legitimacy”.

Such social imaginary, a sense of how the social world is, and how it could be for people with impairments, might be suggested as an enabling factor of the activism of the Disabled Peoples Movement, discussed earlier in this chapter. The poems written by people with impairments, in which they articulate what living with impairment and disability means to them, provide a narrative perspective through which to consider the continuum of the lived experience. Keith (1994: 3), editor of an anthology of poems and letters, suggests an “important way to deal with these new experiences [of disability] was to write about them”. One contributor writes:

> If I can live with this dilemma it doesn’t seem too much to ask
>
> To ask others to recognise how I’m different
>
> But very ordinary
>
> Ordinary and very different (Jastrzębska, 1994: 153)

To contemplate the lived experience of others without appropriation is, therefore, to consider each situation, each person, each research finding in its own right rather than apply “general principles in a reductionist and dogmatic way” (Thompson, 2001: 160). This research study has, through semi-structured interviews with individuals from the Disabled Staff Network (DSN), provided an opportunity for each interviewee to consider and share their lived experience in the context of the research, to explore what is known through their unique lens and thus “assign meaning to the phenomena of lived life” (Van Manen, 1997: 37).

In summary this chapter has introduced and explored the medical, social and affirmative models of disability, considered the discipline known as Disability Studies and briefly explored the emergence of CDS, before introducing the concept of the lived experience. The review demonstrates, in particular through the lens of disability activism, how the position of the researcher might influence the design, analysis, synthesis, presentation and conclusions of their research, an issue further considered in Chapter four. Models of disability, societal influences and the way in which people with impairments have been represented over time provide stimuli for the design and delivery of E&D training in UK HE. In the following chapter the HE context, in which the professional staff developer practices, is explored.

3 Equality and Diversity training in UK Higher Education

Chapter three provides the rationale for, and positioning of, E&D training in UK HE. The andragogic challenges are discussed alongside an exploration of the purpose of, approaches to, barriers towards, and illustrative delivery methods of, contemporary E&D training in HEIs. The chapter specifically considers and partially answers the sub research question 'What is the nature and purpose of equality and diversity training in Higher Education and how is it defined and delivered?

3.1 The rationale for Equality and Diversity training

In considering the rationale for E&D training in HE, Barnes (1995: 66) writes that "the overwhelming majority of British schools, colleges and universities remain unprepared to accommodate (the) disabled within a mainstream setting". Barnes (1995: 66) goes further by suggesting that universities currently adopt "institutionalised practices which work to the disadvantage of disabled people". This section will introduce the legislative drivers that inform E&D training in HE and explore the rationale for providing such training to HE staff. UK HEIs have a specific duty, framed by the Equality Act (2010), to promote equality and diversity. The Act requires public sector organisations, including universities, to have due regard to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between "persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it" (Equality Act*,* 2010: s149). The Equality Act introduced the term 'protected characteristic' as a way of defining a trait or aspect of a person such as their age, gender or disability; discriminating against a person because of a characteristic defined in this way contravenes the legislation.

The Equality Act (2010) unites the previously dispersed threads of race, gender and disability into a single piece of legislation, providing statutory protection from discrimination for individuals and communities across nine protected characteristic categories which include disability. Despite this amalgamation of legislation, Martin (2017: 5) suggests the way in which disability is defined by the Equality Act promotes ableism and is "equated to descriptors of ways in which impaired bodies deviate inconveniently from assumed normative corporality".

Martin (2017) also writes that the Equality Act lacks clear guidance for public sector organisations in terms of good practice for developing training, which emphasises the benefits of an inclusive culture in which those with an impairment are treated with respect.

Equality and diversity education in HE first came to prominence in the United States (US) and the UK as a reaction to the civil rights movement of the 1960s which was seen as providing a rationale for social change. The US Title VII Civil Rights Act of 1964 was regarded as a “defining moment in the history of the United States” and legislated against “acts of unfairness and inequality in all forms” (Scott, 2014: 9) although it was, at the time, specifically limited to “race, color (sic), religion and national origin”. Diversity training in the workplace became commonplace in the US by the 1980s and, when the Americans with Disabilities Act was approved in 1990, paved the way for formal education programmes designed to ensure equal treatment of people with an impairment.

In the UK the Macpherson report into institutionalised racism and systemic inequality in the Metropolitan police, highlighted the growing need for public sector organisations to focus attention on equality and diversity issues given the collective failure to tackle discrimination it all its forms (McKenzie, 2000). The failures documented by Macpherson were not the “exclusive domain” (Clements & Jones, 2008: 25) of the police service, indeed Brown and Leigh (2018b: 988) go so far as to suggest “ableism in academia is endemic”. Government reforms in the late 1990s were designed to accelerate progress on diversity issues and drew into sharp focus the need for the public sector, including HEIs, to “be a part of, not apart from the society it serves” (Clements & Jones, 2008: 25).

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006) provides an international frame for training in HE with articles 8 and 24 focussing attention on awareness raising and education respectively. Article 8 (2006, section d) invites parties to promote “awareness-training programmes regarding persons with disabilities” while article 24 (section 4) advocates training for “professionals and staff who work at all levels of education”. With specific reference to HEIs the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) publish benchmark statements designed to support the development, validation and audit of curricula in HE including guidance on the auditing of equality and diversity practice.

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) admit, in the green paper 'Fulfilling our potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice' (2015) that, while recognising the public sector equality duty placed on HEIs to promote equality of opportunity, the report recommendations rely on an incomplete quantitative data set which examined only five of the nine protected characteristics enshrined within the Equality Act (2010). The paper advocated the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) designed, BIS suggested, to improve the quality of the student experience and promote participation across diverse communities. While the formal consultation invited qualitative comment from interested parties the formulation of recommendations based on an analysis of a partial data set are suggested by the researcher to be problematic, even discriminatory, and raise questions as to the efficacy of national HE policy with regard to the genuine inclusion of those with a protected characteristic. It is interesting to note from Annex (D) of the report that, of the 156 individuals and organisations consulted, only the Sutton Trust, whose mission is to combat educational inequality, could reasonably be suggested as representing the views of those for whom the reforms are intended to make a difference. The exclusion from the BIS consultation of the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) is also significant given the ECU remit to further, support and promote equality and diversity for staff and students in HEIs in the UK. When established in 2001 the ECU was funded, in part, by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) with HEI's subscribing to the service. The 2018 merger of HEFCE, ECU, the Higher Education Academy (HEA) and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE), creating *Advance HE* may, in time, alter the nature of the relationship with individual HEIs for whom the critical friend role of the ECU is both helpful and challenging.

The ECU Progress Review of 2013 forewarned that the ECU needed "to remain at the centre of the continuing debate about the role of HE in society" (James, 2013: 3) and that the commitment to the social case for equality and diversity in HE be maintained. In the past ten years the ECU has published thirty-six reports, guidance notes and literature reviews where one or more of the protected characteristics, enshrined within the Equality Act (2010), specifically feature in the title. Papers relating to age, LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) and ethnicity feature prominently with fifty percent of the publications dedicated to these issues. Guidance notes intended for HEIs to support students with a disability account for a further sixteen percent while papers relating to staff with a disability amount to fourteen percent.

Of these only one is concerned with learning and development in the context of academic staff embedding disability equality themes into their teaching. This ECU publication, ‘Academic teaching staff: developing equality and diversity skills, knowledge and values’ (2015: 41), specifically recommends that HEIs “develop a model for equality and diversity expertise” through inclusive learning and teaching practice. This echoes similar guidance from LFHE (Clifford et al., 2015: 16) who recommend “mandatory attendance at equality and diversity staff development for all staff where stereotypes and prejudices relating to disability in the workplace can be challenged”.

Everett (2017: 16) suggests that meeting the needs of people with impairments is “not helped by universities’ approaches” and identifies training as one of a number of inclusive activities that HEIs should consider. Roulstone and Prideaux (2012: 23) posit that such recommendations be viewed through the lens of people with an impairment suggesting that policy makers “want to adapt disabled individuals to a non-disabled world” rather than seeking to celebrate cultural and social difference. Pringle (2009: 76) agrees that when diversity is “managed through a predetermined and documented system”, such as the one seemingly in evidence in HE, “creative and diverse practice” is neither encouraged nor celebrated.

The Index for Inclusion, proposed by Booth and Ainscow as “a singular approach to development” (2011: 12) outlines how policy development, when part of an integrated process, can, however, be an enabler of cultural change. Offering a “supportive process of self-review and development as an alternative to one based on inspection” (Booth & Ainscow, 2011: 19), the index provides a planning framework and a series of indicators for designing inclusive learning environments. While their work is focussed on developing learning and participation in schools the approach suggested by Booth and Ainscow could equally apply to HEIs. Comprising three dimensions, policy, practice and culture, the index invites educators to consider, while acknowledging the progressive challenge, how policy should support evolving practice and, in turn, lead to cultural change.

Regarding the earlier question of whether HEIs could themselves be described as ableist, Kirton and Greene (2016: 238) describe the UK HE sector as minimalist or partial in its adoption of E&D policy; compliant with legislative requirements yet scant in regard to the root causes of discriminatory practice and with “no conception of a wider social justice concern for equality and diversity”. Mindful of the increasingly competitive HE landscape, Stevenson et al. (2014: 8) meanwhile note a developing tension between quality and equality, leading HEIs to focus on “measurable outputs”. One such indicator of performance is training by numbers, a term ascribed to HEIs who focus solely on measuring the number of people, or percentage of staff, who have been trained in order to satisfy audit or legislative requirements. Such institutions might be defined as ableist, having little regard for the quality or impact of such training and are described by Johnson Morgan and Finkelstein as “becoming mired in their own processes” (2017: 147), viewing E&D training as a “progressively tick-box exercise” (2017: 146) and a “bolt-on aspect of delivery” (James, 2013:4). The apparent simplification of, indifference to, and poor engagement with, equality and diversity issues by senior HE individuals poses a significant impediment to those engaged in translating legislation and policy when designing and facilitating impactful E&D awareness and training (Jones & Moore, 1996; Pringle, 2009; Diamond, 2015; Greatbatch, 2015; Everett, 2017). The following section explores these challenges from the perspective of the professional staff developer working in HE.

3.2 The andragogic challenge

Barton (1996: 5) suggests that “the sociological imagination involves a healthy scepticism and a desire to get beneath surface features to the deep structures of social relations and experience”. If, as suggested earlier in this chapter, E&D training in HE is considered by some to be an exercise in meeting a simple statutory obligation, how can the professional staff developer and andragogist (from *Andragogy,* the art or science of helping adults learn) design and facilitate learning events that provide a space for challenge, debate and a shift away from discriminatory and ableist attitudes? The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (2007: 1) describes the purpose of education as “concerned with understanding how people develop and learn throughout their lives, the nature of knowledge and critical engagement with ways of knowing and understanding”. Reid and Barrington (1999: 7) suggest simply that “learning must yield the ability to do something that was not previously within the learner’s capability”. To enable learning to take place a “planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviours”, described as ‘training’, would be designed, facilitated and evaluated to measure the impact the intervention has made.

The role of the professional staff developer, or trainer, is “essentially about making learning happen” (Reid & Barrington, 1999: 7); they have a duty of care to their audience of adult learners, a responsibility to do far more than simply inculcate institutional dogma through constant repetition. Their role is to create an environment in which learners can question and challenge perceived wisdom, work with complexity, interpret and understand social phenomena and assist in the application of new knowledge in their own environments. Cleaver et al. (2014: 28) describe this as a process of “contextual illumination”, making sense of the world with a desire to make positive contributions that will impact on wider society with the aim of transforming socially unjust policies, beliefs and practices (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000; Wright-Mills, 2000; Bryman, 2016).

In order to understand the principles of training for institutional and social change the setting in which learning takes place should first be considered. Vygotsky (1978: 86) conceptualised this environment as a “zone of proximal development” where the learner, through the learning intervention and with the support of the learning group and a skilled facilitator, or trainer, is able to raise their level of knowledge from a base to an enhanced level, effectively aiming for a target zone between existing and new knowledge. Vygotsky’s work, although rarely read in its original form, or indeed in relation to andragogy, sought to explain the theories first proposed by the Gestalt psychology movement which described how human perception of phenomena could be constructed as a series of parts which formed a whole, complex structure.

Vygotsky was particularly interested in Marx’s theory of society in which historical changes in society, as seen in the historical construction of disability explored in the literature review, fundamentally impact upon human consciousness and behaviour, a core component of learning. Vgotsky believed that, in order for humans to develop mature thinking, or consciousness, it was necessary for some form of learning to take place. The “distance between the actual developmental level and the level of potential development” in a collaborative environment “with more capable peers” is how Vygotsky (1978: 86) described the zone of proximal development.

In the context of E&D training in UK HE the relationship between andragogy and the zone of proximal development is particularly interesting and raises a series of questions. For example, having achieved adulthood, can, if at all, learning undertaken by an individual be considered as fully completed or is the role of the staff developer to encourage lifelong learning and personal development. The following section will consider a range of barriers facing the professional andragogist in creating the environment in which such learning can take place.

3.3 Barriers to Equality and Diversity training

Having explored the legislative framework which underpins the provision of E&D training in HE, it is reasonable to infer that participants, who may well be under an obligation to attend training, will have “variable commitment and enthusiasm” for the subject matter (Clements & Jones, 2008: 58). In this section the barriers facing the professional staff developer in HE, who is charged with the design and delivery of E&D training, are explored. In her small scale study of academic staff (n=12) Kendall (2018: 697) notes that, while “all but one of the participants identified a need for disability training” only a small proportion felt that training should be mandatory. Meanwhile, Kulik and Roberson (2008: 280) suggest that participants “who think they have no need for training are unlikely to benefit from it”, a particularly challenging audience for the professional staff developer. Furthermore, Clements and Jones (2008: 10) recognise that “learning to learn about diversity can be, and may even have to be, a painful process. Hannon (2007: 36) agrees, intimating that “most people, if challenged, would deny that they treat disabled people unfairly”, that participants at E&D training events may even “conceal(s) a deep reluctance to accept disabled people on equal terms”.

Oliver (1996a: 88) poses a significant challenge for those tasked with the design and delivery of E&D training in HE when he suggests that “nothing short of the removal of all disablist curriculum materials will suffice if the new version of integration, as we are coming to understand it, is ever to be achieved”. Jones and Moore (1996) however offer a cautionary note for the professional staff developer in that employing a strategy which simply seeks out, removes and replaces disablist materials ignores and undermines the social, historical and institutional context that E&D training is intended to explore.

Meanwhile Herring and Henderson (2015: 1) suggest that diversity training should provide "creative conflict that leads to closer examination of assumptions" within learning environments although Swan (2009: 308) is cautious in this regard noting that "diversity training is likely to generate hostile reactions from managers and academics".

It is fair to state that HEIs employ creative, articulate and intelligent individuals from a multiplicity of backgrounds who, if the environment and culture permits, can enrich the knowledge base, innovative outputs and experience of all who live, study, work in, and benefit from, HE. The design of "readily accessible research-informed and evidence-based practice to raise awareness, build confidence, promote engagements and inform future direction" (Caruana & Ploner, 2010: 2) is particularly important in HEIs where a lack of confidence and understanding among academic staff promulgate a resistance to change (ECU, 2015).

In their report of a survey of 557 academic staff the ECU (2015: 1) write of the importance of E&D skill development opportunities that provide academic staff with the confidence to challenge "dogmatic views" while reducing the institutional risk of litigation resulting from discrimination. The ECU (2015: 7) quote one respondent as saying "it is important to reflect on how to behave with respect" with others acknowledging the need for alternative approaches that develop an appreciation of equitable treatment of all students. It is interesting to note, from the academics responses, the emphasis on the equitable treatment of students with no obvious cognisance of similar fair treatment of colleagues. This supports the suggestion, discussed earlier, that the focus on development activity that explores the needs of students with impairments above those of all individuals may be prevalent in HE.

In contrast the ECU report includes the views of some academics for whom "equality and diversity expertise was irrelevant" with "limited impact" becoming a "distraction for intelligent people from work of value" (ECU, 2015: 8). Burwood (2009: 487) suggests that such views "epitomise a self-regarding and inward looking academy" in which such "elitist and exclusionary" attitudes are counter intuitive to the primary function of HE which is to enlighten and educate.

The challenge to the professional staff developer in HE is, in part, to acknowledge the diversity of views when working with both the academic and professional services communities and to challenge hegemonic notions of equality and diversity. The ECU report, moreover, suggests that the dominance of the academic voice in the social structure of a University leads to a tendency to view equality and diversity as an issue of concern only when working with the student population, creating the opportunity to broaden such limited views through learning and development activity which promotes equality and diversity for all.

Herring and Henderson (2015:15) discuss the need to challenge prevailing ideas and present their definition of critical E&D training as “the equal inclusion of people from varied backgrounds on a parity basis” providing space to consider all those who participate in HE, whether student or staff. “Patterns of inequality do not simply happen; they occur because of the actions of organizations (sic) and therefore are not inevitable or insurmountable” (Kirton & Greene, 2016: 7).

The challenge for the professional staff developer in HE is to acknowledge the competing tensions presented here and design and facilitate E&D training that not only satisfies legislative requirements but also enlightens and informs participants. The four sections that follow provide an exploration and discussion of a range of alternative approaches that the professional staff developer in HE might consider when designing and delivering E&D training.

3.4 Approaches to Equality and Diversity training in UK Higher Education

When it comes to the delivery of E&D training in HE Swan (2009: 319) suggests that, without the history, personal narrative, imagination, lived experience and stories of those with impairments, disability awareness and disability equality training are nothing more than a panacea, an “ambivalent space”. Swan (2009: 319) recommends “highly heterogenous practice” which offers a place for constructive challenge, shared understanding and an appreciation for the lived experience of those who live and work in a disablist society.

In providing learning spaces in which staff in HE can gain an understanding of, and appreciation for, the lived experience of those with impairments, the professional staff developer might select from a broad range of activities with the purpose of enlightening, informing and challenging participants around issues of E&D, disablism and ableism. The most commonly utilised and traditional method of delivery in HE is the face to face workshop, led by a facilitator and, to gather qualitative data for this study four of these traditional training workshops were observed. These were delivered by HEIs, from which collages, a collection of images, stories, metaphors and words taken directly from these workshops and presented later in Chapter six, were created.

As discussed in the previous section the principal purpose of E&D training is to provide a space in which those who participate can consider what it means to work in an organisation with a diverse workforce, to challenge assumptions about people who have a protected characteristic, to establish a “common language for talking about diversity” Kulik & Roberson, 2008: 277) and to support a culture of inclusivity (Pendry et al., 2007; Wynants & Dennis, 2017).

While E&D training is designed to provide context around all nine protected characteristics, Murray et al. (2009) found that disability focussed training had a positive impact on staff perceptions of people with an impairment. In particular they noted that an increase in positive views among non-disabled staff of their impaired colleagues was directly attributable to training workshop participation although this was reduced when applied to online course completion. With specific reference to disability, French and Swain (2008: 34) describe two forms of face to face disability E&D training; disability awareness training which they suggest can be delivered by the non-disabled person and disability equality training (DET) which, in their view, should only be delivered by someone who has an impairment. The British Council of Disabled People recognise the opportunities presented through disability awareness training in suggesting it is a space for people with impairments to recognise and acknowledge “the social model’s immediate connection to their own experiences” (Thomas, 2007: 57). Kulik and Roberson (2008: 279) suggest that the purpose of awareness training is to increase “awareness of the cognitive processes that may lead to discrimination and differential treatment”, providing a space where participants can consider their personal assumptions and potentially unconscious biases about those with whom they may not share specific characteristics.

Martin (2017: 26) similarly highlights these different forms of training and supports the recommendation that “high quality mandatory disability equality training” should be “delivered by disabled people”. Hurst (2006: 155) however, is critical of the term ‘training’ which, he suggests, infers that “particular actions occur irrespective of context and individual”. He offers a third subtler form which he describes simply as “disability awareness” designed to “sensitise people to what it might mean for someone with an impairment to participate in higher education and society” (Hurst, 2006: 155). The use of such contextualised simulations designed to heighten this suggested sensitivity will be explored later in this chapter.

Meanwhile Clements and Jones (2008) question the use of the term ‘awareness’ suggesting this form of training may be seen as inferior to DET and, therefore, incapable of supporting Bartons’ (1996) aim of getting beneath the surface to a place where learning can be effective, the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). This focus on awareness is further explored by Ewens et al. (2011: 15) who highlight the importance of “awareness-raising and mandatory disability equality training” in HE noting that “respondents expressed strong views about achieving equitable treatment for disabled staff”.

In response to the suggestion from French and Swain that disability equality training be delivered by a person with an impairment, Clements and Jones (2008: 8) argue that, while it is “imperative for trainers to believe in what they are doing”, and that collaborating with impaired individuals and groups in the design of both disability awareness and DET promotes inclusivity, the facilitation expertise of the trainer ensures consistency of design and delivery. Hurst (2006: 156) agrees that the proficiency of the professional staff developer is important in maintaining excellence in a “higher education context” although recommends a partnership approach with specialist input being provided by those with an impairment. As Priestley (1999: 154-155) notes, these alternative approaches to disability E&D training were “originally conceived and pioneered” by a group of women with impairments in the 1980s, among them Jane Campbell and Kath Gillespie-Sells, who believed it was possible to challenge attitudes through E&D training which conveyed “the values of participation, integration and equality”. French herself (1996: 121) advocates “small group discussion, case studies and examining the portrayal of disability and disabled people in the media” in workshops which are facilitated by people with impairments who enable “discovery” and challenge people’s understanding of disability.

French and Swain (2008: 38) acknowledge the challenge facing institutions in meeting their statutory obligations to identify and eliminate discrimination and note that “consistency in training vertically through the organization (sic)” is necessary for policy change to be effective. They recommend a flexible approach to training suggesting that generic training is “highly problematic and could disempower the grassroots participation of disabled trainers” (French & Swain, 2008: 38).

Campbell and Oliver (1996: 197), in their interview with Postance, a post graduate student at the University of Greenwich and ally of the disability movement, discuss the importance of disability equality training although are keen to advise that such training must be “relevant” and should reflect the circumstances, emotional impact and individual experience of impairment. Titchkosky and Michalko (2014: 102) likewise invite those tasked with the design and delivery of disability awareness and disability equality training to be mindful of the “hidden narrative” of those with an impairment and the way in which this can “draw out and give(s) meaning to disability”. Furthermore, Darke (2004: 105) reminds the learning and development professional that “it is disabled people’s own ability to make and imagine images of disability that ultimately gives them a power that far exceeds those of almost any other kind of imagery – they undermine the entire value system of society: normality”.

Is the challenge to the professional staff developer not just mainstreaming disability equality training but embedding a culture in which all individuals, regardless of their impairment, are valued and appreciated for their individual contribution? As Shakespeare (2014: 73) reminds his reader “impairment has always existed and has its own experiential reality”. Reflecting the flexible approach recommended by French and Swain (2008) the following three sections are presented to partially answer the sub research question about the nature, purpose and delivery of E&D training in HE. While acknowledging there are a broad range of alternative E&D training approaches that could be considered, among them psychodrama, role play and quizzes, three specific forms of training, contextualised simulation, drama-based training and online courses have been selected for discussion here as they are illustrative of methods of delivery in the home institution of the researcher. These three approaches were also found to form part of the delivery mechanisms of other HEIs with whom the researcher engaged.

3.5 Contextualised simulations in Equality and Diversity training

The first illustrative approach for consideration is the use of contextualised simulations. Whether planned as part of simple awareness raising or DET, contextualised simulations can, if managed sensitively and appropriately, assist in challenging participants to think critically about attitudes towards impairment and enhance an appreciation of the barriers encountered by those who are disabled by society (French, 1996; Lalvani & Broderick, 2013).

Whilst an advocate of contextual awareness raising activity, French (1996: 116) is, however, critical of the use of exercises which simulate a physical or sensory impairment, for example non-impaired participants being blindfolded or sitting in a wheelchair. French (1996: 116) goes so far as to suggest such practice is “positively harmful” and might be seen as trivialising impairment and induce guilt among less “diversity competent” (Pendry et al., 2007: 33) participants who feel obliged or compelled to take some personal responsibility as a result. French (1996: 119) recalls the “exuberant giggling and horseplay” of physiotherapy students learning how to use a wheelchair as part of their training, reminding the professional staff developer in HE that “disability is not intrinsically amusing and for non-disabled people to treat it as such, especially in the context of disability awareness training, is in bad taste”.

Lalvani and Broderick (2013: 468) share similar views and condemn tokenistic Disability Awareness days where participants are invited to “plop yourself in a wheelchair to navigate an obstacle course (sic)” and “tie one of your arms behind your back so you can fully appreciate a paralyzed limb (sic)”. Such “activities that purport to simulate the experience of being disabled” are, according to Lalvani and Broderick (2013: 469), “outrageous and objectionable to the disabled community”. Herring and Henderson are similarly critical of Universities (US) who “mask social inequalities” (2015:15) in failing to acknowledge the social barriers and discrimination that exclude individuals with impairments from society when promoting and celebrating cultural events and festivals on University campuses. They describe this lack of understanding as “snowflake diversity” (2015: 16) in which it is suggested that, because all individuals are unique, there is no need to pay attention to “group-based difference in any meaningful way”.

While contextualised simulations are a “complex and challenging prospect” (Lalvani & Broderick, 2013: 480) they can, despite this level of critique, be a “powerful and transformative tool” in educational settings. Barney (2012: 4) suggests that contextualised simulations can provide an “interface between disability and the physical environment” in which participants can experience the “rich interaction” between those with an impairment and the social world they inhabit. Acknowledging those who criticise the “pervasive use” of disability simulations, Barney (2012: 2) posits they can be effective when accompanied by pre and post event briefings which provide context and the opportunity to discuss what has been experienced and learned as a result.

Impactful contextualised simulations should be preceded by a set of clearly defined objectives ensuring participants are conscious of the potential challenges they may encounter during the simulation with a post event debrief providing the conversation which “solidifies learning and contextualises the experience” (Barney, 2012: 6). This section has considered a range of contrasting views as to the efficacy of using contextualised simulations for E&D training. The inherent risk is that, without careful attention to the design and facilitation of simulated scenarios, such events might trivialise the lived experience of impairment, providing a false impression to those who participate and undermining the learning that should occur. However, when such risks are mitigated, the contextualised simulation is a powerful mode of delivery, creating, albeit simulated, environments in which participants can experience, discuss and consider the lived experience of those with impairments.

3.6 Drama-based Equality and Diversity training

Drama-based training is one method that has been utilised at the home institution of the researcher to deliver E&D training and is one of the three illustrative delivery approaches chosen for further discussion. As Cossa et al. (1984: 2) suggest “Theatre is a powerful medium for evoking feelings and eliciting personal disclosures in participants, actors and audience members alike”. Arts based learning activities can be emotive and have a “positive impact” (Hayat & Walton, 2013: 290) although the medium may become the main focus of attention rather than the learning it is designed to elicit.

An early proponent of using theatre to create life affirming social and political change was Augusto Boal, a Brazilian born theatre director who founded the international movement ‘theatre of the oppressed’ from the practice of simultaneous dramaturgy (*to perform and take action).* Boal (1979: 9), whose work was dominated by his political convictions and influenced by the work of Freire, describes theatre as “necessarily political, because all of the activities of man (sic) are political and theatre is one of them”. Early street performances in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro exposed what Freire (2007: 54) saw as “banking education” where the protagonist, or “aristocrat”, imposed their view on the passive audience.

‘Theatre of the oppressed’ transformed this aristocratic monologue into a dialogue between actor and audience, bridging the physical and temporal gap and elevating the relationship to one of mutual critical reflection. Critics of Boal (Szeman, 2005; Auslander, 1997) suggest that his political ambitions, Boal was Mayor of Rio De Janeiro from 1993 to 1996, overshadowed his philanthropic intentions. Auslander (1997: 98) referring to ‘theatre of the oppressed’ as “scattered and fragmentary”, argued that Boal could have engaged more readily with public sector organisations, enabling them to embrace the techniques he pioneered. Szeman (2005: 357) does however recognise the legitimate “dialogue and empowerment” which the theatrical devices known as analogy playlets, hot seating and forum theatre collectively provide.

The analogy playlet allows a complex institutional issue to be explored from an alternative and objective perspective. For example a short play might focus on the experiences of a group attending a concert, among them a friend with an impairment. The portrayal of the physical and subliminal barriers experienced by the group are then discussed by the audience in a thought provoking facilitated activity. The discussion provides the learning space in which assumptions, prejudice and experience can be explored, promoting greater awareness of, in this case, disabling barriers. The audience might then engage with the technique known as hot seating where a lone actor or the ensemble cast answer questions while remaining in character. This provides a space in which the audience can question the motivations of a particular action or the way in which an experience has impacted on the individual.

Babbage (2004: 41) argues that theatre “imposes finished visions of the world” and that the audience comprises passive spectators with no influence over the drama on stage. To counter this, forum theatre, a third theatrical tool used in drama-based training, bridges the divide between passivity and engagement by inviting the audience to adapt the script during the performance. In the example of the group of friends attending a concert the audience can, having seen the analogy playlet, review, adapt and restage a section of the drama. For example asking that an actor rephrase their original response or adopt an alternative stance to elicit a different outcome.

Hayat and Walton (2013: 290), in their study of drama-based training in an HE setting, found an increase in “the confidence and capacity of university middle managers” to challenge assumptions and promote understanding among staff. In summary, while incurring significant costs to institutions, drama-based training, when facilitated by a professional practitioner, can, as Szeman (2005) implies, empower participants to consider their own experiences, disabling attitudes and behaviours, primary objectives of E&D training.

3.7 Online Equality and Diversity training

It is fair to say that the use of online courses as a way of providing generic and accessible training to large numbers of staff has become more widespread in the HE sector in recent years. An illustration of this growth can be found in the HEI of the researcher which offers 23 online courses covering subjects including data protection, safeguarding and consumer protection. Online equality and diversity training in HE, while contextualised for the HE audience, tends to be somewhat generic, providing a broad introduction to the subject matter. Courses primarily focus on raising awareness of the nine protected characteristics, including disability, and consider the terms most commonly associated with discriminatory behaviour, among them direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and discrimination by association. Those engaging in this form of learning will be promoted to answer questions, some of which may be presented in scenario format.

In considering the role of online E&D training Reid and Barrington (1999: 187) recognise that “the application of new technologies” reinforces the idea that “successful training does not have to take place in a training centre”. In complete contrast to the embodied experiential qualities of drama-based training the third form of E&D training, identified earlier as one for further exploration, is the online course. This section will consider how the use of online E&D training courses in HE can enhance learning provision and broaden participation.

Whitlock (2001: 187) writes of three “prevailing models of online learning” each having numerous “hybrids and derivatives”. The first he describes as “web-based training”, a self-contained module of learning accessed through a computer. The second approach uses technology to allow a wider audience to view a classroom based activity through the use of video enabled hardware such as video-conferencing, known as webinars. The third is an amalgamation of technology which provides participants with remote access to the activity, perhaps through e-mail contact, audience participation voting tools and presentation software. This research study has focussed on web-based training, described throughout as ‘online learning’, as one of the methods utilised for the delivery of E&D training in HE, the use of which was explored in the online survey, part of the primary research, discussed in Chapter five.

Hurst (2006: 158) recognises the “undoubted quality” of online learning although suggests that, in order to mitigate the assumption that simply having access to sufficiency of information online will facilitate learning, such solitary activity should complement rather than replace face to face interaction. The sentiment is shared by Hayat and Walton (2013: 300) whose study found that the online course is “the least preferred method” among HE staff and should be used as a precursor to more innovative and impactful delivery methods. Wynants and Dennis (2017: 35), however, note “similar success in the improvement of participants’ attitudes and /or knowledge” when comparing online courses with face to face workshops. While the quality of the online course may contribute significantly to the learning experience, the design, interactive content, ease of navigation between pages, accessibility, accuracy of links to other materials and images selected for inclusion are all issues to be considered by the professional HE staff developer.

Lynch (2004: 30) suggests that “course interactivity is the key to a quality online learning experience” promoting intellectual engagement through the application of questions, case studies, examples, and short assessments. Providing economies of scale in HEIs, online E&D courses are used, for example, as an introductory learning platform from which staff can access and explore foundation level information including the legislative background and institutional policies. A level of prior knowledge might then be assumed of participants in the face to face social learning environments which follow (Lynch, 2004; McPherson & Nunes, 2004; Hurst, 2006).

However, completion of online courses does not necessarily equate to enhanced understanding. Simple validation tools or assessments, common features of online learning designed to demonstrate knowledge acquisition, can provide a “non-threatening learning activity” (Clements & Jones, 2002: 122). They may also have the “effect of patronizing (sic) learners” giving a false impression that the assessment represents the full extent of knowledge in the subject. Given the earlier discussion in this chapter about the “inward looking academy” (Burwood, 2009: 487), the credibility of design of online courses tailored for an academic audience requires careful consideration.

Accessibility, interaction, selection of language, images and case study material and ease of navigation through the courses with useful links and additional materials for the learner should all be considered in the design phase. This will enable users to focus on content applicable to their own setting and context to enhance the learning experience rather than becoming distracted by the online nature of the course. To summarise, the online course, a commonly utilised method of delivering E&D training in HE, provides a cost effective tool for the delivery of basic information to a large staff population. However, the mode of delivery presupposes that the end user will engage with the material, and therefore increase their understanding of E&D issues, with only a simple quiz to test out such an assumption.

3.8 Equality and Diversity training in UK Higher Education: A summary

The context in which the study is framed have been explored in the first three chapters. The paucity of research studies which specifically focus on E&D training in HE was explored in Chapter one where the research questions where posed. The historical development of models of disability was considered in Chapter two highlighting the need for the professional staff developer in HE, and those contributing to the field of Disability Studies, to be informed by the historical social construction of disability. In Chapter three the rationale for E&D training in HEIs has been explored with initial conclusions drawn about the way in which HEI's are seemingly driven to offer E&D training by a need to demonstrate statutory compliance.

To partially answer the research question 'What is the nature and purpose of equality and diversity training in Higher Education and how is it defined and delivered?' the chapter included sections about the andragogic challenges, barriers and alternative approaches to E&D training for the professional staff developer in HE. The chapter ended with an exploration of three alternative and contrasting approaches to E&D training, contextualised simulations, drama-based training and online courses. The following methodology chapter considers the position of the researcher and professional practitioner.

4. Methodology

4.1 Positionality: Passionate, rational and intellectual

The introductory chapter and literature review provided context, rationale and a focus for this study as well as clearly defining the main and subsequent research questions that have been explored. This chapter discusses the way in which my axiological, epistemological and ontological position frame the ethical and methodological approach I have taken in my research. In this personal narrative the reader, both academic and professional, will see how and why my background, professional interest and vicarious experience of disability have influenced the study of how, if at all, the lived experience of those with an impairment is portrayed in E&D training in HE. The chapter will explore the challenges I experienced in balancing passion, objectivity, intellectual rigour and professionalism in my research.

As Ezzy (2013: 60) notes, "social research is inherently, and unavoidably, political in nature" while Lawler (2014: 161) suggests that "identity is *always* political". In considering my own multiple identities, which influence my scholarly practice and research design, I was conscious to consider the constraints and possible influence such identities might pose for others. While acknowledging and respecting the seminal work of prominent disability rights activists in developing the foundations of the Social Model of Disability, I would describe myself as a professional activist. My intention being, in part, to enlighten professional staff development practitioners and invite, or one might even suggest, campaign for, impactful changes E&D training practice in the HE sector.

I am passionate about contributing to the understanding of disablism, how those with an impairment are disabled by society, in order to not only inform and enhance professional staff development practice in HE, but also to contribute to disability studies narrative in this regard. I define myself as non-impaired, having no physical or mental impairments, while my mother is physically impaired with a multiplicity of needs. The nature of her impairment necessitates personal assistance (ways of delivering personal support in daily living, described by Shakespeare (2014: 173) as "a key element in the empowerment of people with significant impairments") from my father and sister as well as the use of physical aids including a powered wheelchair.

I have seen the physical deterioration of my mother over many years and been shamed, frustrated and even angered by the lack of dignity and respect she has been shown and the intolerance of others, both individuals and institutions, to her as a woman with impairments. While I do not share her lived experience, my familial connection and desire to understand how those with an impairment are portrayed in E&D training in HE are both fundamental drivers for my research. One early question arose of whether I should hold this passion loosely, while striving for impartiality in my research, or hold it steadfast with the attendant compromise this might require.

The question of partiality or impartiality was an important consideration in the planning of my research. I was mindful of the voices of Campbell and Oliver (1996) who suggest it is ridiculous for a disability studies researcher to attempt to be objective. Johnstone (2001: 116) agrees that, in relation to disability research, the “more radical proponents of a politics of disability would suggest that it is impossible, if not irresponsible, to remain neutral”. As Glesne (2011: 157) suggests, the researcher should adopt a “mindset of openness, curiosity, and desire and willingness to interact in collaborative ways” while acknowledging how their “social, locational and ideological” position may inform choices made through the research journey. Such curiosity is likened by Johnstone (2001: 114) to “that of a detective” whose role is to be near and concerned while also being remote and indifferent. However, he does concede that such binary positioning might “deny the place of sensitivity and interpretation” in the research process (Johnstone, 2001: 114).

Throughout this study I have chosen to describe myself as ‘non-impaired’ rather than ‘non-disabled’. In doing so it was not my intention to propagate binary separation (Thomas, 2014) nor was it to adopt a “social model approach” (Lawson & Priestley, 2017: 7). The nuanced and complex language of disability, and the way in which disability activists in particular adopted the term ‘disabled’, was discussed in Chapter one. For this study, although likely to be contested by others in the Disability Studies community, the term ‘non-impaired’ reflected my own physicality and was, therefore, a pragmatic choice.

I work as a senior learning and development professional in a HEI based in the north of England and have spent the last thirty years of my professional life working in a learning and development environment, in both the private and public sectors. Much of my work, particularly in the HE sector, has been to design and facilitate activity which assists an institution in meeting its statutory obligations, including the delivery of E&D training to both academic and professional services staff. As a part of this work environment, and the social world I have chosen to explore, I was attentive to the "multiple positionalities and perceptions involved" in social research (Maynes et al., 2008: 101). Not only did I consider my own position but also that of those who participated in my research through the online survey, the training workshop observations, semi-structured interviews and the audience for whom my research findings are intended to inform, educate and "to illuminate decisions and actions" (Cameron, 2014b: 34).

The oversimplification of "categorical affiliation" (Maynes et al., 2008: 16) with respect to disability cannot be underestimated and I have taken care, both reflectively and reflexively (these terms are discussed later in this chapter) throughout the research journey to acknowledge and bridge the divide between the individual and the social world. To attempt to remain impartial, detached and objective in the design, implementation and dissemination of social research while simultaneously acknowledging the "personal persuasions and turmoils" (Glesne, 2011: 156) has been challenging and not necessarily desirable at all times. A research journal has proved to be an invaluable tool in recording questions, both practical and epistemological, thoughts and experiences to aid my reflections in this regard.

With reference to one of Bourdieu's "tools for thinking" (Wellington, 2015: 49) I have attempted, throughout the study, to remain conscious of my own habitus, the way in which my thoughts and behaviour have been shaped by my worldview, both past and present. Bourdieu's concept of habitus suggests that the way an individual presents themselves and behaves within the world is influenced by their attitudes towards society which have been shaped, or become habit, over time. Habitus embodies both hexis (tendency towards alternative physical expressions) and mental processes including the way in which individuals perceive and classify others, how they feel and might act. Habitus represents "a counterpoint to notions of rationality" allowing an individual to determine the most appropriate course of action in any given context (Bitzer & Matimbo, 2017: 540).

Bourdieu (1998: 56) however, reminds the researcher that “primordial orthodoxy, or dominant *doxa*, must be problematized (sic)” and subject to challenge through a reflexive and reflective approach to research. In the context of E&D in HE is it the political system and the legislative framework that dominate *doxa?* Was the “natural attitude” (Bourdieu, 1998: 56) a “politically produced” construct which must be explored by the phenomenological disability studies researcher like myself? Weber considered it a fundamental responsibility of the social scientist to be able to “determine the facts in a value-free manner” (Lazar, 2004: 16); to distinguish between the relevance for value, what the individual researcher considers to be culturally significant, and value freedom, where the researcher can be objective.

My position as a disability studies researcher, as a learning and development professional working in HE and as the daughter of a woman with significant impairments was not simply something to be considered in isolation. I was aware that my position could impact on every stage of the research process from research design and engagement with the literature, through participant selection, analysis of findings from my primary research, drawing conclusions and the dissemination of my work. Finally, as this thesis is intended to stimulate discussion among fellow professional staff developers in HE, I also considered the position of the reader of this finished work. As Grbich (2007: 13) suggests, the reader should be “encouraged to use the text” and to “interact, to interpret and to respond” rather than passively accept the authority of the researcher. My work is, therefore, presented in such a way as to be mindful of, and useful to, the intended audience of both academic and professional colleagues and considers how they might engage with my findings, helping them to understand the propositions as recommended without making judgements or assumptions about their own position or prior knowledge.

4.2 Positioning oneself within Disability Studies

In considering position, involvement and the applicability to professional practice of my research a continuum of views emerged. Barnes (1995) clearly aligns himself to one end of the continuum, that of the disability rights activist, discussed in the literature review, arguing that researchers should work with and for disability organisations in developing user-led research to “challenge the structural exclusion of disabled people thus enhancing the catalytic validity of research” (Goodley, 2011: 23).

In contrast Shakespeare (2014), who was shown in the literature review to favour the affirmative model of disability, argues that research requires utility and is open to a range of methodological approaches that are mindful of remaining accountable to those with an impairment yet unapologetic when, or if, alternative ideas, concepts and theories emerge. Meanwhile, Oliver (2004) whose work was instrumental in the emerging understanding of the social model of disability and who collaborated frequently with Barnes whose position was, at the time of their work together, much akin to his own, has raised concern about adopting an unequivocal stance. His concern relates in part to the researcher whose ambition is to further their own career and "support their own professional interests" (Watson, 2012: 94) without specific regard to the impact of their work on people with impairments. In particular Oliver (2004) is critical of those whose claim to write about the lived experience of those with an impairment with whom they have had no involvement.

With reference to the discussion in Chapter two, French and Swain (2008: 24) acknowledge that "Disability studies is an arena of controversial issues and debate" and that such controversy is "crucial to its strength and vibrancy". Disability studies being "a matrix of theories, pedagogies and practices" (Goodley, 2011: 10) which leads Cousin (2010: 10) to suggest that, as a researcher I should "not strive to be wholly detached" but needed to acknowledge that my "view of the world is always from within it". Adopting a similar tone, Gunyan (2017: 12) suggests "rather than striving for neutrality or objectivity, researchers engaged in E&D work at universities should aim to bring a self-critical awareness to their work". As a professional working in HE these concerns were particularly relevant for me and I wanted to address the controversial question of whether disability studies can, or should be, conducted by a non-impaired researcher. Thomas (2007: 6) notes that the discipline "welcomes non-disabled individuals who support the interests of disabled people" and that, while many writers have personal experience of impairment, this is both in terms of their own embodied experience or that of someone with whom they have a close association.

The view expressed by Johnstone (2001: 114), that non-disabled individuals “form the majority of the research-active community”, is challenging to justify, particularly given the words of Goodley (2011: 25) that “disability studies have embraced the contribution of non-disabled researchers”. In attempting to find an answer I drew upon a range of views, opinions and experiences of disability studies researchers who have been candid about their impairment and those who, like myself, define themselves as non-impaired.

Beazley et al. (1997: 153) focus attention on the question of whether disability studies research can or should be carried out by a non-impaired researcher when they suggest the “disabled/non-disabled divide is one we experience as blurred and indeterminate and is a source of vulnerability and unease”. Whether a researcher shares or does not share a specific protected characteristic with their research participants and, therefore, should or should not undertake disability studies research is an important consideration. Should I have chosen to disclose personal information about myself and in so doing what assumptions might have been made about me by those who chose to participate in my research? Would selectively disclosing, or assuming that my identity was self-evident to the viewer, a shared characteristic, such as a visible or invisible impairment, suggest a predetermined relevance or personal agenda related to the research focus and outcomes?

Marshall and Rossman (2016: 162) recognise the “complex and nuanced” relationship between a researcher and their research participants and argue that there is a risk of assumed tacit knowledge on the part of the researcher where both parties share a similar concern, in this case to reflect the lived experience of those with an impairment in E&D training in HE. As discussed in Chapter two the question of whether “non-disabled people have the right to theorise about disability” (Shakespeare, 2014: 67) has been explored with Marshall and Rossman (2016: 18) reminding the researcher that “there is an essence to an experience that is shared with others who also had that experience”. A contrasting opinion, one which I would suggest is somewhat dismissive of the need for constant self- reflection and a reflexive approach to research, is offered by Van Manen (1997: 10) who writes that “a person cannot reflect on lived experience while living through the experience”. Could this suggest that, as a disability studies researcher who is non-impaired, I was more likely to be impartial in the research I conducted, yet might not have captured the essence of the lived experience or is this an overly simplistic or even irrational interpretation of what Van Manen (1997) posits?

Shakespeare (2006: 196) provides a balance here when he recognises the contribution of the non-impaired researcher who, like myself, "have experiences of disability through their families". The amalgam of position, being a professional practitioner and a non-impaired researcher with a mother for whom disablism is a lived experience, provides a unique perspective. The opportunity to share these insights being further discussed in section 8.3. Cameron (2014b: 35) meanwhile notes the preponderance of disability studies research "undertaken as a result of the academic interests of non-disabled researchers" and advocates a critical examination of the "character and extent of social exclusion and the disadvantages facing disabled people" (Cameron, 2014b: 34). Reminiscent of the earlier account of the Le Court Cheshire Home residents, Priestley (1997: 88) adds that the "act of researching disability has become increasingly problematised (sic) as disabled people have begun to examine more critically the relationship between themselves and the researchers who have studied their situation". Shakespeare (2014) admires the work of both impaired and non-impaired scholars who are united in their intention to understand the societal conditions which impact on those with an impairment.

On a similar, yet narrower, theme Priestley (1997: 91) suggests that disability studies researchers, regardless of whether they are themselves impaired, adopt an "emancipatory paradigm for disability research" characterised by the adoption of the social model of disability as the "ontological and epistemological basis for research production". He goes on to identify a number of fundamental principles of disability studies research including giving voice to the "personal", adopting a "plurality of methods of data collection" and conducting research that has some "practical benefit" (Priestley, 1997: 91). Although written twenty years ago and, while my research study was, in part, informed by these three principles, a slavish adherence to the social model as the only frame of reference felt restrictive. The emergence of the affirmative model provided for broader ontological and epistemological perspectives to be considered.

In seeking to find an answer to the question of whether a non-impaired person can or should contribute research to the field of disability studies I found a plethora of contrasting opinions yet no definitive answer. What did become clear was the concentration of views regarding the intentions of the researcher; as Brueggemann (2014: 294) suggests, "to say that one can only really *do* disability studies or present a disability perspective if one is disabled is most certainly a misstep".

Shakespeare (2014: 67) agrees when he suggests that those who “want to make comments about the impact of impairment, might do well to base their analysis on empirical evidence” about how those with an impairment experience social constructions rather than being overly concerned with their own position. My personal position has, indeed, informed the approach taken in this study and is explored further in the next section.

4.3 Hermeneutic phenomenology and positionality

Rioux (1994: 6) provides a clear argument for “a paradigm that takes into account both the phenomenon of disability and the experiences of those with disabilities”. In this vein I was drawn to, yet not constrained by, an emancipatory interpretivist philosophical position (Bryman, 2016; Gilbert & Stoneman, 2016) with the aim of conducting research which sought meaning and “concentrates on social agency” (Walter, 2013b: 17), specifically the way in which individuals interrelate and interact in society. The worldview which had relevance here is hermeneutic phenomenology (a research position seeking to understand the lived experience, *phenomenology,* and interpret the text of life, *hermeneutics*), (Creswell, 2007).

From the Greek ‘*hermeneutikos’,* hermeneutic interpretive epistemology in social and educational research assumes that all human interaction is important and “hence to be interpreted and understood within the context of social practices” (Scott & Usher, 1996: 18) lending itself to a study which has at its core an understanding of the lived experience of those with an impairment. An antediluvian field originally applied to the scrutiny of religious texts in order to ascertain their true meaning, modern hermeneutics finds origins in the work of Friedrich Schleiemacher (1768-1834), later developed by Martin Heidegger. Heidegger suggested that the foundation of knowledge in the social sciences was based not simply on understanding but on the interpretation of human language, action and interaction though the lens and cultural setting of an individual or group. Bauman (1978: 161) writes of Heidegger’s critical exploration of the ontological foundations of human understanding stating that he considered “theoretical knowledge is a secondary, derivative feature of being in the world”.

In his study of the divergent views of traditional quantitative and qualitative approaches to research Bryman (2016:24) reflects on the views of the positivist, one who holds an “epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences, who might consider hermeneutics as an “attack on reason and truth” with findings loosely articulated, incomplete, inaccurate and even misleading. Bauman (1978: 14) recognises this argument, describing the challenges to hermeneutic inquiry as “that of consensus and that of truth”.

Bauman (1978) suggested that, bounded as it would be by the historical and personal context in which the lived experience was related, there might be a shared consensus between the researcher and research participant but that this did not, in itself, assure the truth. Bauman (1978: 14) goes further suggesting the lived experience of one person from another would be subject to personal interpretation thus “organically incapable of meeting the standards of truth”. Was it my intention to seek the ‘truth’? Whose truth would this be and what would my purpose be in finding a definitive answer? The aim of this study was not to find a single answer but to discover a multiplicity of truths, some with common facets but all unique and based on the lived experience of the individuals encountered during this study.

Hermeneutics is, in itself, not a research method but more a simple process, a way of conceptualising understanding from the perspectives of those situated within the experience, continuing to expand, interpret and build shared knowledge without transcending historical context (Reason & Rowan, 1981; Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008; Cohen et al., 2011). Van Manen (1997: 7) suggests that hermeneutic phenomenological research “edifies the personal insight” of the researcher, both morally and intellectually, promoting a thoughtful, attentive and tactful approach to educational research. Attention to the “consequential in the inconsequential, the significant in the taken for granted” (Van Manen, 1997: 8) is a fundamental feature of phenomenological practice. In order to move from a naïve conceptualisation and cross the “irreversible” (McKenna, 2017: 459) threshold, thus attaining a “more nuanced, sophisticated understanding” of self and the phenomena that forms this study, I acknowledged the challenges associated with entering such a liminal space and spent time reflecting on how my own understanding developed and in considering further questions that arose.

Duncombe and Jessop (2012: 108) acknowledge that the researcher who aspires to build authentic and honest relationships with their research participants risks becoming “phoney and inauthentic”. Mindful of this I paid attention to questioning my personal assumptions with the aim of being confident in the “critique (of) dominant understandings in society” (McKenna, 2017: 460) through reflection and adopting a reflexive approach throughout the doctoral study (Freire, 2007). I endeavoured to take great care to ensure the study did not, in any way, commodify people with an impairment, but that it recognised and celebrated their individual lived experience.

My research was reflexive, discursive and collaborative in approach and I took care to ensure my personal position and the aims of my study were clearly articulated and understood by research participants, fellow professional staff developers in HE and those who might read the final study. In adopting a qualitative approach I acknowledged how my personal, social, cultural and historical experience might shape the interpretation of findings generated from “data in the field” (Creswell, 2014: 9). Noting that May (2011: 119) writes how “the critical and hermeneutic can be brought together”, the following section explores the value of critical self-reflection and the adoption of a reflexive approach by the social researcher.

4.4 Critical self-reflection and reflexivity

This study has explored how the lived experience of people with an impairment, thought to be disabled by society, is and could be reflected in E&D training offered by HEIs. The ability to conduct disability studies research and the extent to which it resonates with social life was informed by the relationship between my position and the community to which I belong. As discussed earlier in this chapter, in answering the question of whether Disability Studies research should or should not be conducted by a non-impaired person I suggested that, regardless, the aims of the study and the way it is positioned must be made clear to both research participants and the reader. Van Manen (1997: 20) suggests that the function of reflection is, in part, to defend against the researcher becoming “enchanted by extraneous elements”; that adopting a reflective approach provides the space to be “perceptive, insightful and discerning”.

In a similar vein to Wright-Mills (2000) Vernon (1997: 159) is particularly critical of the researcher who fails to recognise the “thin dividing line between identification with one’s own research subjects and their exploitation” commending a reflexive approach to ensure that the needs of both the researcher and their participants are fully understood and accommodated wherever practicable. In considering what it means to be critical Barnett (1997: 7) argues that the researcher should broaden their horizons beyond critical thinking, constrained by standards of reasoning in a given field, and adopt the wider concept of “critical being”. This, he suggests, “opens the possibility of entirely different and even contrasting modes of understanding (Barnett, 1997: 7).

In pursuit of a “thoughtful, self-aware analysis of the intersubjective dynamics between researcher and the researched” (Finlay & Gough, 2003: ix) I was concerned to conduct this study in a reflective and reflexive manner through what Finlay describes as “hermeneutic reflection” (Finlay, 2003: 107). I was deliberate in engaging in critical thinking at every stage of the research study and, in adopting a reflexive approach, I recognised “the fact that the social researcher, and the research act itself, are part of the social world” (Wellington, 2015: 101). To facilitate such critical reflection and to capture questions that would aid reflexivity I started a research journal as a “place to examine – in an ongoing and oftentimes unstructured and informal way – thoughts, questions, struggles, ideas and experiences with the process of learning about and engaging in various aspects of research” (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017: 216). Not only did this allow me to consider practical issues and plan for supervision encounters it also provided a personal space in which to write about my own experiences, challenges and questions, distractions and irritations that arose during the research journey.

Chronicling the interpretive process became important, capturing the “complex and often intersecting influences” (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017: 217) I encountered. Wang similarly (2012: 776) endorses the value of using a research journal, not only to consider the “complexity and subtlety” of relationships formed during the data collection period, but throughout the life of the study and on to publication and further research opportunities. The journal was the device which facilitated analysis of my lived experience, “making visible new insights and options” (David, 2019: 7), and ensuring I paid close attention to any “theoretical and methodological presuppositions” (Coghlan & Brannick, 2010: 115) that I might have made throughout the period of this study.

Gunyan (2017: 4) describes reflexivity as “the process of reflecting critically on your identity, your biases and assumptions, and how your experiences and background might influence decisions made in the research process”. Adopting a reflexive approach to my research allowed for personal bias to be illuminated, the limitations of my research to be acknowledged and the potentially complex dynamic relationship between myself and those participating in this study to be considered. Like the “intellectual craftsman” (sic) (Wright-Mills, 2000: 196) who habitually reviews the “state of (my) problems and plans” (Wright-Mills, 2000: 197) I imagined and considered both my intellectual and personal experience throughout the course of this study. The journal entries were not intended to provide a source of primary data, more to generate space for iterative “critical reflexivity and praxis” (Burke et al., 2017: 53) throughout the course of my research. In doing so I was able to not only engage in reflections about the way my research journey was unfolding but also to analyse assumptions and consider how each learning experience could enhance and further develop my thinking, writing and eventual thesis. An example can be found in appendix J.

4. 5 Practitioner research: Opportunistic and collaborative

Earlier in this chapter the question of whether a non-impaired researcher can or should contribute to the expansion of knowledge in the disability studies field was discussed. Although no definitive resolution was found, the issue of personal and professional position also extends to that of the insider and outsider researcher. In this context Swain et al. (2003: 34) single out a particular challenge facing the insider disability studies researcher in HE claiming that “the disabling physical and social environment of universities can pose great difficulties”. As such this section will explore the challenges facing those, like myself, who are “researching knowledge created in the context of application” (Costley & Gibbs, 2006: 91). As a learning and development professional working in HE I would, therefore, be categorised as both insider practitioner and researcher. Coghlan and Brannick (2010: 101) describe the insider researcher as a “complete member”, one who is inside and shares at least one characteristic with their organisation and who wishes to remain inside after the research has been concluded.

While the inquiry process itself is of value, Coghlan and Brannick (2010: 102) remind researchers in my position that insider research could be described a simply “opportunistic”, in that the focus of the study is research or professional activity that might have happened naturally in the course of my professional work.

While recognising that my research could be considered as opportunistic in nature I suggest that this study might not naturally have been undertaken as part of the role of a staff developer in HE but was, instead, carefully considered with the potential to enhance professional practice in respect of E&D training in HE. Coghlan and Brannick (2010) suggest, however, that the greatest challenge to the complete member is maintaining distance while building on the closeness that their insider status affords them. Gunyan (2017: 4) adds a further dimension when considering research in the field of E&D suggesting that the 'insider' might also "personally belong(s) to the group to which their participants also belong" while the 'outsider' is not a member of the group. This rather mechanistic explanation might belie the actual experience of conducting research where the researcher may adopt a position along a continuum between insider and outsider status and may even "experience the feeling of simultaneously being both and insider and an outsider" (Gunyan, 2017: 4). Gathering "contextual knowledge" (Wolsey & Abrams, 2013: 19) as the outsider researcher while being mindful of my professional interest was a delicate balance. As previously discussed the non-impaired researcher, like myself, needs to pay attention to their status and ensure both they and their research participants are able to recognise and manage the challenges and opportunities such status presents.

The practitioner researcher is one who conducts research into their own practice in their given specialist field, in this case, learning and development, with the intention of enhancing existing professional practice (praxis) in the field. The practitioner researcher may, either deliberately or inadvertently, have greater impact on the research they conduct knowing by instinct "what can be done and how far old friendships and favours can be pressed" while being able to navigate the "moral mazes and subtexts" of the institution (Hannabus, 2000: 103). An appreciation for the institutional structure, politics and culture, both formal and informal, could be suggested to be a benefit for the insider researcher. However, I acknowledge that my perspective was likely to be a partial one, based on my own limited experiences. Was it possible, even when consciously stepping back, to know everything about the institution, to avoid assumptions when gathering information and, as a consequence, fail to capture rich data that would enhance the research study? The final section of this chapter discusses the moral questions posed here, the ethical issues I have considered and the choices I have made which informed my approach to conducting disability studies research.

4.6 Ethical considerations for the hermeneutic phenomenological researcher

Framed by the knowledge that “Ethics is the science of morality: those who engage in it determine values for the regulation of human behaviour” (Homan, 1991: 1) and the “ethical challenges in conducting research in educational settings” (Punch, 2014: 43) it was important to be alert to the potential ethical implications of my research. Wright-Mills (2000: 197) is unequivocal in his scorn for “salesmanship” (sic), referring to researchers who consider a research plan and ethical consent as levers to gain consent from others while having little compunction in blurring the boundaries of ethical research for their own ends. A moral compass provides not only a guide and direction for the researcher but serves as a reflexive tool to continually challenge the research journey as it unfolds.

In Chapter three I suggested that E&D training in HE is driven by the need to meet statutory obligations. As such I could have chosen to adopt a similar approach and simply apply a set of established ethical rules as outlined in an institutional ethics policy but to what end. Does a slavish adherence to a bureaucratic and formulaic code inculcate a *laissez-faire* mentality in the researcher leading to what Weber (1864-1920) might consider to be disenchantment. Brown and Brown (2003: 209) invite the professional practitioner to consider the “gap” between what they would do, or would be willing to do, in their professional role and how they would behave in a personal setting. While articulating an ethical position should invite confidence in the researcher, I suggest it is the way in which I considered, designed, planned, reflected upon and facilitated the research itself that separates the hermeneutic phenomenological researcher, like myself, from the salesperson (Pring, 2000; Wright-Mills, 2000; May, 2001; Coghlan & Brannick, 2010).

4.6.1 Moral values

As a disability studies researcher it was important that the ethics committee, my research participants and the multiple audiences for whom my work is intended could clearly understand the position from which I conducted my research. If, for example, I subscribed to the tenets of the medical model then my research would have been paternalistic in its design, aiming to relieve suffering and “restore ability” (Edwards, 2009: 32) for those with impairments. Alternatively, if I aligned myself with the disability activists of the Disabled Peoples Movement, then my research might have adopted an approach which aimed to clearly challenge the politics of disablement.

Moreover, if my moral guides were those who sought to understand and respect the individual then my research would be designed in such a way as to hear those individual narratives without prejudice. I have, throughout this study, aimed to be objective in considering a range of alternative models of disability while acknowledging my alignment with those who seek to consider the lived experience of those with impairments through the lens of the affirmative model.

The research study, for which full ethical approval was granted by my home institution, sought to elicit information from members of the Disabled Staff and Neuro-diverse Staff Networks (DSN) who, in joining these groups, had self-identified as having an impairment. As a non-impaired researcher I was aware of the sensitivities of conducting disability studies research in such a way as to hear and capture the views of participants in a way which was respectful. Aware that my position could impact on every stage of the research process from research design and engagement with the literature, through participant selection for the online survey, the observations and semi-structured interviews, presentation and analysis of findings from my primary research and the reporting and the dissemination of my work, I paid close and particular attention to the sensitivities involved in this research. (My three methods of data collection, are discussed below and again, in more detail in the research design chapter)

4.6.2 Trustworthiness, anonymity and informed consent

The three methods selected for the primary research determined the need to develop a high level of trust between myself and those who agreed to participate, specifically members of SDF, NEYSDF, the facilitators and participants at the training events I observed and members of the staff networks who agreed to be interviewed. The observations and semi-structured interviews took place in educational institutions which could be described as “public settings” (Oliver, 2010: 86), thus warranting consideration of the ethics associated with privacy. For this research study the observations were of internal training events for staff employed at each HEI and the interviews were with staff employed in my home institution, therefore privacy of the public was ruled out as being of concern.

Trustworthiness, a criterion offered by Denzin and Lincoln (2003) as an alternative to the more traditional positivistic measures of 'validity' and 'reliability', suggested to me that no one should suffer any adverse consequence as a result of their participation in my research. To establish trust I considered both how to assure anonymity and what information participants would need access to in order that they could give their informed consent. A central feature of social science research is that research participants have the right to be advised of any information that "may have a direct bearing upon [themselves] as individuals" (Oliver, 2010: 28). In order for participants to feel able to be open in their engagement with my research I felt it was important to provide reassurance that no HEIs or individuals would be named or be capable of being identified in the completed thesis. The presentation and subsequent analysis of the survey findings, observations and semi-structured interviews as seen in Chapters five and six are, therefore, anonymised, without reference to individual HEIs or individual participants.

For the online survey, respondents were specifically asked, both in the e-mail invitation with accompanying information sheet (Appendix A) and in the survey instructions, not to provide any personal data which could lead to them or their institution being identified. The survey did ask for information about the region each respondent worked in so that the data could be presented at a regional rather than national level however assurance was provided in the information sheet that individual HEI anonymity would be maintained. For the second observational phase of the study I knew, by necessity, which HEIs had agreed to allow me to observe their E&D training from which the collages have been created.

To maintain individual and institutional anonymity in the findings I have simply identified participating HEIs as, for example, 'HEI A'. Anonymity for this phase of the research was particularly important as the collages include examples of the words, images, metaphors and stories as expressed by both the facilitator and participants at each training event which, taken out of context and attributed to a named HEI, could lead to those involved being challenged about the views they expressed. The written guarantee of anonymity given to each participating HEI and to those attending the training events took the form of an information sheet (Appendix B). An electronic version was provided in advance of each event with additional paper copies made available as participants arrived. An Information sheet (Appendix C) was also provided to members of the staff networks prior to them agreeing to participate in a semi-structured interview.

Those staff who agreed to participate were also asked to sign a consent form confirming their understanding of how their contribution would be respected with anonymity a key feature. The data from each interview has been anonymised and presented as, for example, ‘Participant A’.

4.6.3 Empathy, care and non-malfeasance

Guided by Richards (2015: 46), who suggests that interviewing “is as ordinary as conversation, and as intrusive as a spy camera” and mindful of Cleaver et al. (2014) who question whether participants engaging in social and education research fully understand their role, it was morally important to design the study in a way that would do no harm to those who were contributing, whether directly sharing their experiences or participating in the observed training events. Malfeasance is an unjustified, harmful or illegal act by a public official and, in this context, as a researcher employed by a public institution, non-malfeasance, or doing no harm, was central to my thinking.

Noting that hermeneutic “interpretation of understanding has become increasingly linked to empathy” (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000: 54), as the researcher I contemplated the personal position of my research participants. I considered those completing the online survey who were being asked to reveal information about their own institutional practice and the facilitators and participants at the observed events. Most acutely I reflected on how it might feel from the interviewee perspective when they were sharing their lived experiences and personal artefacts with me.

While the uni-directional nature of the online survey and the observations required no intervention on my part, that is not to say that my presence in the room or as the designer of the survey questions might, in themselves, have caused a reaction that could have impacted on the authenticity of the data collected. Described by Plowright (2011: 71) as an “observer-as-participant” having been introduced to facilitator and participants, I was conscious that “procedural reactivity”, resulting in untypical behaviour from those attending the training sessions I observed, could have a bearing on the content of the artefacts I would later create.

While a silent observer, having no part in the way the session was delivered, there is no way of knowing whether the contributions were authentic or could have been deliberately manipulated to create a false impression. Oancea (2014: 40) offers some reassurance here suggesting that “ethical decisions are contextual and ethical problems are never neatly defined, nor fully resolved”.

In considering the semi-structured interview, Oliver (2010: 71) writes how “conflict may arise if the respondent [interviewee] asks for help from the researcher”, perhaps viewing them as a “potential friend”. As an insider researcher, whose aim was to invite discussion about personal experiences which involve a degree of emotional exploration, it was important to maintain a clear focus on my role. As Oliver (2010: 71) advises, “participation in research may be therapeutic for the respondent, but this is not the purpose of the researcher”. Perhaps I was “unnecessarily sensitive” (Oliver, 2010: 72) as the participants in my research, whose choice to take part was an informed one, made autonomous decisions about the information they disclosed, whether through the online survey, in the observed sessions or during the interviews.

4.6.4 Ethical data recording and storage

The “tumultuous tumble of events and opportunities” (Richards, 2015: 72) from which qualitative data might appear presented both logistical and ethical challenges. Even in the early design stages as the research aims and questions were being formed, data was accumulating. The term ‘data’ in this context indicating the “objects of sociological attention” (Banks, 2007: 12) that emerge from the process of inquiry. In aiming to do no harm, and to ensure individual and institutional anonymity, the way in which data was recorded, stored, protected and disseminated was carefully considered.

As a researcher entrusted with information of a personal and sensitive nature the guiding principles of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) (a set of EU-wide data protection rules brought into UK law as the Data Protection Act 2018) and the Concordat to support Research Integrity (a national framework of good research conduct and governance developed by Universities UK) were helpful in framing my approach.

Data derived from the primary research was captured in the form of handwritten notes taken during the interviews and on the observation template (appendix F). Interviews were recorded using an encrypted voice application on a mobile device, later deleted having been transferred to a secure server from which the transcripts were drawn.

While it was necessary to provide specific detail about the date and institutional location of each training workshop on the tailored information sheets provided to participants, this information has been redacted in the example included in appendix G. Similarly, any identifiers, including institutional logo and name, have been removed from the materials presented in the appendices to reduce the likelihood of identification. Contact details for those to whom the online survey was sent, professionals who facilitated the training events I observed and those who consented to be interviewed, were stored separately from the raw and analysed data. While Habibis (2013: 83) recommends the researcher "destroy contact information once data collection is complete" those who have participated in my research have been drawn from my own HEI and national network with whom I have an ongoing professional relationship. As such, any contact information which was specifically created for the purposes of this research was stored independently and deleted or shredded upon completion of the survey phase of the research.

4.6.5 Professional integrity

As stated in the introduction to this study one audience for my research is the professional staff development community in HE of which I am a part, both within the institution in which I work and across the UK. Behaving with professional integrity and safeguarding "these personal and moral relations to others" (Costley & Gibbs, 2006: 89) required that I consider the potential impact that disseminating my research within this community might have.

Punch (2014: 47) describes how "members of a community may use a wide range of contextual clues to infer the identity" of people and places from a completed piece of research. The staff development professional in HE, for whom this research is intended to provoke curiosity about their professional practice, might infer from the personal narrative of this positionality chapter which institutions and group of individuals have participated.

Of particular concern was the need to respect the needs and interests of the four facilitators of the training workshops I observed. Could, for example, a professional practitioner from another HEI identify a facilitator solely from the artefacts created following the observations.

Similarly, the identity of those who agreed to be interviewed might possibly be inferred by a reader engaged in research or teaching related to issues of disability. As will be seen in the analysis in Chapter seven, the contributions made by those interviewees from an academic background provided some interesting insights and contrast with those of colleagues from professional services. Considering the risk of identification as marginal I included the findings given their contribution to the study. To counter such questions Costley and Gibbs (2006: 94) suggest that, by setting aside one's own self-concern, "one leaves others the opportunity to harm one….and also shows one's confidence that they will not take it". In the view of the Faculty ethics committee, delivered by e-mail, "the reviewer felt the researcher does show a great level of sensitivity towards protecting anonymity" (2018). This, in part, alleviated some of the concerns I have raised in this chapter while also providing the foundation for continual rational and intellectual reflection. Having placed myself at the centre of this methodology chapter in order for the reader to clearly appreciate my personal position, the study now reverts to the traditional third person narrative with an exploration of the research design.

5 Research design

While Chapter two, an exploration of models of disability, can be seen as an active immersion into the conceptual, historical and social narrative and research of others, this research design chapter charts the primary research undertaken in the course of this study. Walter (2013a: xxiii) writes that social research is “a thrilling endeavour”, an “addictive” journey of discovery which, once begun, may be difficult to end. As such, rigour was applied to the selection of research methods which, when combined, would elicit a diversity of data sources for subsequent analysis yet would be confined in size and duration. Chapter five will, therefore, focus attention on the methodological approach, informed by a hermeneutic phenomenological frame, that guided this study or, as Wellington (2015: 33) describes it, the “activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying” research methods. The chapter commences with a discussion about the broad qualitative approach before describing and justifying the methods selected for the primary research phase of the study. Three research methods, an online survey, document analysis informed through observation and semi-structured interviews, are explored. The chapter concludes with two further sections discussing the sampling strategy adopted and the approach taken to data analysis.

As expressed in Chapter one, the aim of this doctoral thesis was to explore, using a qualitative research methodology, how, if at all, an understanding of, and appreciation for, the lived experiences and narratives of people with impairments working in UK HEIs might contribute to improvements in the design and delivery of E&D training in HE. To assist in answering those sub research questions which would subsequently contribute to the main research question, ‘How does the portrayal of people with impairments in equality and diversity training offered by UK HEIs reflect their lived experience?’, three primary data collection methods, conducted sequentially, were selected. The research design was intended to gather both numerical and narrative data which would assist in answering, either in part or in full, the research questions as set out in the introductory chapter.

The insider researcher and professional practitioner, both discussed in Chapter four, must consider the research process, ensuring this demonstrates rigour and quality, while remaining attentive to the potential contribution the emerging research might offer to both professional practice and the field of disability studies.

Considering the research design was one such opportunity to ensure that assumptions and inferences, seemingly inherent in the insider position, could be explored using a range of research methods appropriate to the study. Furthermore, as Priestley (1997: 91) was shown to suggest in Chapter two, a fundamental principle of disability studies research is in the adoption of a “plurality of methods of data collection”, a principle which has been adopted in this study. Janesick (1994: 215) meanwhile advises the social researcher to consider content before method describing a “slavish attachment and devotion to method that so often overtakes the discourse” as “methodolatry, a combination of *method* and *idolatry*”.

The three data collection methods, discussed in detail later in this chapter, were selected and designed to be managed sequentially. As such the findings from each activity would provide practical and contextual data for each subsequent phase of the study, expanding and building shared knowledge consistent with the hermeneutic frame of the study. While the initial survey style contrasts with the more creative methods which followed, it provided for the collection of informative quantitative and qualitative data. Figure 2, below, provides a visual representation of this sequential connectivity. To engage with the expert milieu of professional practice in HE, the researcher utilised the Staff Development Forum (SDF) (a national network of HE learning and development professionals) as a legitimate means of promoting the initial survey, the researcher being a member of the SDF. It could be suggested that confining the list of recipients to those in HE who are responsible for E&D training was a benign choice. Those responding were being asked, in essence, to share and even critique their own professional practice whereas a survey of training participants could be expected to reveal alternative views and perspectives. However, much of the survey was designed to elicit information that would only be known by those directly involved in the design and delivery of E&D training providing the rationale for the selection of recipients.

The introductory communication, through e-mail, was accompanied by an information sheet (Appendix A) which served a dual purpose, not only explaining the aims of the research and purpose of the survey, but also as a way of eliciting early expressions of interest from individual HEIs in the North East region who might be willing for the researcher to observe E&D training in their institutions.

In the week that followed the closure of the online survey the researcher gave a presentation (Appendix E) at a regional forum of staff development practitioners, the purpose being to outline the main aims of the research and to elicit invitations from fellow professionals for the observational phase of the study.

In considering participation in the research study the researcher received 22 survey responses, 20.5% of the available sample of learning and development professionals from 107 HEIs. The survey response rate was modest although consistent with similar studies (Hayat & Walton, 2013) and invitations were subsequently received to observe four E&D training events hosted by institutions from the North East region.

Following each institutional observation, a collage was created, by the researcher, as a partial visual representation of the images, text, language, stories and metaphors used by both facilitators and participants at the training workshops. The final phase of the research was a series of semi-structured interviews, four in total, conducted at the home institution of the researcher with interviewees drawn from Disabled and Neurodiverse Staff networks. The rationale for conducting interviews with participants from these networks was twofold. Firstly, for practical reasons, having travelled to observe the workshops, that the interviews could be restricted to the home institution to minimise further travel. Secondly, that the networks would provide access to people for whom impairment was a lived experience and who were assumed to have participated in E&D training. These interviews, while small in number, were rich in their exploration of the lived experience of those with an impairment and enabled an in-depth analysis of views. The interviews formed the culmination of the primary research phase of the study providing the opportunity to discuss data collected from the observations and answering, in part, the main research question. The interviews created the space in which each interviewee could respond to the collages, share their own personal artefacts, talk about their lived experience and discuss their views, opinions and perceptions about how people with an impairment were represented in the observed sample of E&D training offered by HEIs.

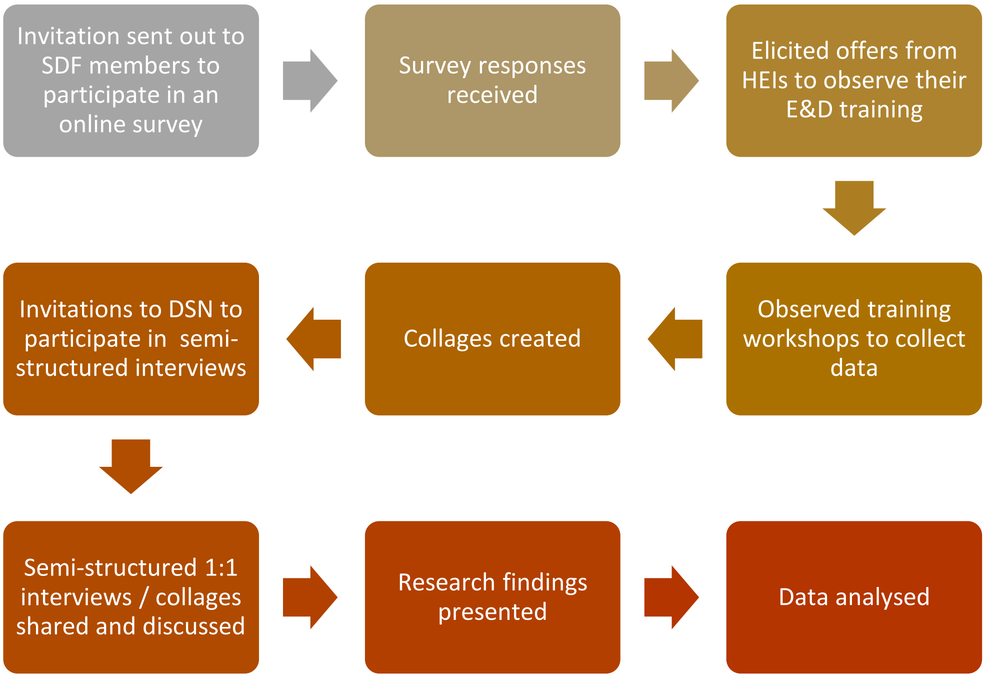

Fig. 2 A visual representation of the sequential connectivity between research phases.

5.1 Qualitative study

As a researcher working in an HEI, whose study is primarily hermeneutic in nature, it was encouraging to note the suggestion from Ernest (1994: 24) that qualitative research is "particularly suitable for institution-based research where human activities and relationships are intricately interwoven". The selection of research methods to examine the main and sub research questions was guided, not only by the researchers epistemological and theoretical assumptions about the construction of social knowledge, but also by the "substantive literature" in the field of disability studies (Roulston, 2010: 74). A primary focus of the study was to understand "people's lived experiences" as they occur in a specific social setting (Hennick et al., 2011: 17). This study recognised that such understanding can be viewed from two perspectives, the researcher applying their own frame of reference in order to understand the phenomena and the participants' perspective on the research issue. This second view is known as *Verstenhen* (a concept derived from the work of Dilthey (1833-1911) and further considered by Weber (1864-1920)) which refers to "understanding the life of the people whom you study from their own perspective, in their own context and describing this using their own words and concepts" (Hennick et al., 2011: 17).

The methodological approach was informed, in part, by the deductive nature of this study. In considering the dialogue between a deductive or inductive approach an initial emphasis on the literature, as suggested by Roulston (2010), is likely to influence the pathway adopted although “an awareness of previous theory might bias (ones) ability to let the data truly speak” (Lee & Lings, 2008: 214). An inductive approach “begins with the particular and moves to the general” (Harding, 2013: 13) allowing the researcher to establish relationships between their own findings and existing knowledge. A researcher adopting an inductive study would review the literature in the field having first assembled their own findings based on data collection; grounded theory being one such inductive approach (Harding, 2013). In contrast the deductive methodological approach followed in this study commenced with a thorough search of the literature from which the main research question emerged, informing the way in which data was collected, presented and analysed.

5.2 Research methods

To counter the claim from Banks (2007: 4) that restricting oneself to a single research method is “sociologically limiting” this study adopted Faulkner’s (1982) triad proposition, where data derived from each individual qualitative mode of inquiry could both supplement and be integrated with the others. Commensurate with the triad approach the study adopted what Gilbert and Stoneman (2016: 126) would describe as a “multi-method” inquiry (also described as a “mixed methods approach” (Harding, 2013: 10)) comprising an online survey, the creation of a series of cultural artefacts through document analysis and semi-structured interviews to assist in answering the research questions posed in Chapter one.

Gillham endorses the multi-method approach when using questionnaires (2000: 1) believing that they are “of most value when used in tandem with other methods” while Grbich (2007: 20) recognises that a combination of complementary “design approaches and traditions of inquiry” can occur in the same study and would describe the approach taken here as both iterative and investigative. This study was partly iterative in that the approach sought meaning and involved a “series of actions of data collection” (Grbich, 2007: 20) with the researcher participating in a series of E&D training events hosted by other HEIs to gather data.

The methodological approach could also be described as investigative in that it sought to gather “signs and symbols” (Grbich, 2007: 23) drawn from the E&D training observations. The following three sections provide detail about the rationale for, and the adoption of, each of the research methods employed in this study.

5.2.1 Survey research

To gather a “cross-sectional snapshot” (Thomas, 2013: 170) of data from professional staff developers in HEIs a self-administered questionnaire, sometimes referred to as a self-completion questionnaire, was selected as one of the three main research instruments that form this study. ‘Self-administered’ in this context meaning that the researcher did not meet respondents in person choosing, instead, to invite participation by email given the national spread of the sample. Noting that “an effective survey requires substantial planning” (Walter, 2013c: 122), this section provides discussion around how questionnaire purpose, design, delivery, accessibility and administration were each considered.

The survey configuration, content, style and design began with considering the sub research questions for which survey responses would provide relevant data. The survey questions were constructed to elicit information from practitioners about the purpose, delivery mechanisms and design of E&D training in HE. The survey would also elicit responses about how, if at all, models of disability and the lived experience of people with impairments were considered by practitioners during the design of their training. The online survey tool chosen for this study was originally constructed by researchers at Bristol University specifically for use in HE settings. Described by Thomas (2013: 216) as “the preferred method of questionnaire distribution”, Bristol Online Surveys (BOS), in 2018 the name contracted to simply Online Surveys (OS), was selected as it provided a comprehensive survey builder tool with password protected data storage. The draft questions, privacy statement, and proposal to use an online survey to elicit information being scrutinised and endorsed as part of the application for ethical approval. A copy of the final version (3) of the survey can be found in appendix D.

The questionnaire design was informed, in part, by the need to minimise the known disadvantages of this research method. While convenient for respondents, the absence of the researcher removes the opportunity for respondents to ask questions, both in regard to how to complete the questionnaire and to query what a particular question is asking (Bryman, 2016) so attention to the format and instructions was important. Low response rates, respondent fatigue due to lengthy questionnaires, and the inability of the researcher to return to a respondent and ask for clarification about an answer were also factors which were considered in the questionnaire design. While "respondents may be highly tolerant" (Bryman, 2016: 225) of lengthy question sets when the questions are relevant to them, is it "difficult to specify when a questionnaire becomes 'too long'".

The OS used in this study contained 18 questions and was estimated, through the pilot stages, to take up to 30 minutes for respondents to complete. Questions were designed to appear in a logical sequence, starting with general questions about the HEI before moving onto more specific and complex questions later in the survey. This journey through the survey was designed to assist respondents in getting "their brain 'primed'" (Lee & Lings, 2008: 280) to provide focussed and informed responses. The OS builder functionality provided for consistency of presentation with headings, questions, categories and instructions for respondents each clearly defined through the use of bold, italics and font size. Respondents were guided through the survey with clear instructions such as 'click next' to move to a subsequent page and could review their responses before clicking 'submit' and exiting the survey where a short message of appreciation was located.

The survey was constructed using a limited variety of question formats which would provide sufficiency of data while ensuring ease of completion by each respondent. Closed-ended questions with a vertical format (Bryman, 2016) were selected where fixed alternatives were available to the respondent. Where only two choices of response were offered, for example questions five and eight which invited a 'yes' or 'no' response, both options were shown on screen. Where a lengthier range, up to six single response options, was offered, the question included the instruction 'please select one from the following options' and, in the case of question one which had ten possible responses, a 'drop-down' list was included. The vertical format was also used where respondents could select more than one response to a question. The range of options appeared on screen with the instruction to 'please select all those that apply' guiding the respondent.

Instructions were also provided where further detail was requested depending on the response from a previous question. For example, question five invited a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ response with those who had answered ‘yes’ invited to select a more detailed response from a drop down list of categories in question five (a). Respondents were also guided, although not obliged, to provide additional contextual information for eight of the survey questions in the form of a free text box. This function was utilised when one of the response options was ‘other’ where the instruction ‘if you selected ‘other’ please provide further information’ was noted. The free text box was not restrictive in terms of word count so that respondents would not feel constrained in their response. One question, number eleven, was more complex in that it required respondents to identify, for each training format, up to three responses. To capture this data a horizontal format, with clear instruction, was designed which drew the eye across the screen to minimise the potential for error.

Three versions of the survey were created, the first two being piloted to assess the appropriateness of the questions to the study, ease of use, functionality, accessibility and time taken to complete (Plowright, 2011). The invitation to the staff development community to complete the survey included information about the estimated time required, hence it was important to test this, along with the proposed questions, with the pilot groups to ensure the information provided was accurate. Those invited to pilot each survey iteration and provide feedback were, for the first draft, colleagues from the home institution learning and development team and, for the second, colleagues from the same HEI who had themselves built online surveys as part of their own research practice. Feedback from those involved in both pilots was used to refine question wording and to improve comprehension and ease of use of the final version of the survey (Appendix D). The draft surveys were distributed as electronic copies of the original so, while responses to each were saved they are not included in the presentation of findings in Chapter six. Section 5.3 houses a brief discussion about the survey sample and information provided to potential participants.

5.2.2 Document and exploratory analysis

The second research method selected for this study was documentary analysis using data collected from four observations of face to face E&D training events offered by HEIs in the North East region of the UK. The home institution of the researcher was deliberately excluded from this phase of the research as "when insiders make observations of what is going on, people may not necessarily be aware that they are being researched" (Costley & Gibbs, 2006: 91). The observations yielded an array of images, narrative, terminology and metaphors from which a series of collages, or cultural artefacts, were created. As Loads (2018: 258) suggests the use of "creative and artistic approaches to find fresh ways of asking and answering" questions enhances the work of the professional staff developer in HE in assisting participants to explore the lived experience of others.

Ali (2004: 271) invites the social researcher to create *a posteriori* (after experience) artefact that "reflects social processes and helps construct perceptions of the social and cultural world", the artefact being simply "an object made by a human being" (Soanes & Stevenson, 2008: 73) resulting from a process of inquiry. One of the three research methods of this study, described by Sarantakos (2013: 305) as documentary or exploratory analysis, was the creation of a series of collages resulting from a search for "peculiarities, characteristic attributes and trends in the text that mark the identity of the message conveyed". Costley et al. (2010: 112) endorse this approach suggesting "observational research has a long tradition" in the social sciences requiring a high level of involvement on the part of the researcher "in the research setting" providing a "kaleidoscope of observations that will be a rich source of ideas".

The researcher created a series of 'collages' (*from the French verb 'coller', meaning to stick)* "gathered without disturbing the setting" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011: 161) from images, symbols, metaphors and texts articulated by facilitators and participants during the training events. The choice of 'collage' rather than 'bricolage' (*from the French 'bricoleur' or 'jack of all trades')* or 'assemblage' (*art that is assembled using disparate items)* reflects the two dimensional artefacts that resulted. The artefacts were not intended to be a random piecing together of materials, as might be expected from bricolage and assemblage, rather a refined and focussed representation of the E&D training being offered in HEIs.

Plowright (2011: 93) suggests "there is a hierarchy of complexity associated with artefact characteristics" ranging from informational, presentational and representational through to interpretational. The informational and presentational artefacts are the least sophisticated, their purpose being to, for the former, record and store information and, for the latter, to "present information to others" (Plowright, 2011: 94). The cultural artefacts created for this study would be described as representational as their purpose was to "re-present selected ideas, events, information [and] knowledge" (Plowright, 2011: 94). As the author and not an interpreter, whose role would be to "implicitly or explicitly explain the meaning" (Plowright, 2011: 95), the artefacts were not, therefore, intended to be interpretational.

Inspired, in part, by the use of drawings in the ethnographic work of Mitchell et al. (2011) and the use of mind maps by Beckett (2014) the collages became a tangible amalgamation of images, diagrams, individual words and text encountered by the researcher during the training events. The resulting artefacts provided a visual prop for discussion in the semi-structured interviews which invited "collaborative meaning-making" (Mitchell et al., 2011: 19) between the researcher, who had created the artefacts, and each interviewee whose experience of, and reaction to, each collage was explored. The response from research participants to such "visual spectacles" (Ali, 2004: 266) elicited valuable information during the semi-structured interviews that followed. Participants were also invited to bring with them an artefact of their own choosing which further enriched the exploration of the researcher artefacts and provided an opportunity for individuals to decode what they saw through the lens of their own lived experience.

As Banks (2007: 3) notes, "images are ubiquitous in society" with a "sensory prominence" so have a broad potential for inclusion in all social research. Banks (2007: 4) goes on to suggest that a study which itself creates images in the form of, for example, a collage, may "reveal some sociological insight that is not accessible by any other means". While the aim was to "capture predominantly surface impressions" (Sarantakos, 2013: 305) from everyday events, the verbal and non-verbal data embedded in the artefacts added "richness to the corpus of data [to be] gathered" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011: 161) and facilitated thinking about the wider inquiry when combined with the primary data gathered through the survey and semi-structured interviews.

Butler-Kisber (2010: 104) describes this interaction of “visual language”, in collage form, and interview responses as when “new meaning and understanding occur(s)”.

The interpretive researcher must consider, however, that the very act of observation from which the collages were created could, in itself, have made a difference to what was being observed. How did, for example, the presence of the researcher at E&D training being delivered by another institution impact upon, or alter, the delivery of, and participation in, the workshop. The information sheet (see appendix B) which had been given to both the facilitator and participants in advance should have alleviated any concerns in this regard, yet their real impact is unknown. Ethical approval to speak directly to either the facilitators or participants about this specific issue had not been sought as part of the study so the question remains a rhetorical one.

This secondary data collection method drew upon situational data from the “traces of social activity literally surround(ing) us” (O’Leary, 2014: 244), such traces described by the social researcher as texts (O’Leary, 2014). Collage “evokes embodied responses, and uses the juxtaposition of fragments and the presence of ambiguity to engage the viewer in multiple avenues of interpretation” (Butler-Kisber, 2010: 102) suggesting that the creation of the artefacts required careful consideration. Denscombe (2010: 296) agrees and suggests the “process of selecting extracts involves a level of judgement and discretion on the part of the researcher”. Editorial decisions as to what to include, what to exclude, what to highlight and how to present each collage proved to be particularly time consuming. The research sub questions and observation template (Appendix F) provided a guide for the collection of specific data that would contribute to understanding with the researcher considering not only how each collage was produced but what they would represent, how they would be consumed and the role each would play in the research process (Ali, 2004; Plowright, 2011; Sarantakos, 2013; O’Leary, 2014). O’Leary (2014: 247) challenges the researcher to “recognize (sic) whether data was produced with a particular agenda in mind” and invites an interrogation or interview of the artefacts themselves during the process of their creation. Tonkiss (2004: 368) similarly warns of the need to avoid “crass content” when she reminds the researcher that such artefacts can only replicate what was said rather than how it was said in the context of the training.

While the artefacts represent the experience as seen through the eyes of the researcher they are still a constructed reality (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008). Kowal and O'Connell (2010: 249) comment that, although an innovative approach to data collection, the "constructive process" is "characterized (sic) by a considerable reduction of the almost infinitely rich primary and secondary data" encouraging the researcher to adopt such a method as an integral part of a broader research methods strategy, endorsing the earlier discussion about the multi-method approach taken in this study. There was the need to mitigate the risk of encoding personal bias in the creation of the artefacts and, as May (2001: 189) proposes, the researcher considered the "authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning" of the artefacts. The images, phrases and symbols drawn from the document analysis, while providing a visual representation of the E&D training workshops, are however, a distilled version of each event, capturing only partial information selected by the researcher, thus "crucially moulding and changing [the] reality" (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2008: 20). Each separate piece of information was carefully considered as inclusion or exclusion of individual items might be suggested as influencing the subsequent dialogue with interview participants. While critics of discourse analysis might suggest that such an approach "reduces complex phenomena into simplistic categories" (Jacobs, 2013: 278), the material artefact, while reductionist, was coherent, clear and accessible. The collages depicting, in part, themes emerging from the analysis of the observations. For example, the charts presenting the frequency of use of particular words link to the historical development of the language of disability, providing segue into the interview question 'What do the terms disablism and ableism mean to you?'

5.2.3 Semi-structured interviews as instrumental dialogue

In considering the use of semi-structured interviews Barton (1996: 235) writes that "one of the most significant aspects of discrimination is the extent to which the voices of disabled people have been excluded from both academic and popular discourses within society". To hear and capture the voices, and thus the deep meaning of participants own words, of their personal accounts, of people with an impairment working in HE, four semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals from the staff disability networks at the home institution of the researcher (Mason, 2002; Marshall & Rossman, 2016).

Using gatekeepers to recruit participants, the researcher contacted the chairs of the disabled staff and neurodiverse networks at their home institution asking them to forward an invitation to network members who form a closed community. The personalised approach was thought to mitigate the potential drawback that these two gatekeepers might "select participants *they* would like" (Hennick et al., 2011: 93) to be included rather than invite participation from any network member who would be willing to be involved. As members of the networks in the same institution as the researcher the interviewees could also be seen as colleagues who might "welcome the opportunity to discuss issues around their work" (Costley et al., 2010: 34), particularly as the researcher, in their professional role, could be viewed as someone able to "solve" some of the issues raised during the interviews.

Inspired by Darke (2004: 105) who claims that "it is disabled people's own ability to make and imagine images of disability that ultimately gives them a power that far exceeds those of almost any other kind of imagery" the semi-structured interviews included an invitation to participants to bring with them an artefact of their own choosing. The collages provided the opportunity to discuss "the participant's perspective on the phenomenon of interest" (Marshall & Rossman, 2016: 150) with a further personalised and in-depth level of contextual dialogue stemming from the introduction of their own artefacts.

The semi- structured interview, a phenomenological research interview tradition, is a narrowly focussed, guided contextual and conversational interaction between researcher and participant. The interview has a loose frame in which combined questioning and observation elicit an understanding of the "meanings that everyday activities hold for people" (Marshall & Rossman, 2016: 150) and from which constructed knowledge can be interpreted and reported upon. This topical approach to the semi-structured interview facilitated an exploration of the general topic while respecting "the way the participant frames and structures the response" (Marshall & Rossman, 2016: 150).

As Kvale (2007: 46) notes "interviews are particularly suited for studying peoples' understanding of the meaning in their lived world, describing their experiences and self-understanding, and clarifying and elaborating on their own perspective on their lived world".

This methodological approach, although not without its limitations, was intended to facilitate the exposure of new knowledge from each participant where the researcher, with “qualified naiveté” (Kvale, 2007: 12), could pay attention to the responses, build a rich narrative of the individual lived experience and an understanding of how this might, in turn, inform future E&D training in HEIs. The naive researcher in this context was curious and prepared to be open to unexpected interpretations of the phenomena being explored while conscious of their own presuppositions and expectations of what each interview would reveal. Holstein and Gubrium (2004: 141) encourage such curiosity although offer a note of caution in acknowledging that the interviewer might be “deeply and unavoidably implicated in creating meanings that ostensibly reside within respondents” and which impact on the “verbosity” (Fielding & Thomas, 2008: 256) of the responses elicited. Similarly, Kvale (2007: 13) draws attention to the way in which a “failure of communication in the interview” might lead to “ambiguous and contradictory statements” by participants.

Such failings would lead to questioning whether such accounts “reflect genuine inconsistencies, ambivalence and contradiction of an interviewees life experience” (Kvale, 2007: 13). The semi-structured or standardised interview “operates with a degree of precision” to produce “openness in the range of responses” and facilitate discovery (Gillham, 2005: 71) yet is neither strictly structured nor non directive. The researcher took care to avoid a precise frame from becoming a rigid process which might inhibit the conversation and emergent themes and thus become a distraction from hearing the nuanced accounts of the participants (Johnstone, 2001).

The researcher scheduled time to meet in person with each research participant, “ensuring reliability across the interviews” (Kendall, 2018: 696), and asked the key questions in the same way for each interview, choosing to adapt the sequence in which they were asked to suit each interactional situation and to probe for additional information (Gillham, 2005; Fielding & Thomas, 2008; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Gilbert & Stoneman, 2016). Denscombe (2010: 175) agrees with this approach, describing the semi-structured interview as one in which “the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised”.

Marshall and Rossman (2016: 150) likewise remind the researcher that the “participant’s perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it, not as the researcher views it”. Having acknowledged that the order of questions differed from one interview to another, the way in which each question was worded remained unchanged, providing a consistent approach to later presentation and analysis. To ensure “methodological stringency” (Kvale, 1994: 148) and credible results when using semi-structured interviews to produce new knowledge that will inform and enhance disability studies research, the researcher carefully considered the “substance, style, scope and sequence” (Mason, 2002: 67) of the proposed questions.

If, as Fontana (2003) suggests, a semi-structured interview is a social production, the researcher should also consider how to contextualise each interview and how to draw each to a close. In “orchestrating the intellectual and social dynamics” (Mason, 2002: 67) of each conversational encounter the researcher has the opportunity to maximise the opportunities for discovery while mitigating for the limitations of this as a research method. As with any social production sequencing was important and Rubin and Rubin (2012) provide the researcher with a simple frame upon which to overlay their interview plan. They recommend an informative and succinct introduction followed by a series of simple questions both of which will set the tone for the conversation. The “tough questions” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012: 109) being followed by a brief period of reflection during which any enhanced emotions could be dissipated before each interview drew to a close.

5.3 Purposive sampling

This study was concerned to explore how, if at all, the lived experience of people with impairments is represented in E&D training in HE. To gather data from which conclusions could be drawn it was important to select participants who could “purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study” (Creswell, 2007: 125). Mason (2002: 120) describes sampling and selection as simply the “principles and procedures used to identify, choose, and gain access to relevant data sources” which the researcher will apply to their choice of research methods. Simple perhaps, yet Lee and Lings (2008: 217) state that “the entire usefulness of (the) study rests on the appropriate selection of sampling units” necessitating particularly careful consideration of the sample. A sample refers to the people, or ‘cases’, who will form “a defined research population (Boeije, 2010: 35).

The cases correspond to the number of individuals within the sample for both the survey and semi-structured interviews, the sample having been "intentionally selected according to the needs of the study" (Boeije, 2010: 35) because their experiences, narratives, professional perspective and insights are directly relevant to the research questions being considered.

Pragmatic sample selection which asks 'what resources are available?', 'what is it that the research study wants to explore?' and 'what constraints might be faced?' is important for the qualitative researcher who seeks to explore the lived experience or real world perspective of participants (Creswell, 2007; Lee & Lings, 2008; Emmel, 2013; Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Emmel (2013) writes of fifteen purposeful sampling strategies while Creswell (2007) suggests sixteen alternative approaches.

For each the researcher is invited to consider the "events, settings, actors and artefacts" (Creswell, 2007: 126) that form the research population when selecting the most appropriate sampling method. Punch (2014: 50) acknowledges the importance of a strategic approach, that the sampling plan be "seen as part of the internal logic of the study" and not as an afterthought or simple matter of expedience. For this study three alternative research methods were used forming the collective triad that Faulkner (1982) proposed. The formation of a bespoke sampling strategy for each method, while requiring considerable thought, was intended to maximise the range of views and experiences elicited during the primary research phase of the study while being mindful of the potential constraints that each approach might harbour.

The findings of this study present, in part, an invitation to professional staff development practitioners in HEIs to consider improvements to the way in which E&D awareness and training in HEIs is designed and delivered. Furthermore, practitioners will be able to review their own training offer and reflect on whether it encapsulates and recognises the lived experience of people with an impairment, disabled by an ableist society. To begin a dialogue with this community of practice the researcher invited professional staff developers in other HEIs and members of the disabled staff networks at their home institution, themselves the "gatekeepers" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011: 161) of the data, to participate in the study.

Hennick et al. (2011: 92) refer to gatekeepers as having a “prominent and recognized (sic) role in the local community” being sufficiently “influential to encourage community members to participate”. This intermediary role proved to be important in each phase of the research study with time dedicated to identifying these gatekeepers and in personalising the approaches made to them thus fostering an “individual rapport” (Costley et al., 2010: 53). In particular, the researcher considered the possibility that members of the SDF and the chair and deputy chair of the disabled staff networks might have felt obligated to cooperate with the research and, as discussed in Chapter four, due care was taken to avoid any suggestion of coercion (Costley at al., 2010). While working predominantly with the SDF and internal networks could be suggested as too narrow a sample, as the data was drawn predominantly from the HE practitioner community, one aim of the study was to share findings that might lead others to reflect on E&D learning and development practice in HE and, learning from a narrow, yet expert, field created new knowledge that supports this aim.

The interviews elicited the views of both professional services and academic colleagues who participate in E&D training although were small in number. A broader study which sought the views of a larger number of training participants would be recommended for any future research.

The researcher identified two principal categories of research participants who, it was proposed, would contribute to one or more of the three research methods selected for this study. The first group were those who work in staff learning and development departments in UK HEIs given their professional expertise in the design and delivery of E&D training in HE. The national Staff Development Forum (SDF), the collective body which represents learning and development practitioners in HE, had, in 2018, a membership of 110 HEIs which formed the total sample for the survey. The researcher, a member of the SDF, had intended to seek permission to use the full membership list for research purposes. This was, however, to prove challenging despite consideration having been given to the newly introduced General Data Protection Regulations (2018) which require organisations to have informed consent from individuals before sharing their personal data.

Each SDF member had provided such consent and the researcher had received permission for the online survey to be distributed by the SDF to all members. To have done so would, however, have led to the possibility of multiple responses from single institutions as membership of the SDF was not by HEI but by individual of whom they could be many. This methodological oversight meant that an alternative had to be considered to ensure that only one representative from each HEI would then receive the personalised invitation to complete the online survey. Reflecting on what Boeije (2010: 35) advises, a bespoke mailing list was thus "intentionally" created, with names, job titles and contact details of the most senior learning and development professional from each HEI. This time consuming endeavour could, perhaps, have been avoided had the access to a readily available distribution list been considered as part of the research design. Of the 110 HEI members of the SDF the researcher was able to locate sufficient detail for 107 which formed the actual sample and to whom personalised emails were sent. Each included a short invitation to participate, an attached copy of the survey information sheet (Appendix A) and an embedded hyperlink to the online survey.

For practical reasons, including distance to travel, the observational phase of the study was deliberately restricted to the 19 HEIs who form the North East and Yorkshire (NEYSDF) branch of the SDF. To garner support and provide sufficient information from which potential participants could make informed decisions the researcher attended a regional forum event on 17th October 2018. The presentation (Appendix E) and opportunity to speak with colleagues provoked interest from six HEI's. Each expression of interest was followed up by telephone call resulting in four confirmed dates for observations over the following months.

The third research method forming the triad was the semi-structured interview. The main and sub research questions, the time and resources available and the scope of the research were all variables that needed to be addressed when considering the sample size for semi-structured interviews. When adopted as a single research method Bryman (2016: 416) suggests "For a qualitative interview study to be accepted for publication" thirty interviews provides a "minimal level of acceptability. Lee and Lings (2008: 216) note the "rule of thumb" as no fewer than twenty participants being required to generate a sufficient breadth of views.

Braun and Clarke (2013: 55) add context here by suggesting, while fifteen to thirty individual interviews “tends to be common in research which aims to identify patterns across data” that “there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry”. Kumar (2014: 247) for whom “the main aim in qualitative inquiries is to explore diversity” adds that “if selected carefully, diversity can be extensively and accurately described on the basis of information obtained even from one individual”.

The second group of research participants was drawn from members of the Disabled Staff and Neurodiverse Networks (DSN) at the University where the researcher is based. Expressions of interest were invited through the Chairs of each network who agreed to forward the information sheet (appendix C) to their membership. The information sheet stated that the selection of interview participants would be based solely on the date contact was made with the researcher. Interestingly one participant offered to disclose the nature of their ‘disability’ prior to the interview suggesting it might be helpful for a ‘diverse cross section of disabilities’ to be represented. The offer was declined, as this had not been anticipated when making the application for ethical approval, although does provide an opportunity to reflect on the selection of participants in any future research.

From this circulation four members of staff voluntarily agreed to participate in the study, two academic staff and two from professional services. The academic participants could, themselves, be considered as insiders, both conducting social science research and with an interest in disability studies. Their decision to volunteer suggesting they had an interest in the aims of the study and in contributing to enhancing professional E&D training practice in HE.

5.4 Thematic data analysis

In order to explore the synthesis between primary and secondary data the study adopted a univariate analysis approach, this section providing an overview of how this was accomplished. Although Bryman (2016: 570) describes qualitative data analysis as a "nuisance" because of "the attractiveness of its richness but the difficulty in finding analytic paths though that richness" the intention in this study was to use the data gathered as a "descriptive or illuminative analysis of the situation" (Thomas, 2013: 235).

To reduce and restructure the data gathered, the univariate approach provided a methodical structure in which to consider and analyse each piece of collected information. Recognising that such a rigid frame might have resulted in a narrative both abstract and remote from the real lives and experiences of those who participated in the study and that the selection of data for inclusion in the constructed artefacts might constrain or even influence open dialogue, the researcher adopted strategies to compensate.

Grbich (2007: 25) notes that preliminary data analysis is a simple process to both check and track the emerging data, offering opportunities to question where the data is leading, to ascertain whether supplementary inquiry would be helpful and to "gain a deeper understanding of the values and meaning which lie therein". To capture and, therefore, track the data this study employed a variety of techniques, each commensurate with the research method. Survey responses were collected electronically using the OS survey tool, an observation template (Appendix F) was designed to capture data, or "field notes" (Willis, 2013: 330), from the observations (an example of a handwritten template used to capture data from Observation C can be found in Appendix G) and the interviews were recorded on a voice enabled I-pad application and then transcribed verbatim.

In the following chapter information gathered through "descriptive coding" (Punch, 2014: 175) is presented. This contextual information (seen in figures 12 and 16) provides detail about the facilitators and participants at events and those who were interviewed, for example whether they were female or male and from an academic area or professional services. The use of descriptive coding provides not only context for the reader but also allowed for a depth of further exploration, for example, in considering the willingness of academic staff to engage in mandatory and optional E&D training.

The approach taken to analysing the data was primarily thematic given the intention to identify both differences and commonality of views and experiences of research participants. Although thematic analysis is particularly associated with an inductive approach it “can be conducted using deductive, *a priori* codes rather than inductive, empirical ones” (Harding, 2013: 128). The hermeneutic interpretive approach taken to this study is a further “hallmark(s) of a thematic analysis” (Willis, 2013: 324) as the data was not only read and coded but the way in which interview participants responded to the artefacts was explored a sensitive manner.

In considering the use of codes, tags or labels Richards (2015: 65) recommends establishing “guidelines for records of qualitative data that are as accurate, as contexted, as ‘thick, as useful and as reflective as the project will require”. In working with *a priori* codes (themes determined prior to the data analysis) a return to the research questions provided the initial frame from which segments of data could be marked, coded and assigned. The study adopted a manual system of coding using coloured pens, sticky labels and highlighters to initially sort the data into easily recognisable sets. Colours were used to differentiate between, for example, terminology, models of disability and forms of training delivery. A photograph of a sample of coding activity is included in Appendix I.

In examining the “recurrence of particular codes or concepts” (Willis, 2013: 325) additional markers were applied to signal where frequency of use could be attributed to one research participant rather than across the data set. During this process further *posteriori* codes emerged adding further layers of interpretation, these were assigned, for example, to hidden or invisible impairment, introduced during the observations and interviews and which had not been anticipated. Returning to the recordings of the interviews provided further richness as listening to the voices of participants, without distraction, allowed for the transactions within the dialogue to be heard.

To analyse the data at a conceptual level memos were used to record ideas, identify emerging patterns or themes and capture questions that arose during the process of coding (Punch, 2014). These memos were handwritten, appearing on the interview transcripts, in the research journal and on numerous post-it© notes which could be later reviewed and considered as part of the analysis.

One particular concern had been whether the decision of the researcher, to adopt the language of impairment rather than disability, might have inculcated bias in the data analysis phase of the study. The adoption of a rigid methodological data analysis frame would have limited the opportunity for genuine exploration of the data. By holding the frame loosely, thus creating space for posteriori themes to emerge, the potential for bias was both acknowledged and reduced. From the coding activity applied to the online survey results, the observations and the interviews, themes were identified from which explanations and interpretations could be explored.

Chapter five has explored the rationale for, and selection and implementation of, the three sequential research methods used in this study. The sampling strategy and univariate approach to analysis adopted have been discussed with attention given to issues encountered during the collection of primary research data. The numerical and narrative data findings from the survey, observations and semi-structured interviews are presented in the following chapter.

6 Presentation of research findings

This chapter presents the primary research findings from the online survey, workshop observations and semi-structured interviews. Grbich (2007: 19) reminds the researcher to "get as close as possible to the essence of the experience being studied while displaying the comments of those being researched in their own voices", reflecting the earlier discussion in Chapter four (Marshall & Rossman, 2016), in which the ability of the impaired or non-impaired researcher to appreciate the essence of the lived experience was discussed.

Although unusual in such a study the research findings are presented simply, perhaps starkly, without any analytical comment. The aim in doing so is to provide an opportunity for the reader to appreciate and get close to the voices of those who have participated in this study, without being distracted by analytical observations, synthesis with the literature and researcher reflections, Chapter six is, therefore, a comprehensive and focussed presentation of the rich primary research data. Each phase of the primary research is presented sequentially, utilising visual aids and data displays including graphs, charts, quotations and images to assist the reader in their journey through the research findings.

6.1 Presentation of survey data

This section presents findings from the online survey which was launched on Friday 14th September 2018 and closed on Monday 15th October 2018, allowing a four week window for completion. From 107 potential respondents 22 completed the survey, a response rate of 20.5%. A copy of the survey as sent out to potential respondents can be found in Appendix D. Each respondent was given an identifying number, where additional information was provided a respondent number, for example R01, is shown in brackets.

6.1.1 Survey response, HEI location and size

Respondents were asked to first identify in which region of the UK their HEI was located, with the aim of the resulting data being available for analysis to show potential regional variations in practice. Of the 10 SDF regions there was a nil response from HEIs in Northern Ireland and Wales, meaning that, while data could be analysed by region, it would show the views of those representing only Scottish and English HEIs.

For the purpose of this research, given the small pool of data, the findings are presented here without reference to geographical region in order that individual HEIs cannot be identified.

Question two in the survey asked about the size of each HEI providing an additional lens through which the data could be viewed. 54.5% (n=12) of respondents identified as working in institutions of between 501-2999 staff, with a further 18.2% (n=4) in HEIs of between 3000-3999. Institutions with less than 500 staff were represented by just one respondent while 22.7% (n=5) identified as working in an HEI with more than 4000 staff.

6.1.2 Equality and Diversity training in HE: Purpose and obligations

Question three elicited responses about the purposes of E&D training in HE with respondents asked to review a series of statements and identify all which applied to their institution. All respondents stated a purpose was to raise awareness among staff of E&D issues with 20 of the 22 stating it was to comply with legislation. Furthermore 81.8% (n=18) noted the drive to embed cultures of inclusivity on campuses with one respondent suggesting:

> The ambition [in providing E&D training] is to influence culture. In reality that is some way away with our current training (R05)

Questions four to eight focussed attention on statutory obligations facing HEIs and how individual institutions manage their approach to E&D training. In response to the question 'Which area is responsible for the governance of equality and diversity training at your institution?' the range of views indicate ownership being shared across a range of functions, most prominently Human Resources and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) functional teams. It is fair to suggest that the majority of medium to large HEIs will, in addition to having a Human Resources function, employ one or more people whose work is solely focussed on EDI activity. This study was, however, limited to asking a broad question about the location of such teams.

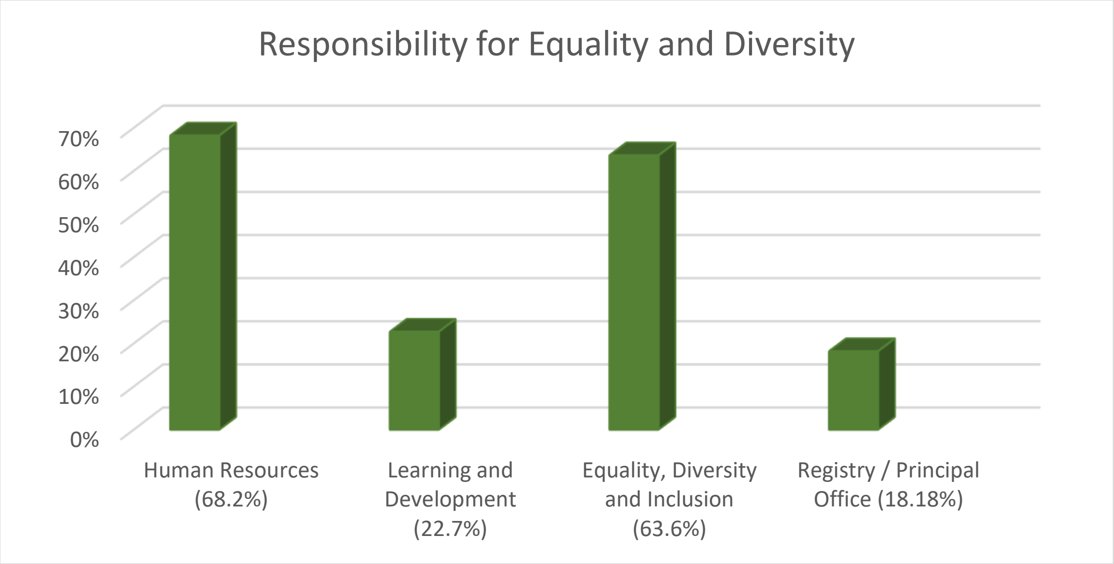

Fig 3: Chart representing HEI institutional responsibility for equality and diversity

6.1.3 Mandatory training

Question five asked whether E&D training was mandatory and, if so, whether this was for all staff or for named categories, for example academic or professional services staff. 81.8% (n=18) of respondents stated training was mandatory in their institution and, of these, 100% (n=18) identified this as being for all categories of staff. The 18.18% (n=4) of HEIs who stated that E&D training was not mandatory were those where staff numbers were between 500-2999. To elicit additional data about the mandatory nature of E&D training, question six asked whether HEIs established institutional performance targets for the numbers of staff who were expected to complete E&D training. While 18.2% (n=4) of respondents stated their HEI had not established a specific target, 54.5% (n=12) had set numerical targets of between 75-100% of staff completing training. A further 22.7% (n=5) of respondents were unable to provide a response suggesting the data was not readily available or that targets had either not been established or were not communicated to staff.

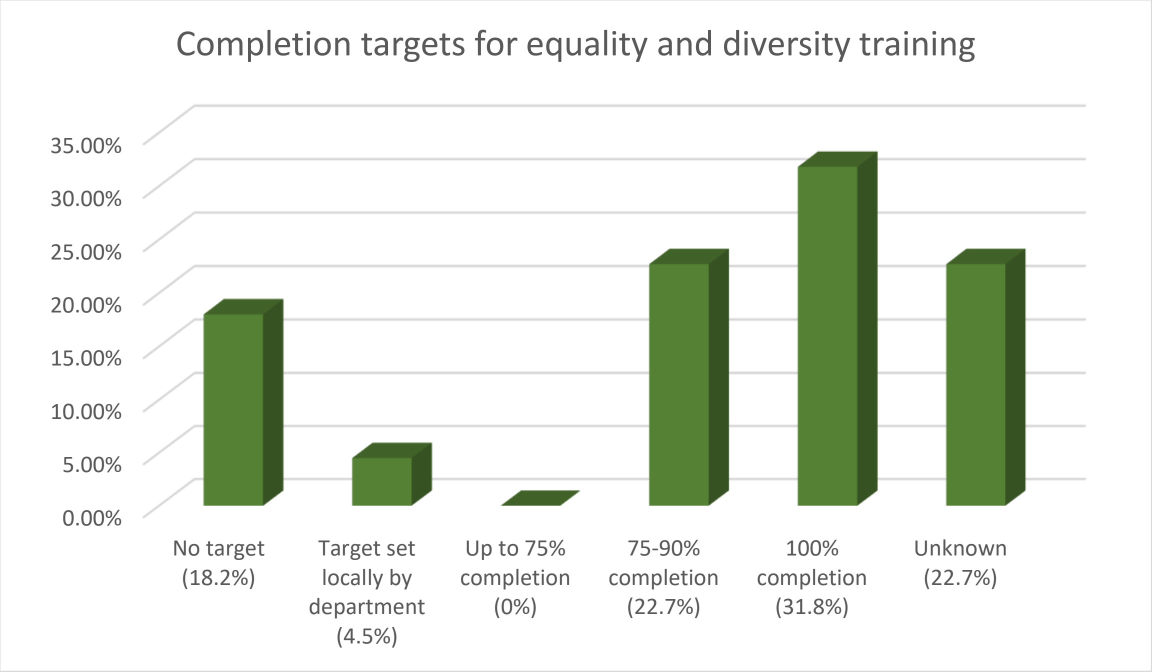

Fig 4: Chart representing HEI completion targets for equality and diversity training

Having established the range of expected targets for completion, question seven asked what proportion of staff had completed E&D training in the last 3 years. 9.1% (n=2) of respondents indicated that their HEI was able to report 100% compliance with the requirement to complete training while a further 45.4% (n=10) reported completion rates within a 3 year period of between 50-99% of staff.

When merging the responses for questions 6 and 7 it is interesting to note of those HEIs which had established a target of 100% completion (n=7) only two had achieved their desired rate of completion. Of the respondents in this group one indicated that they did not know how many staff had completed the training with a further 28.5% (n=2) indicating completion rates in their HEIs of less than 50%. When comparing these completion rates with the institutional purpose of E&D training as elicited in question 3, results indicate that, of 90.9% (n=20) of HEIs who stated the purpose was to comply with legislation, 30% (n=6) were not able to access completion data in order to demonstrate levels of compliance. Furthermore 20% (n=4) reported E&D training completion rates among staff of less than 50% with 15% (n=3) reporting rates of up to 75%.

Fig 5: Chart representing HEI completion rates for equality and diversity training

The final question, eight, in this phase of the survey, asked whether staff at each HEI were required to refresh their E&D training to update knowledge in line with legislative change and institutional practice. 45.5% (n=10) indicated that staff were required to refresh their training while 54.5% (n=12) confirmed that staff were not required to do so. Of those who, in providing additional detail in response to this question, said staff were required to undergo further training, one HEI asked staff to attend refresher training annually with 40% (n=4) requiring staff to complete training every two years. The remaining five (50%) HEIs did require staff to refresh their E&D training although the frequency of participation was less than biennial. When merging the responses to question eight with the stated purpose of E&D training being to comply with legislation, extracted from question three, of note are the 22.7% (n=5) of HEIs where staff are required to repeat their training.

6.1.4 Delivery of Equality and Diversity training in HE

The online survey then asked respondents a series of questions to elicit information about how E&D training was delivered at their HEIs. Question nine offered a series of potential delivery choices from which respondents could select all those which applied in their home institution.

The most frequently employed delivery method was online courses being selected by 95.5% (n=21) of respondents. Alternative delivery methods selected included workshops, chosen by 77.3% (n=17), with 18.2% (n=4) using quizzes, 9.1% (n=2) facilitating drama-based learning environments and one institution identifying contextualised simulations as a delivery method. 13.6% (n=3) selected ‘other’ from the menu of choices and, when prompted, provided additional narrative about how E&D training was delivered.

> Through facilitated Action Learning Sets (R16)
>
> My department delivers disability awareness training via workshops (R12)
>
> Group Coaching Conversations (R16)
>
> Other, ad hoc training is provided, e.g, when the new Transgender inclusion policy was launched, training was provided across the institution (R22)

Question ten offered a binary ‘yes’ or ‘no’ option for respondents being asked ‘with regard to people with an impairment do you deliver separate training for staff which specifically focusses on disability?’ While 45.5% (n=10) said they did not provide separate training, 54.5% (n=12) answered in the affirmative with almost a third providing further information about how such training was delivered.

> Case by case basis as each impairment can vary in adjustment required (R03)
>
> There are voluntary training courses for staff to support students (sic) some disabilities including mental health issues (R04)
>
> 1:1 sessions if requested. Thus far it has been to HR Advisors and one manager within a school (R13)
>
> We provide Building Disability Confidence training to educate staff on adjustments that can be made and the impact of this on staff and students (R08)
>
> Impairment related disability awareness training where the need is identified. For example autism, dyspraxia and ADHD specific training focussing upon supporting staff in providing reasonable adjustments (R16)
>
> This year we’ll be providing reasonable adjustments training for managers (R11)
>
> We are developing an online disability awareness module (R19)

6.1.5 Design and facilitation of Equality and Diversity training in HE

To understand not simply the mode of delivery but those involved in its facilitation, question eleven asked respondents to indicate which individuals were involved in the delivery of each form of training. Online courses were excluded from this question as, once designed and made available, they require no face to face involvement from a facilitator. In the case of drama-based training both HEIs which had identified this as a delivery method in question nine, stated that an external expert was solely responsible for delivery. The sole HEI, who had earlier stated they facilitated contextualised simulations, noted they shared the delivery equally with an internal expert while other forms of delivery including workshops and quizzes required the involvement of a range of internal and external experts.

Fig 6: Chart representing individuals involved in the delivery of equality and diversity training

To assist in understanding the relationship between learning and development professionals and both internal and external experts, question twelve asked respondents to provide information about which parties had responsibility for the design of E&D training. Human Resources took the lead design role in 18.2% (n=4) of institutions with an equal number of respondents, 18.2% (n=4), identifying Learning and Development as the lead department.

45.5% (n=10) identified the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team as leading on training design with the remaining 18.2% (n=4) providing additional narrative regarding collaborative approaches and work with external experts.

> Collaborative responsibility between Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Learning & Development for design of training. Learning and Development are responsible for the delivery of it (R16)
>
> External e-learning materials tailored for the University in partnership with HR (R04)
>
> Our People and Culture team sit within HR and deliver work on this, and so does our Professional Development Team who also sit in HR - it's a bit confusing (R08)

6.1.6 Research and engagement in Equality and Diversity training in HE

Questions thirteen and fourteen asked respondents to provide information about how, if at all, disability studies research was considered during the design phase of E&D training. 86.4% (n=19) stated that the design of their E&D training was informed by relevant research in the field. From the sample only one HEI responded that research was not a factor in the design of their activity. Question fourteen asked, 'with specific reference to disability which models, if any, influence the design of your equality and diversity training?' and provided a range of options from which to select. Of the 86.4% (n=19) who stated, in response to question thirteen, that their design was informed by relevant research, 52.6% (n=10) selected the social model with one respondent each for both the medical and affirmative models while 36.8% (n=7) chose 'none of the above'.

In considering collaboration with others question fifteen asked 'To what extent, if any, are people with an impairment involved in the design of your equality and diversity training?' 33.3% (n=7) noted no involvement while 47.6% (n=10) sought views of people with impairments through local networks. One respondent stated they invited people with impairments to pilot activity in order to gain their views and four HEIs provided additional information about how people with impairments were involved.

> The EDI team are proactive in seeking input from other professionals and colleagues (R05)
>
> [our training is] designed by an external facilitator who has a disability (R08)

> The training is delivered by a social enterprise who engage with those who have lived experience of disability (R10)
>
> Specific impairment related training is sometimes developed and delivered by people with that impairment (i.e. Deaf Awareness) (R16)

Question sixteen focussed on the content of facilitated training events and asked 'to what extent, if at all, is discussion about the lived experience of people with impairments included in your equality and diversity training?' 13.6% (n=3) stated their training provided no opportunity for discussion while 45.5% (n=10) of respondents indicated they encouraged open discussions about the lived experience of all individuals. 22.7% (n=5) actively encouraged open discussion specifically around the lived experience of people with impairments with the remaining 18.1% (n=4) stating such discussion was invited but was limited in scope.

6.1.7 Measuring the impact of Equality and Diversity training in HE

Question seventeen asked for information about how, if at all, HEIs measure the success of E&D training. Respondents were provided with a range of potential options from which to select all those which applied at their own institution. The most frequently applied measure of success, selected by 95.5% (n=21), was the percentage of staff who had participated in, or completed, training. 59.1% (n=13) selected institutional awards or accreditation for E&D practice, for example Athena Swan and Disability Confident, as success measures while 36.4% (n=8) identified with an increased engagement by staff in E&D forums and networks. (The Advance HE Athena Swan Charter recognises that all individuals have identities shaped by multiple factors and celebrates work undertaken in HEIs to address gender equality. Disability Confident is a Government scheme designed to assist organisations, including HEIs, to recruit and retain people with impairments.) From the range of success measure options available to respondents for question seventeen, two were not selected, decreased sickness absence among people with impairments and increased resource allocation for reasonable adjustments in the workplace. One respondent provided further information, commenting that:

> We struggle to measure the impact of the training delivered (R10)

The final question, eighteen, in the survey asked about the methods employed by HEIs to evaluate the impact of their E&D training. The purpose of asking this question was to understand how, if at all, HEIs gathered information from participants about their experience. Although the question was limited to the format of information collection the responses would be useful in ascertaining the perceived value each HEI placed on the data. Respondents were invited to select all those which applied to their institution and to provide additional information where applicable. The majority, 71.4% (n=15) indicated the use of post event reaction sheets while 28.6% (n=6) conducted no evaluation of E&D training. Of the sixteen respondents who confirmed they did evaluate this type of training, 50% (n=8) used questions in their internal staff surveys to gauge impact with 12.5% (n=2) preparing case studies and 37.5% (n=6) facilitating focus groups. Further information was provided, specifically about the use of focus groups, with respondents noting:

> We have a number of EDI focussed forums that feed into several work streams (e.g Positive Working Environment) (R05)
>
> Recent open staff sessions have focussed on EDI (R18)

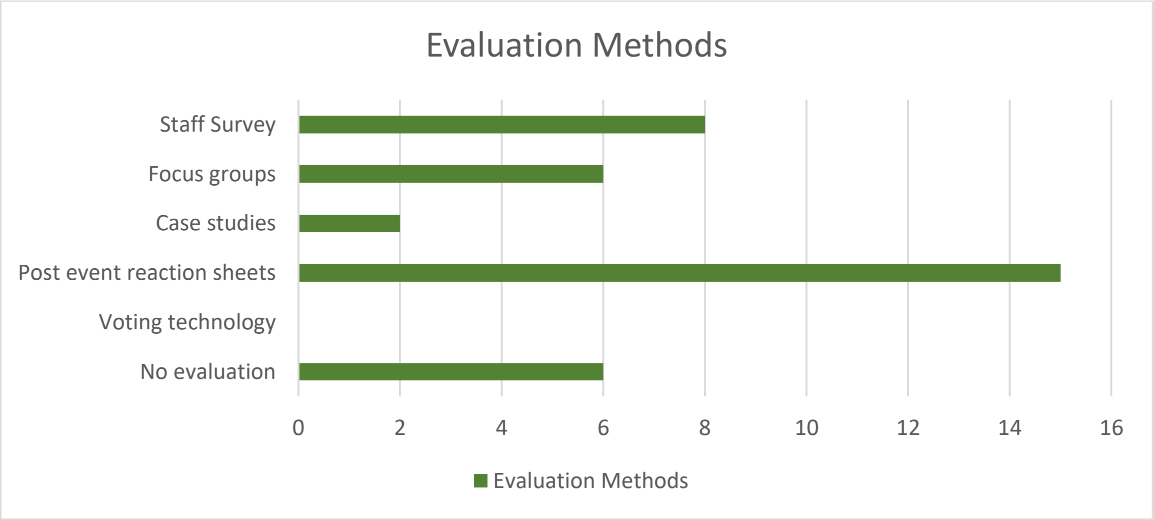

Fig 7: Chart representing evaluation methods of equality and diversity training

6.2 Representing impairment

This section presents the findings from four observations of E&D training workshops the researcher had been granted permission to observe, facilitated by HEIs in the north of England. Findings are presented in a thematic manner, exploring the language of disability, how terms associated with E&D were phrased, what stories were shared and the images which were used in the workshops. This second phase of the primary research was observational, providing rich numerical and narrative data from which four individual collages, or cultural artefacts (Plowright, 2011), were created. The four figures, 8-11, are copies of the cultural artefacts created as visual representations of each training workshop.

The collages include a number of direct quotes from both facilitator and participants, representing the discussions which took place with the pie charts acting as a visual for the frequency of use of specific terms. Images are copied from the materials used in the workshops, either from the presentation slides or the handouts provided to participants.

The collages are a representation of the terminology associated with disability, impairment, E&D, and include images and story headlines used by both the facilitators and participants at the events. Each collage, is differently titled, not in the way as assigned to the event by the facilitator, but generated from a direct quote by a participant or facilitator reflecting the inclusive aims of each event, thus providing the reader with a sense of each workshop.

Proud to be disabled: Proud to be me (A)

All different all equal (B)

Everyone included, everyone involved (C)

Creating an inclusive environment (D)

Fig 8. Collage created following observation A: Everyone Included: Everyone Involved

Fig 9. Collage created following observation B: ALL different ALL equal

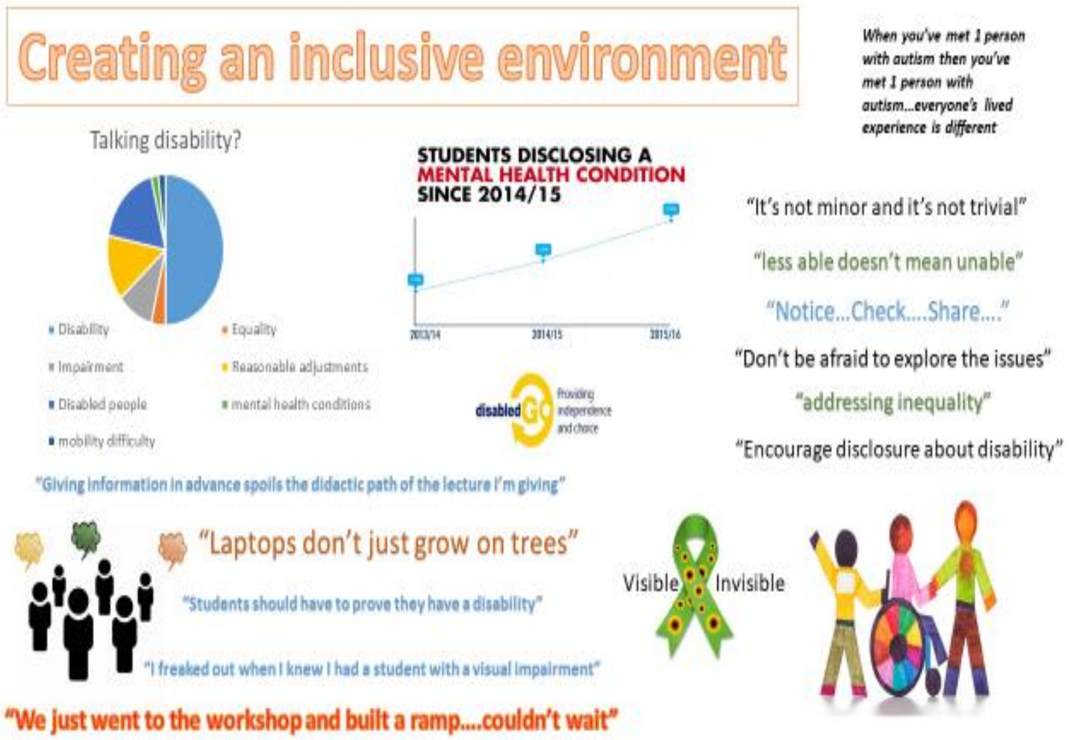

Fig 10. Collage created following observation C: Creating an inclusive environment

Fig 11. Collage created following observation D: Proud to be disabled: Proud to be me

The training workshops took place between 13th November 2018 and 5th March 2019 and were attended by staff, both academic and professional, from each host HEI. While each workshop differed in respect to learning outcomes, some being generally related to the Equality Act 2010 and others specifically designed to raise awareness of disability related issues, the core focus for each was that of E&D in HE. The four events were face to face workshops with each including some opportunity for discussion and for questions to be posed by the audience. Two of the workshops invited audience participation in the form of short quizzes, one involved a role play in which audience members were invited to engage and another included two short video clips. The events ranged in duration from two to four hours and attracted audiences of between six and eighteen participants. The facilitators were professional and academic experts drawn from the respective institution's learning and development, E&D and disability services departments. As discussed in Chapter four, each host HEI was given assurance of anonymity, to respect this, while also offering a sense of each event for the reader, the table below, figure 12, provides anonymised information about the format, content, facilitation and engagement strategies that were observed.

		Observation A	Observation B	Observation C	Observation D
Format and duration		Workshop (2 hours)	Workshop (4 hours)	Workshop (2 hours, 30 minutes)	Lecture / workshop (2 hours)
Mandatory / Optional		Mandatory	Mandatory	Optional	Optional
Objectives		To gain an insight into the practical ways in which equality and inclusion issues relate to your role as a manager	To ensure that all staff have the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding to support and promote equality and diversity within the workplace	In relation to learning and teaching, to gain an understanding of the Equality Act 2010 and explore how to facilitate learning for disabled students	To gain an appreciation of the barriers to communication experienced by those with physical impairments and an understanding of the Equality Act 2010
Participants	Number	18	12	14	6
	Academic/ Professional Female / male	Academic (n=8 / 4f, 4m) Professional (n=10/ 7f, 2m)	Academic (n=4/ 3f, 1m) Professional (n=8 / 6f, 2m)	Academic (n=10/ 7f, 3m) Professional (n=4/ 3f/1m)	Academic (n=1/ 1f) Professional (n=5/ 5f)

	Observation A	Observation B	Observation C	Observation D
Facilitator/s	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion internal expert (Female, non-impaired)	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion internal expert (Female, non-impaired)	Professional services staff, one from learning and development, one from disability services (Female, both non-impaired)	Academic from the HEI who shared their impairment with participants (Female, impaired)
Approach	Facilitator input Small group discussion	Facilitator input Discussion Quiz Video clips	Facilitator/s input Small group discussion	Facilitator led input Quiz Role play
Audience engagement	A facilitator led workshop with medium levels of audience participation	Facilitator led with audience engagement throughout. High degree of challenge from the audience	Interactive, thought provoking discussion, focus on practical application. High levels of audience engagement	This workshop formed two halves, a lecture with a short quiz and participation in the form of a role play

Fig 12. Table showing workshop format, content, facilitation and engagement strategies

In the previous research design chapter, the rationale for selecting collage as the method of data presentation for this phase of the study was discussed. The collages provided segue into the discussion with interview participants, facilitating a discussion around the way in which people with impairments are portrayed in E&D training. To enable this methodological approach to data collection a template was created on which information directly relevant to the research questions was recorded (Appendix F). The template became an aide memoire for each observation allowing for both quantitative and qualitative data to be collected in a systematic manner to ensure consistency of approach and to facilitate basic quantitative content analysis (Beckett, 2013). Contemporaneous notes were recorded during each observation using the template, an example of which can be seen in appendix G, from which the artefacts were later created.

To produce each collage Microsoft© Powerpoint software was used which facilitated ease of insertion of text, images and charts. Each collage, while an individual representation of one of the four different workshops, is, therefore, similar in style and was printed and laminated in different sizes, A4 and A3, to ensure both durability and accessibility by interview participants in the primary research phase which followed later.

6.2.1 The Language of impairment

One workshop, represented by Collage D, included discussion about the way in which language associated with impairment has altered over time. Participants were given a series of words and phrases and asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' to indicate whether each was appropriate to use in contemporary conversation. Participants voted 'no' when shown phrases including 'handicapped', 'retarded', 'deaf as a post' and 'stone deaf' and 'yes' to, among others, 'deaf', 'disabled' and 'hearing disability'. In the same workshop a short role play was facilitated in which half of the participants were asked to put themselves in the position of a person with a hearing or visual impairment. The remaining participants were then asked to communicate a small number of prepared sentences to their counterparts and to then discuss how successfully, or otherwise, their messages had been received. A short quiz designed to explore what participants knew about the Equality Act 2010 and the nine protected characteristics featured in one other workshop.

The collages include charts titled 'Talking Disability?' drawn from numerical data, "generated as a result of counting" (Plowright, 2011: 20), which reflect the frequency of use by both facilitators and participants of the terminology associated with impairment in each workshop. Discussion in the introduction and literature review about the language associated with impairment and disability and the research question 'What is disability…' prompted the collection of this specific data, and subsequent analysis in Chapter seven.

The two charts, overleaf, show the combined total frequency of use of key words or phrases, discussed in the introduction and literature review, used across the four workshops. The first chart, figure 13, shows the actual frequency of use of terminology by the facilitators and the second, figure 14, that used by participants.

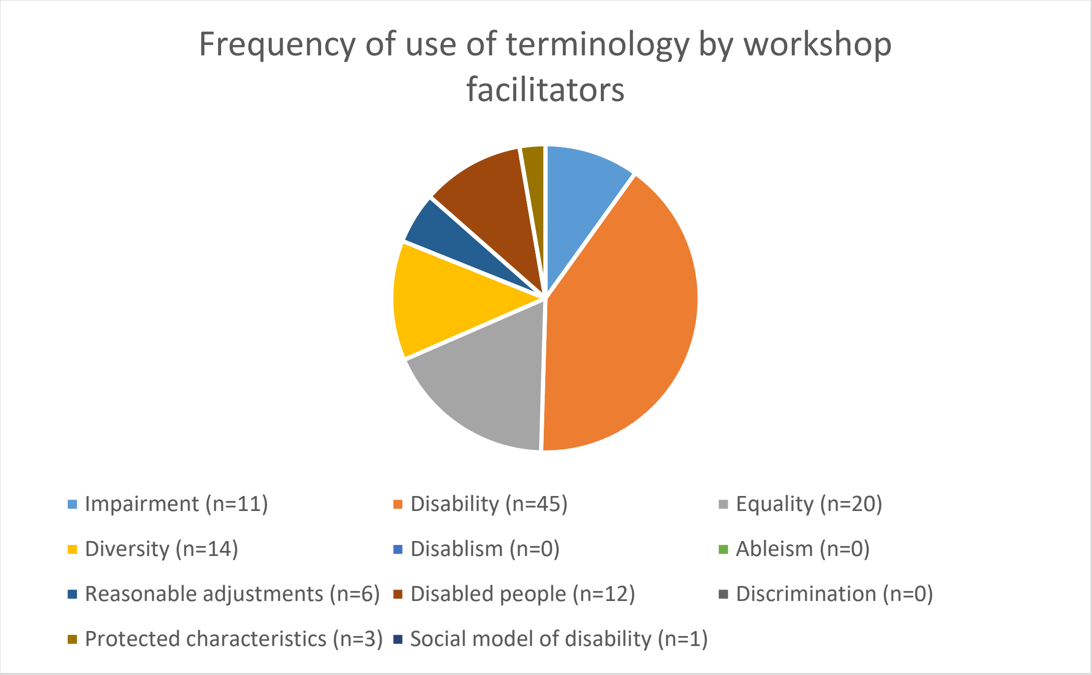

Fig 13. Chart showing frequency of use of terminology associated with impairment by workshop facilitators

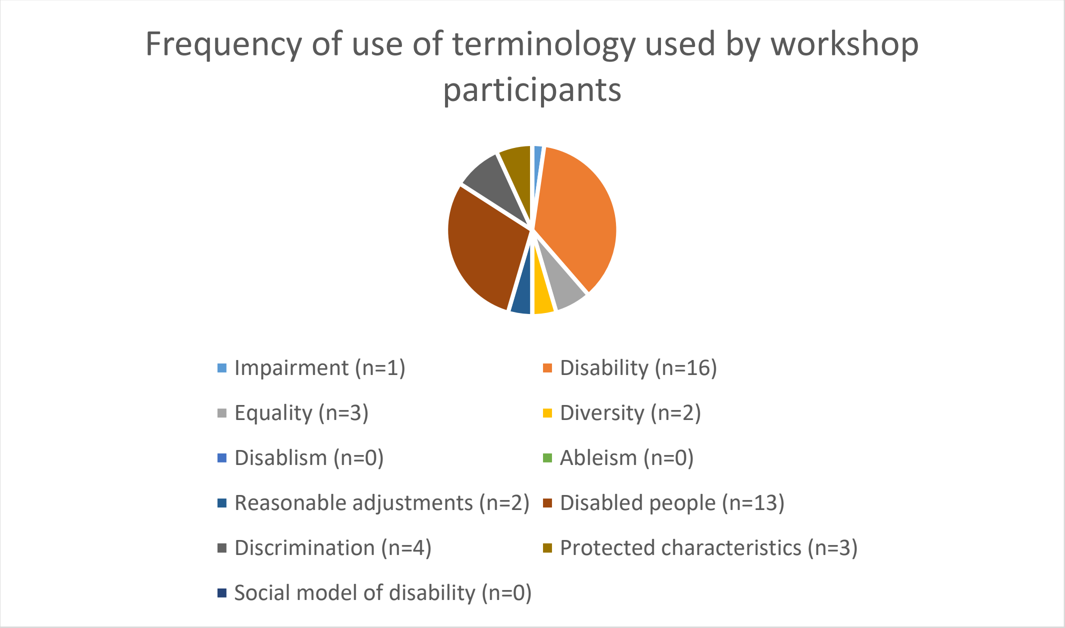

Fig 14. Chart showing frequency of use of terminology associated with impairment by workshop participants

The observation template (Appendix F) was also used to capture the way in which facilitators and participants explained their understanding of the words equality, diversity and disability, with quotes provided in a table, figure 15. In the case of participants, the quotes are followed in brackets by the gender and role of the contributor.

Key phrase	As expressed by facilitators	As expressed by participants
Equality	'Creating a level playing field' 'Acknowledging past imbalances' 'Addressing inequality' 'Tackling discrimination' 'Making sure your services are adaptable' 'Challenging discrimination'	'Treating everyone the same' (Female, professional) 'Equality [and diversity] is just a blunt instrument' (Male, professional)
Diversity	'Treating everyone the same really isn't enough' 'Actively opposing prejudice' 'Creating inclusive environments' 'Overcoming work related obstacles' 'Redressing inequality'	'Isn't diversity a dance group?' (Male, professional) 'Recognising everyone has different needs and qualities' (Female, academic) 'It's [diversity] the trendy thing to do' ' (Male, professional) 'We're all different' (Female, professional) 'Call out and challenge discrimination' (Female, professional)
Disability	'Long term condition' 'Mental health is recognised' 'Substantial and long term' 'Not minor, not trivial' 'Not all disability is visible' 'less able doesn't mean unable' 'We support the social model of disability believing that what disables a person is not the impairments they have but the physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers society creates'	'Visible and invisible' (Female, academic) 'Disabled people are the villains in Bond films' (Male, professional) 'Disability = broken' (Female, professional) 'Is hay fever a disability?' (Female, academic)

Fig 15. Facilitator and Participant explanation of key phrases associated with equality, diversity and disability

6.2.2 Stories of impairment

In three of the workshops participants expressed a desire to share their personal and vicarious experience of disability. One academic participant shared a story about a member of the public who had twice booked to attend events at the HEI. At the time of booking the individual had stated they used a wheelchair and were assured they would be able to access the venue. On arrival they found this was not the case and were turned away. Although this was acknowledged by the HEI, with a guarantee that access would be available in the future, the individual was turned away a second time at the later event. A second participant from professional services recalled a conversation with a colleague who, caring for a child with a physical impairment, expressed frustration saying 'I've a disabled child, why am I treated differently?'

A third story was shared by an academic participant about an applicant with an assistance dog (a dog trained by accredited member organisations of Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) to provide support with practical tasks to people with visual impairments, Assistance Dogs UK, 2019) who had been unsuccessful in securing employment following a job interview. The participant relayed how the recruiting manager had been heard to say, after the interview, that 'we didn't want a dog in the office'. In a related account a participant shared their own experience of making an application for a post which involved driving a University vehicle. When it was suggested they could not apply because their physical impairment would prevent them being able to operate the vehicle, they challenged this as their support worker held a driving licence so they could, collectively, fulfil the requirements of the role.

6.2.3 Engaging with impairment

Each workshop included space for discussion focussed on participant experience of working, learning and engaging with people with impairments. Participants represented a wide range of University professions, academics supporting students, line managers supporting staff and professionals from service areas with responsibility for policy, resources and student recruitment.

The conversations ranged from how to adjust working practice and the physical environment to enable people with impairments to participate in work, study and social life, to participants sharing stories of their own life experience and discussing the currency of language associated with impairment. Contributions from participants and facilitators with regard to accommodating different needs included:

> When you've met one person with autism then you've met one person with autism…everyone's lived experience is different (Female, facilitator)
>
> But we can't afford to make adjustments (Female, academic)
>
> I freaked out when I knew I had a student with a visual impairment (Female, academic)
>
> Giving information in advance spoils the didactic path of the lecture I'm giving (Female, academic)
>
> Adapting your teaching to facilitate learning (Female, academic)
>
> When you exclude someone because of their impairment it leads to feelings of isolation, anger, frustration and sadness (Female, facilitator)
>
> [making an adjustment provides] personal independence (Male, academic)

A small number of participants appeared to voice their frustration about the way in which their institution approached the provision of reasonable adjustments which would improve accessibility for those with impairments. One male participant from professional services said "we just went to the workshop and built a ramp" rather than wait for funding to be made available. Funding for reasonable adjustments also featured in a response from one female academic who said "Laptops don't just grow on trees", a nod to the cost of providing additional equipment.

Conversations also focussed attention, not just on how to accommodate the needs of individuals with impairments, but how such needs might be identified. Facilitators spoke of creating learning and social spaces where individuals could be comfortable to discuss how their impairment affected them and what personal support, adaptation of service or facility would be helpful and appropriate. Contributions from both facilitators and participants included:

> Notice…..check…..share (Female, facilitator explaining how staff should be mindful of the potential needs of others and have the confidence to ask (check) what support, if any, might be provided)
>
> Students should have to prove they have a disability (Female, academic)
>
> Don't be afraid to explore the issues (Female, facilitator)
>
> Encourage disclosure about disability (Female, professional)
>
> If we don't know then we can't provide support (Female, academic)
>
> Only 5% of people with impairments use a wheelchair, differences are not always visible (Female, facilitator)
>
> Confidence of disclosure (Male, academic)
>
> So that we can make reasonable adjustments in the moment (Female, professional)

6.2.4 Representing impairment

A range of visual images, embedded in the collages, were taken directly from the presentation materials designed by the event facilitators. Three distinct categories of images were used across the various training events. Firstly, those which were added to Microsoft© Powerpoint slides as visual aids to enhance the narrative and add variety to the presentation materials. These include the images on Collages A and C which show a wheelchair user at a desk, in a stylised group of people and a wheelchair at the foot of a flight of stairs. The second category of images can be seen in Collage B, a paper tree and a promotional poster for an art installation, both images being used to promote and celebrate the work of people with impairments.

The third category are images which represent organisations or campaigns linked to, or supportive of, equality, diversity and disability. The green ribbon with sunflowers, the symbol adopted by many UK airports who provide lanyards to passengers with hidden disabilities who wish to indicate they require assistance, can be seen in Collages A and C. Linked to these are the two images in Collage D which include the words 'Don't judge a disability by it's visibility' and 'Sometimes disabilities are invisible'.

In this third category are the Access to Work (a Government programme providing financial assistance for people with disabilities to enter and remain in employment) logo, repeated in Collages B and D, and the Disability Confident Employer (a Government scheme championing employers of people with impairments) symbol seen in Collage C. Disabled Go (renamed as AccessAble, a web based organisation providing advice to people with impairments) is also featured in Collage C alongside a slide based on data from Universities UK good practice guide 'Student mental wellbeing in higher education' (2015).

The closing minutes of one workshop were set aside for the audience to watch two short video clips embedded in the presentation. Although both were produced by organisations to promote their product, they were designed to raise awareness of the way in which assumptions can be made about people with a protected characteristic. Participants were able to discuss the impact of each, reflecting on the core messages that had been presented. The series of artefacts created following the observations and embedded earlier in this chapter were then presented to, and discussed with, the four interview participants.

6.3 The lived experience of people with impairments

This section presents the findings from four semi-structured interviews conducted between 14th and 27th March 2019 in neutral locations agreed between the researcher and each participant. The interview participants, four female members of staff, had responded to the earlier request for involvement made, initially, through the chairs of the disabled and neurodiverse staff networks at the home institution of the researcher and are, hereafter, referred to as participant a, b, c and d. As with the earlier observations participants were given assurance of anonymity in the completed study. The table below, figure 15, therefore, provides some contextual information about the participants without revealing individual identity.

Participant	Gender	Role	Nature of impairment	Interview length
a	Female	Professional Services	Physical (Invisible)	55 minutes
b	Female	Professional Services	Neurodiverse	49 minutes
c	Female	Academic	Physical (Visible)	38 minutes
d	Female	Academic	Physical (Visible)	30 minutes

Fig 16. Table showing interview participant information

The invitation to participate included a copy of the information sheet and, in order to ensure each person was giving informed consent, the interviews began with a brief reminder about the aims of the research study following which each participant signed a consent form and agreed for their interview to be recorded using an I-pad voice application. The interviews ranged in length between 30 and 55 minutes with conversations loosely framed by a series of pre-prepared questions (Appendix H) with participants thanked for their time as each interview concluded. The four interviews were then transcribed into Microsoft© word documents.

6.3.1 Definitions of self: The language of impairment

The interview questions were designed to elicit information that would assist in answering the main research question 'How does the portrayal of people with impairments in equality and diversity training offered by UK HEIs reflect their lived experience?'. Each participant was asked the same series of questions, with follow up questions posed, as appropriate, to guide the conversation, and was invited to view and discuss the four collages which had been created following the training workshop observations. The first question was designed to open up a conversation about the language associated with impairment with each participant being asked how they defined themselves. In response participants said:

> Probably as a strong person. I always think there is someone worse off than me. I've never really looked at it as a disability, I just say I've got a long term condition. If you have something that's wrong with you, if you want to call it that, you're slightly different in some way (Participant a)

> I have a specific learning difference, I don't say impairment, I don't say disability, I say difference because I don't feel impaired (Participant b)

> I want to regard myself as a politicised self-identified disabled person, disability is part of my political affiliation it's not necessarily a kind of description of any impairments I have (Participant c)

> For me it's what I am, I don't feel particularly strongly, I'm not ill (Participant d)

In defining themselves individuals also talked about how language was a factor in the way society viewed those with impairments with participants commenting on how the language of impairment was used in daily life.

> If I was filling in a form I would have to tick 'disabled' (Participant b)

> You can have an impairment which is not disabling depending on how society functions (Participant c)

> I'm very happy to tick boxes to say I am a disabled person (Participant c)

> Disability can be a label. I think the words disabled and impaired are labels. It's not a conscious thing, you see someone in a wheelchair and then label them as disabled but the person in the wheelchair may not see it that way (Participant a)

> You need to differentiate between the physical difference or malfunction or deformity or whatever it is. Impairment is a rather better way of talking about that. You can have an impairment which is not disabling depending on how society functions. The process of separating impairment from handicap and disability was something that happened back in the 1970s and that's something that sort of conceptually started to set the groundwork for understanding disability experiences (Participant c)

This early phase of the interviews provided the opportunity to explore two specific terms associated with impairment with each participant being asked whether they had heard the words 'disablism' and 'ableism' and, if so, what they understood these to mean. Two of the participants were not familiar with either term while the remaining two, both academics, engaged in conversation suggesting both words were political in nature and referred to prejudice and societal attitudes. The ability of these two participants to discuss emerging disability theory could be attributed to their own research background and curiosity about the field of Disabilty Studies.

> It's like disability with brackets around the 'dis' suggesting you are discriminating against people who are disabled (Participant d)

> Disablism is a prejudice against disabled people and ableism is an assumption that able-bodied people have to set the standard or the norm (Participant c)

6.3.2 Lived experience of impairment: Personal artefacts

Prior to each interview participants were asked, in an e-mail confirming the details of the interview, to select and bring with them, an object that would add depth to the discussion, something which would assist in their personal description of what it meant to them to be a person living with an impairment. The legitimacy of using artefacts in qualitative research was discussed in chapter five with this study furthering this methodological approach using artefacts, or material metaphors, both to invite discussion about the researchers' observations and to explore the participants own experience. Inviting each participant to consider their own lived experience of impairment through an artefact of their own choosing and then to view and discuss the artefacts created by the researcher added additional texture and richness to the interviews. The invitation suggested a broad range of objects including poetry, pictures, articles, books, or artefacts which might be considered.

The four participants each brought one or more objects with them, images of which can be seen in figure 17. Three of the objects were books, an anthology of female writers with impairments, a compilation of disability imagery and a written account of a theatre group working with deaf and impaired actors. Two of the objects were digital images, one was a small model of an animal and another was a wooden metronome. The two digital images had been selected by participant b) who felt they represented how she felt about her impairment. Describing a “brain fog” in which “my head never feels quiet” the images captured the frustration she experienced when her mind had “constantly got other things going on”. The literature included poems that “relate to a specific time” (Participant d) and images that celebrated the lives of people with impairments from a broad cross-section of society. The metronome symbolised the passage of time for one participant who compared the constant rhythm of the clock with her own impairment. “It [my impairment] will always be with me, you have to fight, you have to put your mind to it, don’t give up, don’t ever give up” (Participant a). The model of a farm animal was brought along by participant d) who shared how, as a child, she had believed “pig was another word for fairy, pixie, elf” her narrative telling “a story that sums up how I see the world differently”. The artefacts presented an opportunity for hearing valuable personal accounts of each participants’ experience of living with impairment and created a useful segue from which to explore the collages.


Images courtesy of dreamstime.com

Fig 17. Participants selected artefacts for discussion

The introduction of these artefacts provided the opportunity to discuss, in more detail, participants lived experience of impairment. Participants described how their impairment, whether physical or neurodiverse, shaped their view of the world, defined their lives, their politics and their relationships with others. These discussions were, without exception, positive, with participants not simply accepting their impairments but drawing strength from them.

> Because it's a part of you, I don't think of it as being any different, it's enabling (Participant a: drawing attention to the metronome and the passage of time, in that her impairment was a constant in her life)
>
> I make connections that other people might not make. I think that enables creativity within my thinking (Participant b: a reference to the digital images which helped her to describe the way in which her cognitive function enabled alternative thinking)
>
> You do live in this slightly different world and you see things and interpret things differently (Participant d: referring to the model of the farm animal which she used to describe how her perception of the world was framed)

6.3.3 Perceptions of Equality and Diversity training in HE

The interviews moved on to focus attention on the purpose and format of E&D training in HE with questions designed to elicit participants views based on their experience. The first question in this phase of the interviews asked 'How would you describe the purpose of equality and diversity training in Higher Education'?, which elicited a range of views.

> What they [staff] need to know to be protected so they don't disadvantage or upset anyone else. What you are responsible for and what you should be able to put up with (Participant b)

> I think it's to set out that stall, that you'll be treated fairly and given equality of opportunity (Participant b)

> Equality and Diversity training is a way of explicitly looking at accelerating that process of breaking down attitudinal barriers. Something that sort of moves us, moves us closer to a goal without insisting on rights (Participant c)

> So, I think there's two sides to it, the general awareness and the practical, what does it mean (Participant d)

> To make people aware of the range that there is, it's educating people (Participant a)

Furthermore, participants talked about how, when E&D training was mandatory, this, in their experience, influenced the engagement with and impact of the training. Participants held strong views about the way in which institutions, including HEIs, seemingly take a risk based approach to compliance. Three of the four participants spoke about the term “tick-box” (Johnson Morgan & Finkelstein, 2017: 147) to describe their perception of how E&D training is framed.

> Whenever anyone refers to the ticking of boxes you know they are not speaking about it in a neutral way. There is never a positive form of box ticking but I don’t know another way round it because, if you ask any individual in the corridor ‘do you understand what equality and diversity means’ they will always say yes. So, if you want it to be the case that all employees in an institution have addressed or at least thought about, or at least connected with, particular analyses then it’s got to be compulsory. Mandatory training can be one thing but there is also something cultural that has to happen, that’s deeper, that’s kind of lived (Participant c)

> I think all businesses tend to tick boxes. I think they have to now, I mean regulations and laws are so strict now that they [organisations] have to be seen to do it [E&D training] (Participant a)

> It’s probably quite frustrating to be obliged to do mandatory training and then be told ‘but that’s not it, you’ve not done it yet’ because [equality and] diversity is a process, it’s not an end product (Participant c)

> [Staff] see it just as something they have to do, yeah (sic), they just tick a box (Participant d)

6.3.4 Being a participant: Personal reflections

Participants were asked about their own experiences of attending E&D training with responses focussing on activity that had been, in their view, helpful, informative and impactful. Two of the experiences shared by participants centred on simulation workshops which were participatory, one facilitated by people with specific learning differences and the other by a colleague from the learning and development team. The first involved small group activities which required the audience to negotiate, both verbally and non-verbally, with each other, highlighting the difficulties experienced by people for whom communication was challenging. The result of attending prompted participant c) to say “there is a lot to be said for people together in a workshop exploring ideas in a fearless way”, going on to suggest that “face to face activity leads to a really deep engagement”.

A theatrical group activity which invited participants to assume a persona was described by participant d) as “a bit like a murder mystery weekend where you are all given an ID”. Participants were given cards on which their identity was detailed, for example, a man with a hearing impairment, and were then asked whether, adopting the identity they had been given, they would be able to engage in a range of activities. Participant d) reflected on the event saying “people literally stopped and were looking almost embarrassed, it made you really think about the practicalities of inclusion”. In response participants also shared their views of online E&D training with comments including:

> It [online training] can be a very useful supplement. It can give you information, it can ask you questions, it’s not going to change your mind on things (Participant c)

> There are people who skip through, go straight to the multiple choice questions and just try their luck. People will take the short cut if you haven’t managed to convince them in, and of, the value of it (Participant d)

> It [online training] can make the subject of equality and diversity palatable, but life isn’t always palatable for those people with a disability who experience barriers in their lives (Participant b)

6.3.5 Considering current HE practice

Each interview participant was given time to view and discuss the four collages with the aim of gathering their reaction to, and reflections of, the way people with impairments were represented in the training workshops that had been observed. One theme that resonated with participants was the level of awareness of hidden impairment. As presented in section 6.2 participants were drawn to the images of hidden, invisible and visible disability with comments including:

> Not every disability is visible, yeah absolutely, I think it’s really because people do have an image in their head of what a disabled person should look like. They [the public] think they have the right to judge someone they see going into or coming out of an accessible toilet when obviously they have no idea (Participant b)

> I guess some people are happy for it [their impairment] to be invisible and other times when it can be frustrating. Dyslexia, dyspraxia, mental health service users, they are all invisible (Participant d)
>
> They [the public] need to know that there are disabled people out there who don’t look disabled (Participant a)

Participants spent time reading the quotations, often asking whether the direct quote was made by a facilitator or delegate at the event. The researcher provided, where asked, further detail, for example, where a participant quote, viewed in isolation, was difficult to contextualise. Participant b) laughed when reading ‘Isn’t diversity a dance group’ saying “I’m guessing this was a participant” while participant c) sighed when reading ‘it’s the trendy thing to do’ going on to suggest that some staff thought E&D training was simply a fad. Interview participants were particularly animated when viewing the quotes from workshop participants around making reasonable adjustments, for example the quote from an academic for whom ‘giving information in advance spoils the didactic path of the lecture’. The discussions highlighted a shared sense among those interviewed that staff in HE were generally cautious when adapting practice to accommodate differing needs.

> The anticipatory adjustment thing is a battle, simply knowing that a person has a hearing impairment doesn’t necessarily solve the problem. It’s assuming that some people will have a hearing impairment that will make a difference (Participant c)

> People don’t necessarily want to engage [with E&D training] (Participant b)

Participants noted the inclusion of the term ‘protected characteristics’ on two of the collages. This prompted conversation about how legislation might inform workshop content yet should not be the primary driver of E&D training with comments including:

> There isn’t a rule book, there are principles, there shouldn’t be a list of how to interact with people (Participant c)

> No matter what your characteristics you’ll be treated fairly and given equality of opportunity (Participant b)

The quote ‘When you’ve met 1 person with autism then you’ve met 1 person with autism…..everyone’s lived experience is different’ from Collage C was noticed by all the participants. There was a shared sense that E&D training should be a space where staff can not only learn about the law, HE practice and be provided with signposts to services but, most importantly, it should be an environment in which to explore, appreciate and understand the experiences of all individuals regardless of their impairment. There were also images and words that were emotive and resonated for just one person.

One example was an image on Collage D which listed a variety of impairments which led participant a) to say “It’s mine, mines there, it chose me”. Another was the phrase ‘Don’t be afraid to explore the issues’ on Collage C which prompted participant b) to say “I want to make it ok (sic) for people to talk to me about it [my impairment] and not to stop a conversation because they are trying to be politically correct”.

6.3.6 Enhancing Equality and Diversity training in HE

To assist in answering the sub research question concerning the delivery of E&D training in HE, participants were asked whether they had alternative suggestions for how training could be facilitated. Recommendations included the use of drama-based training, the inclusion of case studies to prompt discussion, short video clips inserted into presentations and people with impairments being invited to speak about their experiences as part of training events.

> Theatre role play training could be really powerful and have a big impact, bringing it [impairment] to life. The way that people react to it shows how such things can stop people and make them think. It puts people into someone else’s shoes that they wouldn’t normally step into (Participant b)

> Talking heads videos give other people an insight, humanising it [impairment], making it real, making it accessible. What’s fantastic about that is that you are including or valuing your staff so for them it’s going to be incredibly powerful and affirming (Participant b)

> Case studies would make people understand more because it’s real, it’s what someone is living with rather than theoretical (Participant a)

> Capture your resource, getting a group of people together who will talk about disability experience on every level (Participant c)

When discussing the involvement of people with impairments in the design and facilitation of E&D training in HE views were mixed. Participants suggested that the delivery of training requires a combination of skill, knowledge and empathy with the audience so, while not exclusively restricted to professional staff developers, those who deliver training should “be willing to empathise [with the audience] and acknowledge their own position” (Participant d).

One participant d) highlighted a potential risk of involving people with impairments suggesting that “if someone [facilitating training] has had a negative experience, it turns into a personal whinge, and it’s not representative of a broader range of people with impairments”. A similar concern was raised by participant c) who had attended a deaf awareness session delivered by an individual with a hearing impairment which was “adversarial” and “consisted of the audience being told what not to do”.

While participant a) thought involving people with impairments in delivery was “an excellent idea as you are valuing their experiences” she too recognised the challenges associated with training being facilitated by those with impairments suggesting instead a co-facilitation approach as being more appropriate. Participant b) raised another concern in that staff may not wish to “be known as somebody with a disability or impairment” so a request to pre-record a short video or attend a training event to share their lived experience may cause some anxiety.

Chapter six has discursively, yet simply, presented the research findings without analytical comment thus allowing the reader to appreciate and get close to the voices of those who have participated in this study without distraction. The chapter has displayed the findings from the national survey of staff development professionals in HE, the four training workshop observations and four in-depth semi-structured interviews. The following chapter of this study presents an analysis and synthesis of the primary research with reference to the literature. Each of the research questions as posed in the introduction are considered with conclusions shaping the knowledge contribution the study makes to professional practice and the field of disability studies.

7 Discussion of findings

In Chapter six the data from the primary research was presented; this chapter offers a recursive exploration of the study and, in “writing to learn” (Punch, 2014: 342) considers each research question in turn. The chapter explores connections between the literature and primary research findings and, in doing so, reveals how the study contributes knowledge to the field of disability studies and to professional staff development practice in UK HE. The main conclusions reached during the course of the study are then presented in Chapter eight.

7.1 Defining disability, models and practice

The study provided an opportunity to explore the historical and social evolution of the concept of disability. The sub research question ‘What is disability and how do, or should, models of disability inform professional learning and development practice in HE?’ was designed to consider this evolution from both an academic and professional perspective. Central to this study was a curiosity about how those with an impairment are represented, visually and linguistically, in E&D training in HE. It was, therefore, important to explore the language associated with disability, equality and diversity and to consider how an understanding of particular words informs professional staff development practice in the sector. Of particular interest was whether the terms ‘disablism’ and ‘ableism’, acknowledged by the academic community as “easily grasped” (Thomas, 2007: 13), were, in fact, “familiar and well understood”.

The findings provide a hermeneutic insight into the way in which people with impairments choose to describe themselves, gaining an understanding of the lived experience from their perspective. Of particular interest is the way that the two interview participants with a hidden impairment spoke of neither using the word ‘impairment’ or ‘disability’ when talking about themselves, describing these as labels and preferring to use the term ‘different’. Offering a distinction between impairment and disability, Participant C drew attention to the way in which society might disable a person with an impairment, sharing her own affiliation with, and understanding of, the social model of disability.

The interviews revealed an interesting difference in prior knowledge between professional services staff with a hidden impairment and academic staff with a physical impairment. While both academic participants shared a curiosity about the lived experience of impairment, given their own area of research, this finding supports the rationale for providing E&D training to ensure all staff have a basic level of familiarity and understanding (Thomas, 2007). Academic colleagues with an interest in disability issues, themselves becoming research subjects, having shared their lived experience for this study is, in itself an interesting finding. Further exploration is justified to understand why, and to what extent, academics engaged in disability studies are likely to share their own experiences. Examples can be found in the earlier literature review which included references from authors who had been willing to write about and share their own experience of impairment (Finkelstein, 1998; Swain & Cameron, 1999; Shakespeare, 2018).

Developing the proposition from Thomas (2007) that those engaged in disability related research are able to clearly articulate what is meant by disablism and ableism, both academic participants were able to discuss the terms with confidence, their own field of study providing knowledge upon which to draw. Yet, contrary to Thomas's findings, the professional services staff, although prompted, did not appear to be able to do so. The observed workshops did not, however, elicit a similar degree of confidence among academic participants. Neither term was articulated despite a number of academic participants, notably at Workshop C, being from education and social science disciplines who might, therefore, be expected to have a level of prior knowledge. This deficit of discussion could be the consequence of a lack of engagement by, or individual understanding of, workshop facilitators, none of whom introduced the terms 'disablism' or 'ableism' during their events. As three of the four workshops were facilitated by professional services staff this further challenges the suggested familiarity with the terms proposed by Thomas (2007). As facilitators, whose role is not simply to impart knowledge but also to create space for discussion, this lack of engagement is a missed opportunity for practitioners to "challenge academia's existing notion of able-bodied perfection" (Brown & Leigh, 2018a: 36) and to enhance understanding among workshop participants of the impact of society on those with impairments.

Moreover, if E&D training in HE is to be a space in which the “sociological imagination [can] get beneath surface features” (Barton, 1996: 5) then to learn about, debate and challenge the language of a disabling society becomes paramount.

The observations provided the occasion to hear the breadth of definitions used by those responsible for the facilitation of training as well as by participants with examples shown in Figure 15. It was interesting to note the frequency with which particular words were used, for example the word ‘impairment’ was spoken 11 times by facilitators yet just once by a participant, while the phrase ‘disabled people’ was used equally and frequently by both groups. This finding suggests a higher degree of familiarity and confidence in the use of the term ‘impairment’ among HE based facilitators. An inverse lack of confidence among participants might be suggested by the way in which a small number of individuals articulated their understanding of disability and diversity. While using the term ‘disability’ with similar frequency, a small proportion of participants might be suggested as insensitive or naïve when expressing their views. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the terms used most frequently within the workshops are confined to policy, for example ‘diversity’, ‘equality’ and ‘disability’, rather than being informed from disability studies or CDS.

The, perhaps rhetorical or even cynical, question “Isn’t diversity a dance group?” and the comment from a female academic who “freaked out” when she was advised a student with a visual impairment would be in her class, perhaps “conceal(s) a deep reluctance” (Hannon, 2007: 36) among participants to admit to a lack of awareness. Furthermore, the perceived lack of sensitivity among participants supports Thompsons’ (2001: 112) view that “the introduction of another ‘ism’” reinforces the notion of disablism being an “academic fad”.

Reflecting on the way in which the language of impairment has altered over time there was an appreciation, among workshop participants and those interviewed, that some terms were no longer deemed to be acceptable for use in contemporary discourse. The short quiz in Workshop D, not surprisingly, highlighted a shared recognition that words such as ‘handicapped’ and ‘retarded’ were no longer appropriate to attribute to a person with an impairment (Barton, 1996). Interview Participant C reflected on the development of oral tradition when suggesting “impairment is a rather better way of talking”, noting how activists in the 1970s furthered the separation of impairment and disability.

In considering how, or if, models of disability are used to inform E&D training in HE the survey results suggest that practitioners are concerned to ensure that research is a factor with more than two-thirds responding that research influenced their training design. This headline finding echoes the importance of "research-informed and evidence-based" (Caruana & Ploner, 2010: 2) design. However, when asked for specific detail, respondents were cautious in their response with only one HEI indicating their workshop design was influenced by the medical, social and affirmative models of disability. This reticence might stem from staff development practitioners, working in an HE environment, sensing a need to demonstrate engagement with the literature in their own practice to satisfy an academic audience. However, while half of survey respondents stated that the social model was considered in the design of their events, there was arguably little evidence of research informed design in the delivery of events.

The social model was referenced on one occasion, in Workshop B, by a facilitator who read a statement about how their institution acknowledged the tenets of the model. Interestingly, while this could have elicited a discussion with participants, the opportunity to do so was not offered. This implies, perhaps, a lack of confidence by the facilitator to respond to questions about the social model despite, as suggested by interview Participant C, a desire among participants to engage in rigorous debate about the historical and social construction of disability. The minimal engagement in evidence-based design is surprising given the wealth of experience and knowledge contained with HEIs from whom E&D training practitioners could draw knowledge and understanding. One example being Participant C who, in her interview, spoke openly about her understanding of the social model of disability. This sub research question was designed to ask whether, if at all, models of disability were a factor in the design of training. The question of whether the use of theoretical models and the rationalisation of disability is necessary or useful was, however, not posed, offering an opportunity for further research.

Discussion in section 3.1 drew attention to the impact on those responsible for design and delivery of E&D training of the indifference towards the subject demonstrated by senior managers in HE (Jones & Moore, 1996; Pringle, 2009; Diamond, 2015; Greatbatch, 2015; Everett, 2017). When it comes to practice, the study observed a desire among staff to engage in meaningful and challenging conversations around impairment.

A growing confidence and familiarity among participants and facilitators to discuss hidden or invisible impairment is noteworthy and reflects the emerging literature. The denial of a “person’s bodily reality” and “limited public understanding” leading to accusations of “fakery” are described by Osborne (2019: 233) as epistemic invalidation. To explore this emerging public discourse and the challenges associated with perceptions of fakery the facilitators in all four workshops invited, to a greater or lesser extent, participants to discuss their appreciation of hidden or invisible impairments using images, stories and data to introduce the subject. In contrast to the reticence of participants and facilitators to engage in discussion about models of disability and societal influences, this particular focus on hidden and “invisible” (Brown & Leigh, 2018b: 985) impairment generated significant discussion. The emerging public discourse around hidden impairment suggesting, perhaps, that in the public imagination, the medical model of disability is, itself, more ‘visible’.

Exploring the collages provided the opportunity to learn from the perspective of those in HE for whom the lived experience of impairment was being portrayed. Interview participants were animated in their own response to the way in which hidden impairment was explored at the workshops regardless of their own impairment being visible or invisible to others. The animated and emotive conversations during the workshops and interviews around the subject of hidden or invisible impairment indicate a heightened level of awareness among participants. Public recognition of the airport sunflower lanyard seen in Collages A and C and the increasing prevalence of toilet door signs which read ‘Not every disability is visible’ are two examples of invisible impairment as a subject of general social discussion. Similarly, mental health campaigns led by the Dukes of Cambridge and Sussex are prompting the emerging societal discourse about hidden impairment (Yates, 2018; Buitendijk et al., 2019; Swerling, 2019). This discourse provides an opportunity for staff development practitioners in HE to pursue and develop conversations in training environments framed by what participants themselves are exposed to through the press and social media (French, 1996; Brown & Leigh, 2018b).

The inclusion of, and debate about, contemporary social themes in relation to hidden impairment in E&D training in HE provides an epistemological contribution to the field of disability studies. In addition, the analysis of data gathered in response to this sub research question adds to, and further develops, the existing literature in the field.

The research has identified a clear tension between the way in which E&D training in HE is designed, to demonstrate engagement with the academic literature, and the translation of, and application to, learning events at which participants can actively engage and debate. The findings also reveal how the confidence, or lack thereof, of the facilitator is a factor in the delivery of events which are both knowledge enhancing and discursive in nature. Furthermore, the findings indicate a higher degree of understanding among academic staff in relation to disablism and ableism than their professional services counterparts.

7.2 Defining Equality and Diversity training in HE

This sub research question was designed to gain an understanding of the rationale for offering E&D training in HE and to elicit information about the formats in which such training was offered to staff. The discussion in section 3.1 identified the public sector duty to promote E&D as a main driver, with Universities seeking to demonstrate compliance through staff attending training. This is borne out by the majority of survey responses which stated a primary purpose of training was to comply with legislation with institutional responsibility for training being managed by, among others, Human Resources and Governance departments. Interestingly, while compliance was identified as a key factor, not all Universities managed this through mandatory participation as recommended by LFHE (Clifford et al., 2015). This was exemplified by two of the four observed workshops being described as optional, the remainder as mandatory.

The survey revealed a mixed picture in regard to expected levels of participation. Almost half of respondents indicated they had no defined performance target for staff completion of training despite having identified achievement as important while six were unable to access any completion or participation data. Furthermore, institutions for whom 100% compliance was a target reported a varying proportion of staff completing training. This endorses the suggestion from Kirton and Greene (2016) that setting arbitrary targets for training completion is, in itself, the way in which HE institutions satisfy external scrutiny. Further evidence can be found at the home institution of the researcher at which E&D training is mandatory for all staff. The externally published indicator of performance, for example in Athena Swan action plans, is 100% compliance while the actual level of completion, data extracted from institution training records in July 2019, is 62.7%.

Compulsion to attend and refresh training was also discussed in section 3.3 with academic staff indicating their strong views about mandatory training concluding that, albeit limited to a few voices, E&D training was irrelevant and distracting (Kendall, 2018). Compliance was similarly introduced by interview participants who expressed strongly held opinions about the limited value of mandatory training with three of the four participants recognising Johnson Morgan and Finkelstein's description of E&D training in HE as being a "progressively tick-box exercise" (2017: 147). An illustration of the way in which E&D is positioned and presented is the inclusion in the staff appraisal form at the home institution of the researcher of a section to confirm completion of mandatory training. Staff are asked, prior to their appraisal meeting, to tick a box confirming they have met the institutional requirement to complete E&D training.

In considering mandatory participation interview participants also reflected on how E&D training might support cultural change in HEIs (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). Embedding inclusive cultures was similarly identified by almost all survey respondents as a key purpose of training delivery. This juxtaposition between mandatory participation, which this study suggests is a method of satisfying external legislative scrutiny, and the desire to change culture is noteworthy given the discussion in Chapter three which suggested attendance at, or completion of, mandatory training has little impact on institutional culture (Kirton & Greene, 2016; Martin, 2017).

This study suggests the prevailing purpose of E&D training in HE is to comply with legislative requirements. While a small sample from which to gauge this assertion the defined objectives of each observed workshop provide opportunity for further analysis. Two of the events, C and D, categorised respectively as awareness training and DET (French & Swain, 2008) and both optional, specifically referenced the Equality Act 2010, the objectives being to enhance participants understanding of the legislation as it relates to people with impairments. Workshop A had practical objectives while Workshop B was the only event, of those observed, whose main objective was related to changing culture. One function of establishing clear objectives is in order that potential participants can make an informed decision about whether to attend a workshop described as optional. It is, therefore, interesting, that participation at Workshop C was similar to that of the mandatory events.

Although this could be explained by the additional attraction of the objective to explore facilitating learning for students with impairments, it does imply that staff in HE are interested in learning about E&D as it relates to their role.

The way in which E&D training is evaluated provides further evidence to support the assertion that HEIs provide training to satisfy external scrutiny. All bar one survey respondents confirmed the preferred indicator of success as being the percentage of staff who had completed training, a simple numerical statistic collected to ensure HEIs can demonstrate compliance and an example of “the use of evaluation to control training” (Clements & Jones, 2002: 133). Furthermore, more than half of respondents noted that the number of staff attending E&D training was recorded to provide data for institutional submissions towards external awards including Athena Swan. The way in which quantitative and qualitative data is generated in order to assess the impact and effectiveness of training is also interesting.

A quarter of survey respondents did not conduct any form of post event evaluation of their E&D training; of those who did, almost all favoured a post event reaction sheet, the most “simplistic and flawed” (Clements & Jones, 2002: 138) form of evaluation. Where institutions are concerned to assess or measure the impact training may have had on changing practice or culture one might expect to see evaluation in the form of longitudinal studies, impact case studies and interviews with staff, none of which were in evidence in this study.

7.2.1 Delivering Equality and Diversity training in HE

The array of traditional methods of delivery of E&D training in HE were presented in Chapter three, where three methods, contextualised simulations, drama-based training and online courses, all of which had been experienced by interview participants were explored in detail. In all, nine delivery options were presented to survey respondents. Not surprisingly, the most frequent method of delivery, used by all but one of the respondents, was online courses with face to face workshops also offered by three-quarters of HEIs. The survey elicited information about three additional modes of facilitation, action learning sets, coaching and ad hoc training, demonstrating HEIs offering a broad range of activity with online courses and workshops favoured by the majority.

In considering the various forms of E&D training interview participants shared experiences which, in their view, had been particularly thought provoking and engaging. It is interesting to note that simulations and drama-based activity involving people with impairments, described as leading to “really deep engagement” (Participant c), were the least frequent modes of delivery, used by only one in ten institutions, yet are those which enable a depth of “discovery” (French, 1996: 121). It is fair to say that drama-based training, in particular, may be less frequently utilised in HE given the significant costs associated with this form of training. The format requires specialist design and facilitation and the cost of employing actors skilled in the format is not insignificant.

The dominance of online provision, while logical given the limited resource required post development, adds weight to the suggestion that HEIs offer E&D training to provide evidence of compliance to stakeholders. Furthermore, that the prevalence of online courses in HE “marginalise[s] the voices of disabled people” (Kikabhai, 2018: 176). Discussed in Chapter three, the assumption that having information online will “facilitate learning” was contested by Hurst (2006: 158) who suggested online courses be used to complement other forms of training delivery. This assertion was shared by interview participants who described online courses as helpful supplements while acknowledging the limitations and reduced impact (Murray et al., 2009; Hayat & Walton, 2013) of online provision as a sole method of E&D training delivery in HE.

Mandatory training which is offered online will, invariably, include a short test or assessment which users have to pass in order to be certified as competent. The passive and mechanical nature of online learning was considered by Participant D who described some users as “people who skip through” and “just try their luck” with the end point assessment. The exploration of the extent to which online E&D training in HE can, or does, embody the lived experience of those with impairments has been limited in this study, opening up a new line of inquiry for further research.

When it comes to the purpose of E&D training in HE, the main finding, drawn from the data analysis, is that HEIs provide training as a means of demonstrating legislative compliance to external stakeholders. One school of thought might be that, in comparison to other sectors, the reputation and league table position of HEIs is, in part, driven by a wider quality assurance regime. For example, attainment of the Athena Swan charter, while self-audited, is both a public demonstration of compliance and a requirement of many HE funding bodies. While a secondary stated purpose, drawn from the survey responses, is to embed inclusive cultures the study has found little evidence to support this claim. The way in which E&D training is delivered supports the main finding, in that online courses, the least effective form of training, are the most prevalent in the sector. Furthermore, the study found that drama-based training and contextualised simulations, methods of delivery which are among the most effective, are rarely offered.

7.3 Exploring the lived experience of people with impairments in training

The way in which the lived experience of people with impairments is explored during E&D training in HE was the focus of this sub research question. The survey responses revealed that more than half of HEIs provided specific training with a disability focus with a range of alternative delivery methods offered. The specialist delivery methods were described as optional, each providing training related to either a specific impairment or to assist staff in making reasonable adjustments for students. An example of optional specialist training was Workshop C, the aim of which was to explore the ways in which participants might facilitate learning for students. Interestingly, as seen in Figure 12, the proportion of academic staff compared to professional services at Workshop C was the highest among the four observed workshops, academics making up two thirds of the audience.

This finding supports the suggestion that academic staff are more likely to attend E&D training which is primarily focussed on promoting the needs of students (Murray et al., 2009; Wynants & Dennis, 2017; Brown & Leigh, 2018b). Furthermore, the preference among academic staff for optionality adds to research by Kendall (2018) who found that academic staff who recognise the need for disability training are minded to participate when the training event is described as optional.

In considering the small numbers of professional services staff attending optional events one premise might be that this group are less likely than their academic counterparts to voice their resistance to mandatory training, hence less likely to attend training described as optional. Staff in professional services roles, whose daily activity is increasingly informed by policy, process and governance, could be suggested as conformist and thus more likely to attend or complete mandatory training.

Despite HEIs offering training designed to raise awareness of impairment, the opportunity for participants to engage in discussion on the subject was limited. Less than a quarter of survey respondents actively encouraged open discussion specifically around the lived experience of people with impairments in their training events. The objectives of the observed workshops support the survey findings in that only one of the four events was designed in such a way as to provide space for open and challenging discussion. There is, however, a noticeable difference between the objectives of each workshop and the way in which each was then facilitated. The study found a willingness among participants, both academic and professional, to share their personal or vicarious experience of impairment.

It is interesting to note that the stories shared in the workshops were those in which participants had either witnessed or overheard the way in which an individual with impairment had been treated. Creating opportunities to explore E&D issues through the lens of impairment, providing “contextual illumination” (Cleaver et al., 2014: 28), the facilitator might enable a depth of awareness less prevalent in other forms of training. This represented a challenge for those leading the workshops who, having established their script and timing for each event, demonstrated tractability in their approach to accommodate the needs of participants. Examples of this deftness of approach were seen in three of the workshops, see section 6.2.2, where facilitators amended their event timing to allow participants to share their own experiences. Workshop design reflecting what Pringle (2009: 76) described as a “predetermined and documented” approach to training, suggesting that flexibility to adapt during sessions is an important skill for the staff development practitioner.

While acknowledging Brown and Brown (2003: 57) who suggest that it is not possible for those without impairment to fully appreciate “the experience of disability”, and the concern raised by Williams-Findlay (2014: 112) that the dominant perspective about people with impairments does not “necessarily portray their lived experiences”, the observations highlight a potential opportunity for enhancing awareness. The quote “when you’ve met 1 person with autism then you’ve met 1 person with autism” used by the facilitator at Workshop C was singled out by those who viewed the collages as particularly thought provoking and reflective of the sociological imagination. Every lived experience is, by its very nature, unique to an individual and interviewees recognised that care must be taken when designing opportunities to share and hear about lived experiences.

Inviting those with impairments to share their “social imaginary” (Taylor, 2004: 23) at training events may afford participants the opportunity to contemplate the lived experience of others. However, such opportunities must be thoughtfully and respectfully facilitated to ensure participants are able to distinguish between the individual experience and that of others with similarly defined impairments. Interview participants endorsed this approach in recommending the inclusion of case studies (French, 1996), live and pre-recorded, and in suggesting that people with impairments be invited to speak at E&D related events. Each participant offered a range of creative suggestions and spoke with enthusiasm, their comments in 6.3.6, about how hearing real life experience elevated the impact of training, creating “legitimacy” (Taylor, 2004: 23) and prompting significant opportunities for personal and organisational reflection and consideration of changes to practice.

In contemplating the role of guest speakers in professional practice one recent example is found at the home institution of the researcher. In 2019 the actor and presenter Chizzy Akudolu delivered a guest presentation as part of a series of events for senior managers designed to raise awareness of mental health issues. Chizzy spoke openly about her own lived experience of depression and how this had impacted on her career, relationships and sense of self-worth. Chizzy was also able to record a short ‘talking-heads’ video in which she shared some simple techniques to assist staff and managers to talk openly about hidden impairment. Positive feedback, elicited following the event, endorses interview participant views that hearing from guest speakers can have a profound impact on the emerging societal discourse around impairment.

In considering how, or if at all, the lived experience of people with impairments is explored in E&D training in HE the study draws two conclusions. The first being that, while participants are curious to explore both personal and vicarious experience of impairment, the design of training workshops provides limited opportunity for discussion. Secondly, that HEIs are hesitant in their inclusion of case studies and guest speakers at events, which the study has shown to be particularly engaging and impactful.

7.4 Engaging with people with impairments in the design and delivery of training

The purpose of this sub research question was to establish what level of engagement, if any, people with impairments had in the design and delivery of E&D training in HE. The literature reveals a range of opinions with some advocating delivery of disability equality training by people with impairments (French & Swain, 2008; Martin, 2017) while others recommend a collaborative approach to design and delivery between people with impairments and staff development professionals (Hurst, 2006; Clements & Jones, 2008). Agreement is, however, found in regard to awareness training which, when delivered solely by professional trainers who "believe in what they are doing" (Clements & Jones, 2008: 8), can be both challenging and contextual. This consensus was shared by interview participants who agreed that, whoever was involved in the design and delivery of awareness training, empathy with the audience and subject knowledge were both important factors.

As discussed in section 7.3 the inclusion of case studies, whether live or pre-recorded, and guest speakers at events was commended by interview participants. Interview participants were in favour of the collaborative approach to design and delivery in which the skill of the professional, combined with the experience of those with impairments, would provide high quality learning activities. The interviews, did however, highlight a particular concern about the way in which the personal experience of the facilitator or guest speaker, if portrayed as a negative one, might leave participants with a partial impression about the lived experience of those with impairments. The concern raised by Participant D being that an individual facilitator with a "personal whinge [is not] representative of a broader range of people with impairments" and could, therefore, leave an audience with a biased or false impression. The way in which E&D training in HE is designed is, therefore, critical in order that the risk of an audience leaving an event with a single impression of the lived experience of impairment, is mitigated.

Responses to the survey reveal a degree of collaboration in the design of training with nearly half of HEIs seeking the views of people with impairments when preparing events. Of the four workshops observed in this study one would be described as DET, being facilitated by a staff member with an impairment, with the remainder as awareness raising. One in four workshops being facilitated by a person with an impairment is higher than would be anticipated when compared to the survey results. Given the small scale of the study this could, however, be attributed to any number of factors, for example the timing of the observations limiting the opportunity to experience a representative range of scheduled events.

Four survey respondents shared details of specific partnerships with community groups with two noting design and delivery of DET training being led by an individual with an impairment as recommended by French and Swain (2008). An example of engagement was provided by one HEI who worked with a social enterprise external to the University who provide support to people with impairments. Furthermore, the opportunity to pilot, or test out, new workshops with people with impairments was a feature of another HEI suggesting, although singularly limited in scope, a desire to ensure E&D training is representative of people with impairments. Collaboration with staff who have an impairment or, as Vygotsky (1978: 86) would describe them, “more capable peers”, was also discussed during the interviews. Considering the importance of sharing their lived experience with others, Participant C invited staff development practitioners to “capture your resource” and gather “a group of people together who will talk about disability experience”.

It is interesting that, while HEIs endorse a collaborative approach to design, the evidence of this in terms of application is narrow. As presented in sections 6.2 and 6.3 the objectives of the observed workshops were primarily focussed on creating awareness of the legislative requirements and specific duties placed on public sector institutions. If, as suggested from the survey responses, professional staff developers in HE are inclined to work in partnership with people with impairments, then the outcomes of such engagement would be reflected in the session objectives and opportunities for discussion. As this study has shown there is limited evidence of either in HE staff development practice.

7.5 Perceptions of portrayal

This sub research question was designed to gain an understanding of how people, with the protected characteristic defined as disability, perceive the way they are portrayed in E&D training in HE. The primary method of collecting the data to answer this question being derived from the four semi-structured interviews. The stimulus for this particular conversation was provided during the interviews when each participant was shown the four collages and given the opportunity to discuss each in turn. Section 6.3.5 in the previous chapter details the comments made by participants in response to the quotations and images that resonated with them.

Participant B and C respectively laughed and sighed when reading some of the cynical quotes made by workshop participants suggesting, perhaps, an acceptance or weariness that, despite attending training, for some participants, discussion around impairment remains a matter of discomfort. This unease was also noted in the way in which interview participants shared their thoughts about the seeming reluctance of some workshop participants to accommodate individual needs by making reasonable adjustments. Participant C described this hesitancy as a “battle” suggesting that training alone is insufficient and that cultural change in HE is required before the needs of all, regardless of their impairment, will be accommodated as a matter of course rather than as an exception. The extent to which training, in and of itself, can be a driver for institutional change, as recommended by the Macpherson report (McKenzie, 2000), is subject to debate, providing an opportunity for further research. In the context of this study the data does, however, add incremental relevance to the work of Booth and Ainscow (2011) in highlighting the progressive challenge of changing culture.

As discussed in section 7.1 interview participants were drawn to the way in which hidden or invisible impairment was portrayed. Participant a) was particularly gratified to see her own impairment included in one of the collage images saying “it’s mine, mines there”. Participants collectively identified with the way in which the collages portrayed a shift in social discourse with hidden impairment increasingly becoming a subject for broader discussion (Yates, 2018; Swerling, 2019).

There was a sense, while acknowledging it was important to ensure staff had an awareness of the legal basis for discrimination and knowledge of the range of protected characteristics, that this should not dominate training but serve as a basis for more sensitive exploration. While those interviewed perceived a lack of sensitivity towards impairment by a small number of workshop participants they did, however, note a marked difference in sensitivity shown by workshop facilitators. Interview participants found the way in which workshop facilitators represented impairment through their selection of images, to indicate a degree of sensitivity and realism in the presentation materials. Furthermore, the way in which facilitators spoke about impairment was also found by participants to be respectful of their lived experience. Evidence for this can be seen, as discussed in section 7.3, in that all four interview participants were drawn to the 'if you've met 1 person with autism' quote, which, in their view, acknowledged the complexity and individuality of the lived experience of people with impairments.

7.6 Reflecting the lived experience

The aim of this study was to explore how, if at all, the portrayal of people with impairments in E&D training in UK HEIs reflects their lived experience. In this chapter the sub research questions have each been considered in turn. Conclusions derived from analysis of the data gathered during the primary research have been presented alongside connections with, contradictions of, and an incremental extension to the literature. The study was, in part, concerned with the use of ill-considered or ill-informed language and aimed to explore the "construction of a more appropriate vocabulary of empowerment" (Thompson, 2001: 127) in E&D training in HE.

In answering the main research questions, the lived experience of those with impairments is in evidence, albeit limited, in the language and imagery of E&D training in HE. Although the construction of training workshops in HE has been shown to inhibit discussion, the flexibility of approach by facilitators when an audience is willing to discuss challenging issues, is in evidence. However, a lack of confidence among professional practitioners to deviate from a set of established criteria, whether in the form of a training script or a requirement to ensure that participants can simply recall the nine protected characteristics, constrains debate and reduces learning in the "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky, 1978: 86).

Similarly, the research has shown that, the way in which E&D training is formatted, whether online or a formal workshop, provides limited scope for an exploration of the lived experience of people with impairments. Theatre based training, contextualised simulations, the use of case studies and the inclusion of guest speakers have all been established as eliciting a depth of understanding, reflection and reflexivity of, and appreciation for, the lived experience of those with impairments, yet are limited in their use.

There is a desire among professional staff development practitioners in HE to ensure that the learning they provide reflects the lived experience of people with impairments. However, the rhetoric and reality have been shown to be some distance apart. To empower learning in others, engagement with people with impairments in the design and facilitation of E&D training in HE is instrumental in gaining a real understanding of, and appreciation for, their lived experience.

In considering each research question this chapter has drawn together the primary and secondary research, and, through synthesis and analysis of the data, has articulated the conclusions which have resulted from this study. Findings that build on the work of other disability studies researchers have been acknowledged and new insights have been identified. In concluding the thesis, the following chapter consolidates the findings before considering dissemination, limitations and opportunities for future research.

8 Conclusion: Findings, reflections and contributions to knowledge, professional practice and Disability Studies

This final chapter draws together and reflects upon the findings before presenting the main contributions of the study and considering the way in which these will be shared with each intended audience. As Gabriel (2013: 375) suggests, “public dissemination” is a “critical part of social science practice” reminding the researcher of their responsibility to make the completed study available to “peers and others”. While the completed thesis will be available to all through the University library, Silverman (2006: 360) acknowledges that potential audiences “will only want to hear about qualitative research if it relates to their needs”.

The study was originally intended to inform two principal groups, staff development practitioners working in HE and the academic community, specifically those engaged in disability studies research. There is, however, another audience to consider, those staff working in HE whose lived experience of visible or invisible impairment is unique. This could be staff who have a hidden or visible impairment, who provide care or assistance to a friend or relative who is impaired or those whose job, whether academic or professional, is to provide support to staff and students with impairments.

While not specifically identified at the outset of the research, the conclusions drawn in this study may yet prove helpful and informative to these communities (Watson, 2012). Finally, the chapter concludes with a brief reflection on the limitations of the study and considers opportunities for further research contributions to the discipline of disability studies.

8.1 Consolidated findings

The analysis and synthesis of the primary and secondary data gathered to answer each research question was presented in sections 7.1 to 7.6, each section ending with a precis of the main findings. The consolidated findings, reached during the course of this research study, are presented here with numerical indicators for ease of reference. In answering the main and subsequent research questions the study has found that:

- The lived experience and narratives of people with impairments working in UK HEIs, when explored sensitively and confidently in E&D training in HE, enhances understanding and assists in challenging previously held assumptions leading to a depth of meaningful engagement (Section 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6)
- The way in which people with impairments are portrayed in E&D training, while limited in scope, is broadly sensitive to their lived experience (Section 7.1, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6)
- Higher Education Institutions in the UK make available E&D training for staff as a means of satisfying external scrutiny by stakeholders, further embedding cultures in which ableist views remain unchallenged (Sections 7.1, 7.2)
- The provision of E&D training in HE is a demonstration of compliance and an exercise in compulsion which inhibits developmental dialogue (Section 7.2)
- Models of disability are rarely considered in the design of E&D training in HE (Section 7.1)
- Online E&D training is the dominant method of delivery in HE yet is the least effective in increasing understanding of the lived experience of impairment (Section 7.2.1)
- Drama-based training, contextualised simulations and storytelling are among the most effective methods of E&D training delivery yet are rarely offered in HE (Section 7.2.1, 7.3)
- Appreciation of the lived experience of those with impairments is enhanced when case studies and guest speakers feature in E&D training in HE (Section 7.3, 7.4, 7.6)

- Effective design and facilitation of E&D training in HE is led by those with significant subject knowledge, an ability to empathise with others and who demonstrate flexibility in their approach to facilitation (Section 7.3, 7.4, 7.6)

- Limited confidence among facilitators of E&D training in articulating the language associated with disability studies, specifically disablism and ableism, is prevalent in the HE sector (Section 7.1)

- Levels of confidence among participants and facilitators to discuss hidden or invisible impairment are influenced by the way in which these are discussed in the media (Section 7.1, 7.5)

- Professional Services staff are less likely than their academic counterparts to speak with confidence about issues associated with impairment and disability (Section 7.1, 7.3)

- Academic staff are more likely to participate in E&D training which is optional and that specifically relates to their role in supporting students with impairments (Section 7.2, 7.3)

8.2 Reflections on the findings

The original aim of this study was to consider how, if at all, professional staff development practitioners in UK HEIs design and deliver E&D training which encapsulates and recognises the lived experience of people with an impairment. Framed through the lens of the sociological imagination (Wright-Mills, 2000), the study also considered how, and to what degree, the social construction of disability informs contemporary E&D training practice in UK HE. To change society for the better, to transform the lives of people disabled by society through effective training which facilitates engagement in social issues, this study has, to paraphrase Wright-Mills, taken something familiar and facilitated a curiosity among others, thus making it ‘strange’ or unfamiliar. E&D training in UK HE being that which is familiar, the unfamiliar stemming from the design of the study which provided space in which to question conventional practice. In the reflections that follow is an invitation to the professional staff development community to consider their own practice and enhance E&D training, intended to lead to activities which are both useful and transformative.

This study of equality and diversity training in UK HE was medium in scale, with participants drawn from staff development practitioners, academic and professional services staff in HE. Although an incremental addition, the findings contribute to the developing arguments around the marketisation of UK HE and the increasingly competitive educational landscape. Various national and international league tables, published annually, are among external indicators of the success, or otherwise, of HEIs. Contributing to each league table are a broad range of indicators, among them student satisfaction, research income, widening participation and student retention. This study has found that HEIs provide E&D training as a measure of performance which is directly linked to league table position, E&D training completions being reported, for example as part of institutional Athena Swan submissions. The increasing pressure to tick boxes to meet external requirement, thus maintaining or improving competitive advantage, risks undermining the core values of inclusiveness, empowerment and progressiveness espoused by many in UK HE.

Despite the scale of this research the findings raise important questions which have relevance outside the HE sector and the field of disability studies. The public sector equality duty (Equality Act, 2010) is not confined to HE, but is applicable to all public sector organisations hence the concluding remarks, addressed to the practitioner in HE, having both resonance and applicability with trainers, managers and customers in other institutional settings. Public sector organisations, including universities, are, at least in part, funded by the public and, as such, are accountable to wider society. As institutions which publically promote equality and inclusion, social responsibility and ethical integrity, through their published mission and values statements, they should be leading the way in terms of inclusion and zero tolerance of discrimination in all its forms.

Similarly, the findings, framed for those engaged in disability studies, have significance for a wider academic constituency. Colleagues whose research is sociological, historical and educational in nature, and those for whom public policy development is the subject of research will find connections whether historical, policy related or HE focussed. For example, those engaged in the research and development of public policy concerning building regulations, town planning and accessible developments for whom access by those with impairments is an important consideration. Furthermore, the study provides evidence of the way in which artefacts can be used to gather, share and display multiple perspectives opening up a potential source of data collection for other academics.

The study has explored the historical development of three models of disability and the way in which social discourse, and the sociological imagination, have influenced and been influenced by the shifting understanding of impairment and disability. The emerging contemporary discourse around invisible impairment, including mental health is a good example of highlighting the needs and concerns of those whose impairment is unseen and has been thoroughly discussed in this thesis. However, social discourse can also, without contextual and historical narratives to counter ill-informed perceptions and assumptions about those with impairments, become divisive. To this end one can learn from disability activism in the 1970s, discussed in Chapter two, which has not only led to a paradigm shift in the field of dis/ability studies, but also generated wider social awareness and impact. Today, those engaged in leading the campaigns to raise awareness of the rights of people with impairments are frequently viewed as troublesome, confrontational and self-serving (Yates, 2018; Swerling, 2019). When the history of 2019 is read by the next generation, will the same opinion be shared, or understood, about those for whom the lived experience of invisible impairment is a reality?

An understanding of, and appreciation for, the lived experience of those with impairments and how this is represented in E&D training in UK HE was critical to the success of this research. As such the hermeneutic interpretivist approach was not only appropriate, but fundamental in conceptualising understanding from a range of alternative perspectives.

The scope of the study was, in itself, original, previous studies which explored E&D training in UK HE having been limited to two specific research themes. Examples of the first, the views of academic staff about their participation in E&D training, are found in the studies conducted by Kendall (2018) and Brown and Leigh (2018b). The second theme is research which considered how E&D training in UK HE promotes the needs of students with impairments (Murray et al., 2009; Murray et al., 2011; Kendall, 2016; Wynants & Dennis, 2017). This study was designed to elicit the views of both professional services and academic staff in UK HE, a broader audience than previously considered. Moreover, the study was not only, as recommended, a “thorough analysis of training courses offered by universities” (Moriña & Carballo, 2017: 81), but was wider in scope than previous studies, exploring how E&D training is designed to consider the needs of both staff and students in UK HE.

The study was designed to elicit the views of those with impairments and those tasked with designing and delivering training to raise awareness of impairment, to hear their voices and gain a “more nuanced, sophisticated understanding” (McKenna, 2017: 459) of the phenomena. Alternative research approaches prevalent in qualitative sociological and educational research were considered. Structured interviews, focus groups and action research would have been appropriate in terms of data collection around formats of E&D training and the learning experience of staff who attended. The hermeneutic frame, however, invited research methods which would allow for a depth and richness of unstructured dialogue which has, in this study, revealed significant insights into the lived experience of those with impairments and has provided provocation for future research.

The triad of data gathering methods, is not, of itself, a novel approach, given the proliferation of mixed-method studies in sociological and educational research. Similarly, the use of artefacts in educational research is not new, consider, for example, the use of mind maps (Beckett, 2013) and poetry (Keith, 1994) as created artefacts. What is original in this regard is the use of artefacts as representations of impairment from two perspectives. The first capturing how impairment was presented, discussed and considered by workshop facilitators and their audience and the second chosen by individuals to represent their own hidden or visible impairment. The collages created following each of the four observations provided a visual representation of the events for discussion with the interview participants, their own artefacts, offered in contrast, being a personal perspective of the lived experience of impairment.

Acknowledging that impairment is a complex, individual, and emotional lived experience, the study contributes to the growing body of work around intersectionality. While confined to the exploration of the lived experience of those with an impairment, the study raises questions about how disability is linked with gender, age, class or ethnicity, be that from the perspective of research participants, facilitators of training or those attending training events. Seen from this perspective the study seeks to open up new opportunities, both in research and activism, to further explore the lived experience of impairment through multiple lenses, and within increasingly diverse and complex institutional and social contexts.

8.3 Contributions to knowledge, professional practice and Disability Studies

The study, now complete, is original in scope, methodological approach and research design. Moreover, the study is significant in the contribution it makes to both professional practice and the expansion of knowledge in the field of disability studies. Historical and contemporary social discourse and the concept of disability as a social construction are two connected themes which have been contemplated throughout this study. These two frames of reference, combined with the unique position of the researcher, provide for new insights in terms of both praxis and academic contribution. The position of the researcher, subject of discussion in Chapter four, is that of professional practitioner and non-impaired researcher with familial experience of impairment. This trio of identities helped to illustrate and contextualise examples of E&D training in practice in UK HE. Furthermore, the study contributes to the academic debate about how the non-impaired researcher can, and does, make a significant contribution to disability studies.

The broad range of findings from this research, presented in section 8.1, will be of value and interest to both the academic and professional practitioner. In summary the study makes three principal contributions to professional staff development practice in UK HE, the first and second being linked. Firstly, that the increasingly competitive HE landscape (Stevenson et al., 2014) compounds the “progressively tick-box” (Johnson Morgan & Finkelstein, 2017: 146) nature of E&D training. Secondly, for the professional practitioner, the most effective forms of delivery, drama-based training, contextualised simulations and the inclusion of guest speakers in training events, are those which are becoming less likely to be offered given their cost and complexity. This tension between compliance and training effectiveness is likely to increase thus compounding the challenge to embed equality of opportunity for all, regardless of impairment, in the culture of UK HEIs.

The study has extended, and added depth to the previously limited body of knowledge which relates to the purpose, design, facilitation and impact of equality and diversity training in UK HE. In doing so it raises important questions about the suitability and sustainability of online courses as a single method of delivery, a conundrum for broader consideration and application across higher education and the wider public sector.

The third contribution for the professional practitioner relates to the facilitation of E&D training events and the confidence, or lack thereof, of the facilitator. The study has found compelling evidence of a direct link between the confidence of the facilitator and the maturity of dialogue from the audience when invited to engage in stimulating, relevant and contentious conversation. Where facilitation confidence is low, the evidence is that workshop participants, whose level of understanding is mixed and whose views may be ill-informed, are unlikely to learn much, if anything, about the lived experience of those with impairments. Of particular concern is that a facilitator with low confidence is less likely to contradict or dispel inaccurate representations of impairment when expressed by one or more workshop participants.

For those in the academic community there are, in addition to the general findings presented in section 8.1 and the methodological and positional reflections described earlier in this section, key contributions to knowledge stemming from this research study. Firstly, as expressed to the professional practitioner, the study contributes to the growing body of evidence that UK HEIs are driven to provide mandatory E&D training in order for external bodies to gauge and rank institutional performance.

The second contribution is an incremental one, adding to the recent work undertaken by Kendall (2018) and Brown and Leigh (2018b). The study has found that academic staff in UK HEIs are more likely to engage in optional E&D training which provides practical solutions for teaching related activity than that which is mandatory and generic in content. Related to this is the interest shown by both academic interviewees, both in terms of their willingness to engage in the study, given their own area of research, and their comments about the effectiveness of contextual E&D training. Notably the study contributes new knowledge about the lived experiences of both academic and professional services staff with impairments in UK HE.

Thirdly, the study has found significant evidence of an increase in constructive social discourse around hidden or invisible impairment. Such prominent exposure has led to a growing confidence among HE staff to discuss and consider hidden impairment (Yates, 2018; Swerling, 2019) in E&D training events.

There is, however, a concerning and equally prominent rise of ableist and discriminatory language and behaviour (Quinn, 2015) which, without an informed counter-narrative, may threaten the integrity of E&D training whose purpose, among others, is to explore and celebrate the lived experience of those with impairments.

The most significant contribution of the study, advancing theoretical knowledge in the discipline of Disability Studies, is the conceptualisation of the Affirmative Model of Disability. The proposition being for the Affirmative Model to become as common a conceptual and theoretical frame as its predecessors, the Medical and Social Models.

The next two sections explore the manner in which these findings and contributions will be disseminated among the two principal audiences for whom this research study was originally intended, the professional staff development practitioner in UK HE and the disability studies community of academic colleagues.

8.4 Dissemination: Professional practice

This study has, in part, explored the way in which staff development practitioners in HE design and deliver E&D training for staff. The findings, as presented in section 8.1, and the contributions in 8.3, intended for dissemination to the HE staff development community, being "derived from the empirical evidence" of the research study and the "dialectal logic" of the researchers own professional practice (Costley et al., 2010: 189). Noting the valuable contribution of "the individual perspective of a professional practitioner" (Costley et al., 2010: 189) and, as a professional staff developer with the ability to "persuade, often orally or in presentation form" (Costley et al., 2010: 190), the annual national staff development conference provides an ideal forum to present a "compelling interpretation of the research findings" to potential users.

In anticipation of the completion of this study the ethical approval application and the presentation to NEYSDF colleagues on 17th October 2018 outlined the intention to share the research findings at the national SDF conference in November 2020.

Mindful that, although the audience comprises expert practitioners, the area of research is a specialist strand of the work of the HE staff development community and, as such, any recommendations drawn from the conclusions of the study should be “persuasive, clear and reasonable” (Costley et al., 2010: 193). In order for the audience to be moved to consider changes to their own professional practice Costley et al. (2010: 193) commend the use of enthymemes to “evoke emotions in the audience” and disrupt “accepted everyday practice”. (The term *enthymeme* meaning something which is based on “probable opinions that aim at persuasion” (Costley et al., 2010: 195), endorsing the use of data drawn from the study including the stories, lived experiences of others and images to present the research findings).

Although the survey responses were collated anonymously a small number of respondents made direct contact with the researcher. In doing so they expressed an interest in the findings of the study, asking whether, when it was practicable to do so, they could receive a copy of the findings as they relate to professional staff development practice in HE. Similarly, the facilitators of the four workshops asked if they might have sight of the findings as an opportunity to reflect on their own practice.

The findings presented in section 8.1 and the conclusions drawn from these, section 8.2, provide both incremental and new knowledge from which the professional staff development practitioner in HE might review their own practice. While it may be fair to say that the finding ‘HEIs provide E&D training as a way of demonstrating compliance’ reflects a widely held view, the study provides evidence to support this assertion. This knowledge may assist the professional practitioner when writing business cases for funding from senior managers for whom compliance will be a contributory factor in their decision. The findings which suggest that levels of confidence of both facilitator and participants to engage in discussion around impairment are influenced by the media, while not revelatory, provide compelling evidence to the emerging contemporary body of knowledge in this area. Similarly, the recommendation for inclusion of case studies and guest speakers in E&D training, while not a new format for delivery, are novel ways of approaching training in HE which specifically focusses on impairment. The conclusions are not intended to be critical of those who facilitate E&D training in HE, rather they are a provocation for the practitioner in further developing knowledge of, and confidence with, training around disablism, ableism and impairment.

To address the national staff development community, it will first be necessary to respond to the call for contributions to the national staff development conference. The aim being to submit an abstract from which the organisers can determine the value and likely level of interest from participants. The conference submission will, therefore, draw attention to the findings of the study which specifically identify how E&D training practice in HE might be enhanced. The style of the presentation will, in itself, be an opportunity to engage practitioners in a form of learning intended to evoke an emotional response. While designed to be participative, discursive and thought provoking, the presentation will also provide factual information and practical suggestions for improving praxis.

To provide a learning environment in which the audience is able to “interact, to interpret and to respond” (Grbich, 2007: 13) the proposal is to begin the presentation with a pre-recorded video case study from which the audience will hear about the lived experience of a person with an impairment. The audience will, in doing so, experience one of the delivery methods the study has concluded can be particularly useful in E&D training. The way in which the study was conducted, including the contributions from the HE community, and a precis of the main findings will then be shared. The presentation concludes with an opportunity for small group discussion in which participants can consider how, if at all, they might apply what they have learned into their own practice.

8.5 Dissemination: Disability Studies and academic research

Having considered the way in which this study contributes to professional staff development practice in HE this section moves on to explore the incremental and original contribution being offered to the academic community. It is anticipated that the study, or aspects thereof, will be of interest and relevance to four principal audiences, offering both theoretical and methodological insights to inform further research. The first is the academic whose research is clearly situated in the fields of disability studies and critical disability studies; the second being those who conduct research in an HE context. The third, a broader academic audience, are those for whom equality, diversity, inclusion and intersectionality are areas of research focus. The study finally addresses those for whom methodological innovation is of relevance. For this audience their interest will be in the novel inclusion of artefacts, both as a method of data collection and presentation and also as a representation of the lived experience of those with an impairment.

In summary, as presented in section 8.3, the contributions to one or more of these academic cohorts are positional, methodological and ontological in nature. The unique position of the researcher, discussed in Chapter four is, in itself, insightful, providing an incremental contribution to the body of knowledge from the perspective of a non-impaired researcher. Similarly, the way in which academic participants with a background in disability studies, elected to engage in the study, thus becoming research subjects in their own field may also be of academic interest.

The innovative approach to research design, the sequential triad of methods and the use of researcher created, and participants selected, artefacts as representations of impairment will be of value for those who seek innovative approaches to research design and choice of methods. Finally, the findings as presented in Chapter seven contribute to the emerging body of academic literature around E&D training in HE.

Mindful that these contributions might only be “made when the work is disseminated” (Lee & Lings, 2008: 389) a number of opportunities naturally present themselves to the researcher. In preparation for the “oral defence” (Lee & Lings, 2008: 389) of the study a rehearsal in front of an audience of critical friends, in the form of a seminar, provides the opportunity to plan and deliver a compact articulation of the research study.

Similarly, in developing the “authorial voice” (Gabriel, 2013: 357) and to demonstrate “command of the research topic” the intention is to respond to calls for contributions to academic conferences. Poster presentations and parallel workshops provide the opportunity to engage with other academic colleagues and to develop networks though which to collaborate on further research. Furthermore, to review and develop aspects of the study which may be considered for publication in peer reviewed journals thus enabling “other researchers to easily locate their work” (Gabriel, 2013: 375).

8.6 Limitations and opportunities for future research

The interpretive approach and the sequential research methods adopted for this study enabled an understanding of how people with impairments are portrayed in E&D training in HE. However, caution should be exercised in generalising these findings to other social settings as the study, while providing a rich source of data, was limited in size. The survey responses represented a little over a fifth of the available sample and were restricted by a nil response from Welsh and Northern Irish HEIs. The four observations were in the North East of the UK so regional variation is unknown and the selection of only partial information to construct the collages could be criticised as having limited the potential for a breadth of dialogue between researcher and interview participant (Jacob, 2013). The semi-structured interviews at the home institution of the researcher were all with female participants so are without a male, transgender or intersex perspective which would have allowed for a more intersectional view on the topic.

While the research findings are a representation of E&D training in Higher Education they are insufficient in scope to be generalised across the broader public sector. As Van Manen (1997: 22) suggests "Phenomenological research studies, by their very nature, do not "allow for empirical generalizations (sic)", if they were they would be "of troublesome value".

Although studies that "gather data from multiple perspectives [including] observations provide a more reliable, well-rounded picture of staff attitudes and perceptions" (Murray et al., 2011: 299) the narrow geographical spread of the observations could be considered a limiting factor. Furthermore, ethical considerations precluded engagement with a larger, and gender balanced, group of interview participants. The application for ethical approval was framed in such a way as to invite participation through the chairs of the disabled staff networks rather than through broader means such as direct mailing to all staff.

Despite these limitations the conclusions of this study are promising as they provide the professional staff development community with the opportunity to review and, perhaps, improve practice in relation to the way in which people with impairments are represented in E&D training in HE.

Similarly, the study contributes to the “body of theoretical work that is, broadly speaking, counter-hegemonic to dominant understandings of disability” (Goodley et al., 2019; 973-974), adding to the “smorgasbord of perspectives” welcomed in Critical Disability Studies.

This study has considered how people with an impairment are portrayed in E&D training in UK Higher Education Institutions. In the course of this exploration a number of additional avenues of inquiry have been identified, some being natural extensions of the questions originally posed while others have arisen from reflection and continued engagement with the emerging literature. Thus the study concludes with a short provocation and an invitation for further research.

- Online courses, as a method of delivery of E&D training, were excluded from the observational phase of the study prompting the further exploration of the question ‘To what extent, if any, does online E&D training in Higher Education reflect the lived experience of people with impairments?’

- Those who contributed to the study were asked about how, if at all, models of disability were used in the design and delivery of E&D training. The question of whether the use of theoretical models and the rationalisation of disability is necessary or useful was not posed. This offers an opportunity for further research studies and research based practice into the effectiveness, or otherwise, of facilitation of E&D training based on empathy rather than the rationalisation of disability.

- The study included contributions from two academics who engaged as research participants prompting further exploration to understand why, and to what extent, academics engaged in disability studies are more likely than their counterparts to share their own experiences of impairment.

- The study focussed attention on disability, one of nine protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. The “connection of disability to other intersecting identities which experience structural disadvantage such as race and sexual identities” (Osborne, 2019: 233) provides an opportunity for further research in the sector. Furthermore, the recent announcement by Advance HE that the Athena Swan charter might be expanded to become an “all-embracing charter on diversity and inclusivity” (Mayo, 2019: 11) provides the HE context in which such research might be considered.

- The extent to which E&D training in UK HEIs is, or might be, a driver of cultural change is highlighted as an opportunity for further exploration.

- All those who facilitated the observed workshops and were interviewed in the course of this study were women. To observe the facilitation approach, discuss the personal artefacts and hear the lived experience of male, transgender and intersex participants who may “deal with issues in another way” (Kendall, 2016: 5) would add further dimension and depth to Critical Disability Studies research.

- The study has highlighted the way in which the media can influence debate, in particular discussion about hidden or invisible impairment (Buitendijk et al., 2019). If, as suggested, case studies and guest speakers are to feature in E&D training in Higher Education then the confidence to disclose a hidden impairment by those invited to participate becomes a factor. If, as submitted by Brown and Leigh (2018b: 987), “Invisible, less known or contested conditions are dismissed as a fabrication, malingering and an act of a fundamentally lazy or overwhelmed worker seeking validation”. Further research is proposed to consider how HEIs do, or might, create an environment in which staff who are invited to speak at E&D training events are confident to disclose their impairment.

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10 Appendices

A: Information sheet for the online survey

Invitation to participate in a research survey

Who is the researcher?
My name is [redacted] and I am the Head of Learning and Development at [redacted] and a member of the Staff Development Forum (SDF). I am also a student on the EdD programme at [redacted] aiming to complete my doctorate in 2020.

What is the aim of the research project?
The aim of my research is to explore how, if at all, an understanding of the lived experiences of disabled people working in UK Higher Education Institutions might contribute to the design and delivery of equality and diversity training. I would welcome your views as part of my research.

How will the survey be distributed?
I am using Online Survey (OS) as the tool to gather your responses to a series of defined questions. The survey link is embedded in the e-mail you have received to which this information sheet was attached. The survey is being distributed to 107 HE Institutions across the UK.

How long will the survey take to complete?
For colleagues who agree to complete the OS survey your contribution in terms of time commitment is anticipated to be no more than 30 minutes.

How will the data from the survey be used?
Data drawn from the OS survey will be analysed to assist in answering the main and subsequent research questions. The data will be presented within the main body of the thesis.

How will data be stored?
I will make use of two main storage devices, each password protected and, where appropriate, with files encrypted in line with University guidance. The first is a 36mb memory stick which, when not in use is stored in a locked office and the second is the [redacted] secure server.

How will confidentiality be assured?
No HEIs or individuals will be named or be capable of being identified in the completed thesis. When completeing the OS survey you will not be asked to provide any personal data from which your individual responses could be identified. You will be asked for information about the region in which you work so that the data is capable of being presented at a regional rather than national level.

Right to withdraw
There is no obligation upon you to complete the survey. If you choose to complete and submit the OS survey you are consenting to take part in this research. You can choose to withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequence with an undertaking from me that your information will not then be used and your survey response will be deleted.

Research findings
I am proposing to share those research findings which relate to opportunities for improvements to the way in which equality and diversity training in Higher Education is designed and delivered. The most effective forum for this will be at the national SDF conference in 2020 where I would propose to deliver a parallel workshop which you or colleagues would be welcome to attend.

Contact information

If you have any queries about the aims of my research or about the OS survey please contact me on [redacted] or by telephone on [redacted]

If you have any queries about my research and would prefer to discuss these with my supervisor, [redacted] from the School of Education and Social Sciences, he can be contacted on [redacted]

Should you have any concerns about the conduct of this research project you should feel able to contact the secretary to the Faculty Ethics Committee

B: Information sheet for observations

Information sheet for staff facilitating and attending the Equality and Diversity training event on [redacted] at [redacted]

Who is the researcher?
My name is [redacted] and I am the Head of Learning and Development at the [redacted] [redacted]. I am also a student on the EdD programme at [redacted] aiming to complete my doctorate in 2020.

What is the aim of the research project?
The aim of my research is to explore how, if at all, an understanding of the lived experiences of disabled people working in UK Higher Education Institutions might contribute to the design and delivery of equality and diversity training. I would welcome your views as part of my research.

Why am I observing this training event?
I am interested in understanding how people with impairments are portrayed in equality and diversity training and have been given access to this training event by your learning and development team. I am interested in hearing and seeing how people with impairments are described in these training sessions as well as how pictures, data, and other information about people with impairments are used to generate conversation within the session.

How will the data from my observation be used?
Information drawn from my observations will be used to create a collage or 'mood board' as a visual representation of the training event. I will be using this 'mood board' as part of a series of interviews with staff from the Disability Network in the [redacted] with the intention of asking them for their views about how people with impairments are portrayed in equality and diversity training. The resulting data will be analysed to assist in answering the main and subsequent research questions of my study. The data will be presented within the main body of the thesis.

How will data be stored?
A photograph of the physical 'mood board' will be stored on one of two main storage devices, each password protected and, where appropriate, with files encrypted in line with University guidance. The first is a 36mb memory stick which, when not in use is stored in a locked office and the second is the [redacted] secure server. The physical 'mood board' will be kept, when not being used for the interviews, in a locked office.

How will confidentiality be assured?
No HEIs or individuals will be named or be capable of being identified in the completed thesis. In observing this training event I will not be making a note of your name or any personal information about you from which you could be identified at a later date. I will not be taking photographs of any individual during the training nor will I be asking you any questions.

Right to withdraw
There is no obligation upon you to participate in this training event while I am observing. If you choose to attend in the knowledge that you will not be identified in any way then you are consenting to take part in this research. You can choose to withdraw from the training session at any time without adverse consequence.

Research findings
I am proposing to share those research findings which relate to opportunities for improvements to the way in which equality and diversity training in Higher Education is designed and delivered. The most effective forum for this will be at the national Staff Development Forum conference in 2020 where I would propose to deliver a parallel workshop which members of the learning and development team at your University may choose to attend.

Contact information

If you have any queries about the aims of my research or about this observation please contact me on [redacted] or by telephone on [redacted]

If you have any queries about my research and would prefer to discuss these with my supervisor, [redacted] from the School of Education and Social Sciences, he can be contacted on [redacted]

Should you have any concerns about the conduct of this research project you should feel able to contact the secretary to the Faculty Ethics Committee

C: Information sheet for semi-structured interviews

Invitation to participate in a one to one interview

Who is the researcher?
My name is [redacted] and I am the Head of Learning and Development at the University of [redacted]. I am also a student on the EdD programme at [redacted] aiming to complete my doctorate in 2020.

What is the aim of the research project?
The aim of my research is to explore how, if at all, an understanding of the lived experiences of disabled people working in UK Higher Education Institutions might contribute to the design and delivery of equality and diversity training. I would welcome your views as part of my research.

How will the interview be conducted?
The interview would be conducted on a one to one basis in a private and accessible location to be agreed by you and I. I propose to record the interview using an I-pad application from which I can then prepare a verbatim transcript of our conversation. I have prepared a series of outline questions which I would be asking.

I will also be inviting you to see and comment on some collages or 'mood boards' which I have prepared. These 'mood boards' have been created following my observations at equality and diversity training events offered by other Universities in the region. The 'mood boards' are a visual representation of how people with impairments are described in these training sessions as well as how pictures, data, and other information about people with impairments are presented.

I am also asking if you would be prepared to bring with you an artefact of your own choosing that represents your experience of being a person with an impairment. This could be a picture, a poem, a news item, memento or other item of your choosing that you would be comfortable to discuss with me during the interview.

How long will the interview take to complete?
If you volunteer to be interviewed the time commitment for you is anticipated to be no more than 90 minutes. This comprises time to read this information sheet, to source an item for discussion and participate in a semi-structured interview of no more than 60 minutes.

How will the data from the interview be used?
Data drawn from each interview will be analysed to assist in answering the main and subsequent research questions. The data will be presented within the main body of the thesis.

How will data be stored?
I will make use of two main storage devices, each password protected and, where appropriate, with files encrypted in line with University guidance. The first is a 36mb memory stick and the second is an I-pad which will be used to record the semi-structured interviews. When not in use both devices are stored in a locked office. In addition the thesis may be saved, in password protected format, on the University of [redacted] secure server.

How will confidentiality be assured?
No HEIs or individuals will be named or be capable of being identified in the completed thesis. Data will be anonymised and presented as, for example, 'Participant A – a female member of the DSN'. While membership of the networks is confidential so the ratio of female and male individuals is unknown, should either network chair, or you raise a concern that including gender in the final study might lead to possible identification of an individual then I will revert to simply 'Participant A – a member of the DSN'.

Right to withdraw

There is no obligation upon you to express an interest in participating in my research. If you consent to being interviewed you can choose to withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequence. In this case you have an undertaking from me that your information will not then be used and your interview responses will be deleted.

Research findings

I am proposing to share those research findings which relate to opportunities for improvements to the way in which equality and diversity training in Higher Education is designed and delivered. The most effective forum for this will be at the national Staff Development Forum conference in 2020 where I would propose to deliver a parallel workshop for learning and development colleagues.

How to participate

If you feel able to share your perceptions and views with me in an interview please could you contact me on [redacted] I have set a closing date for expressions of interest of 25th February 2019 and would ideally like to carry out 4-6 interviews. If the number of people who have said they are willing to be interviewed is more than anticipated then I would simply make a selection based on the earliest date your expression was received. For those members of the networks who agree to attend an interview I will ask you to sign a consent form, before the interview commences, which reiterates the purpose of my research and your rights as a participant.

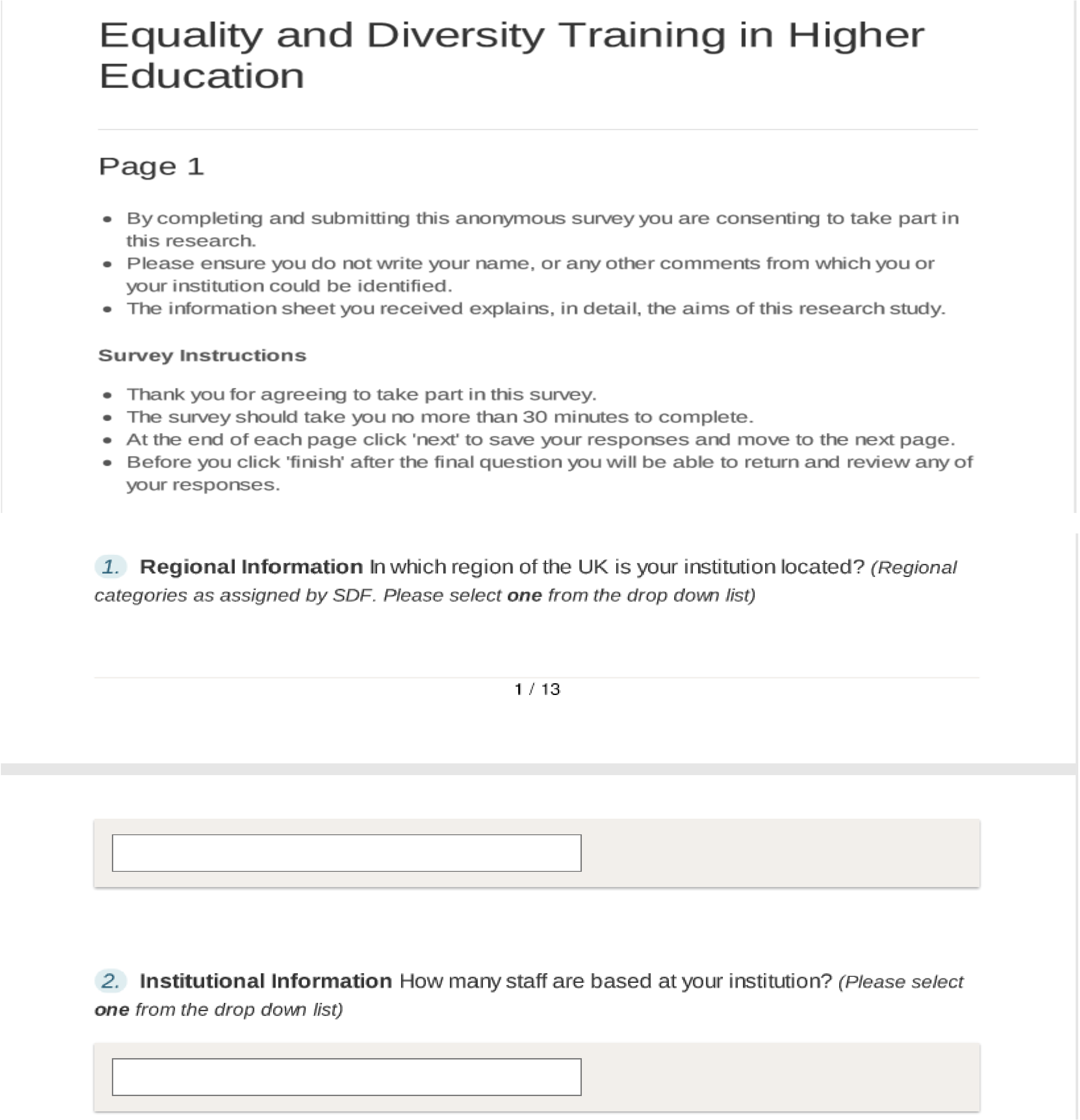
Contact information

If you have any queries about the aims of my research or about the one to one interviews please contact me on [redacted] or by telephone on [redacted]

If you have any queries about my research and would prefer to discuss these with my supervisor, [redacted] from the School of Education and Social Sciences, he can be contacted on [redacted]

Should you have any concerns about the conduct of this research project you should feel able to contact the secretary to the Faculty of Arts Cultures and Education (FACE) Ethics Committee [redacted]

D: Online survey questions



Equality and Diversity Training in Higher Education

Page 1

- By completing and submitting this anonymous survey you are consenting to take part in this research.
- Please ensure you do not write your name, or any other comments from which you or your institution could be identified.
- The information sheet you received explains, in detail, the aims of this research study.

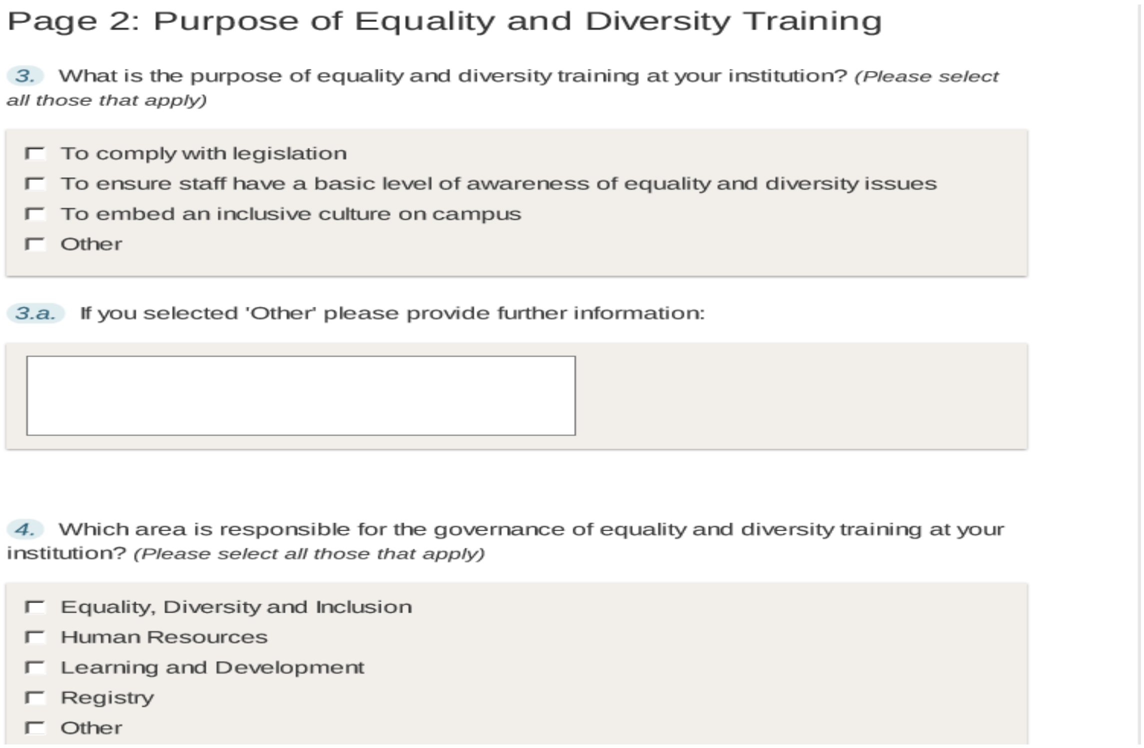
Survey Instructions

- Thank you for agreeing to take part in this survey.
- The survey should take you no more than 30 minutes to complete.
- At the end of each page click 'next' to save your responses and move to the next page.
- Before you click 'finish' after the final question you will be able to return and review any of your responses.

1. **Regional Information** In which region of the UK is your institution located? *(Regional categories as assigned by SDF. Please select **one** from the drop down list)*

1 / 13

2. **Institutional Information** How many staff are based at your institution? *(Please select **one** from the drop down list)*



Page 2: Purpose of Equality and Diversity Training

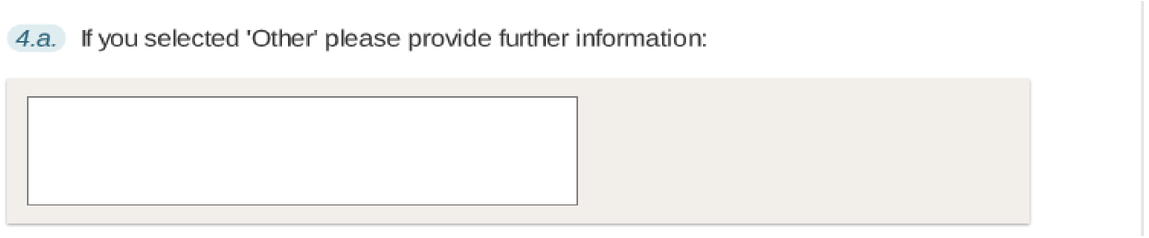
3. What is the purpose of equality and diversity training at your institution? *(Please select all those that apply)*

- ☐ To comply with legislation
- ☐ To ensure staff have a basic level of awareness of equality and diversity issues
- ☐ To embed an inclusive culture on campus
- ☐ Other

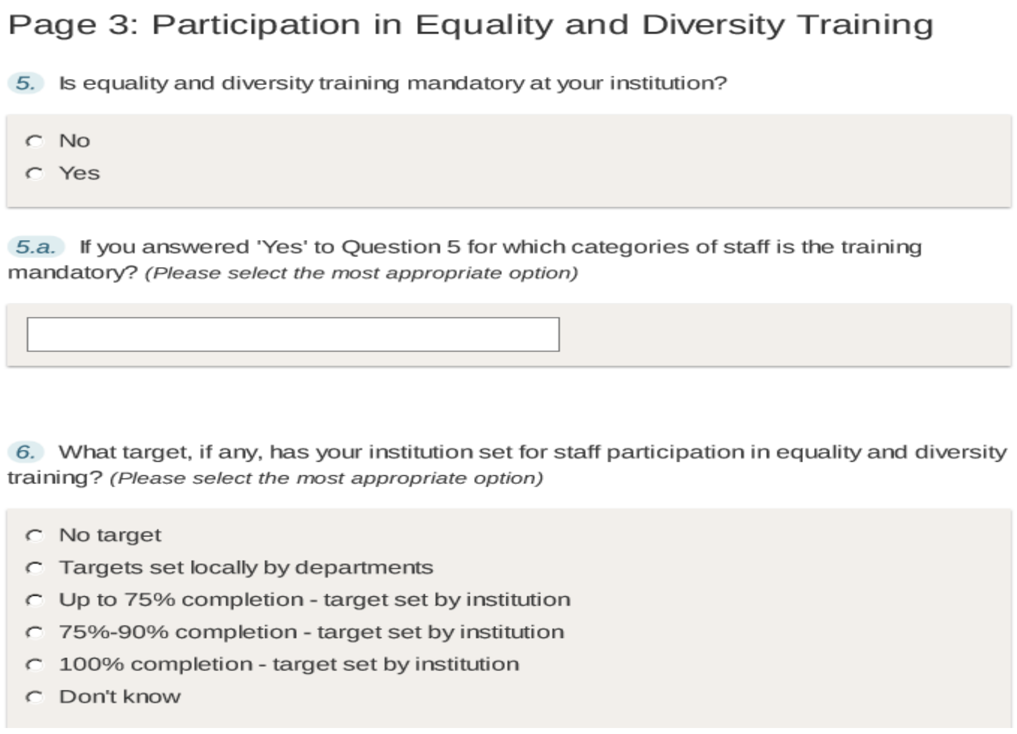
3.a. If you selected 'Other' please provide further information:

4. Which area is responsible for the governance of equality and diversity training at your institution? *(Please select all those that apply)*

- ☐ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- ☐ Human Resources
- ☐ Learning and Development
- ☐ Registry
- ☐ Other



4.a. If you selected 'Other' please provide further information:



Page 3: Participation in Equality and Diversity Training

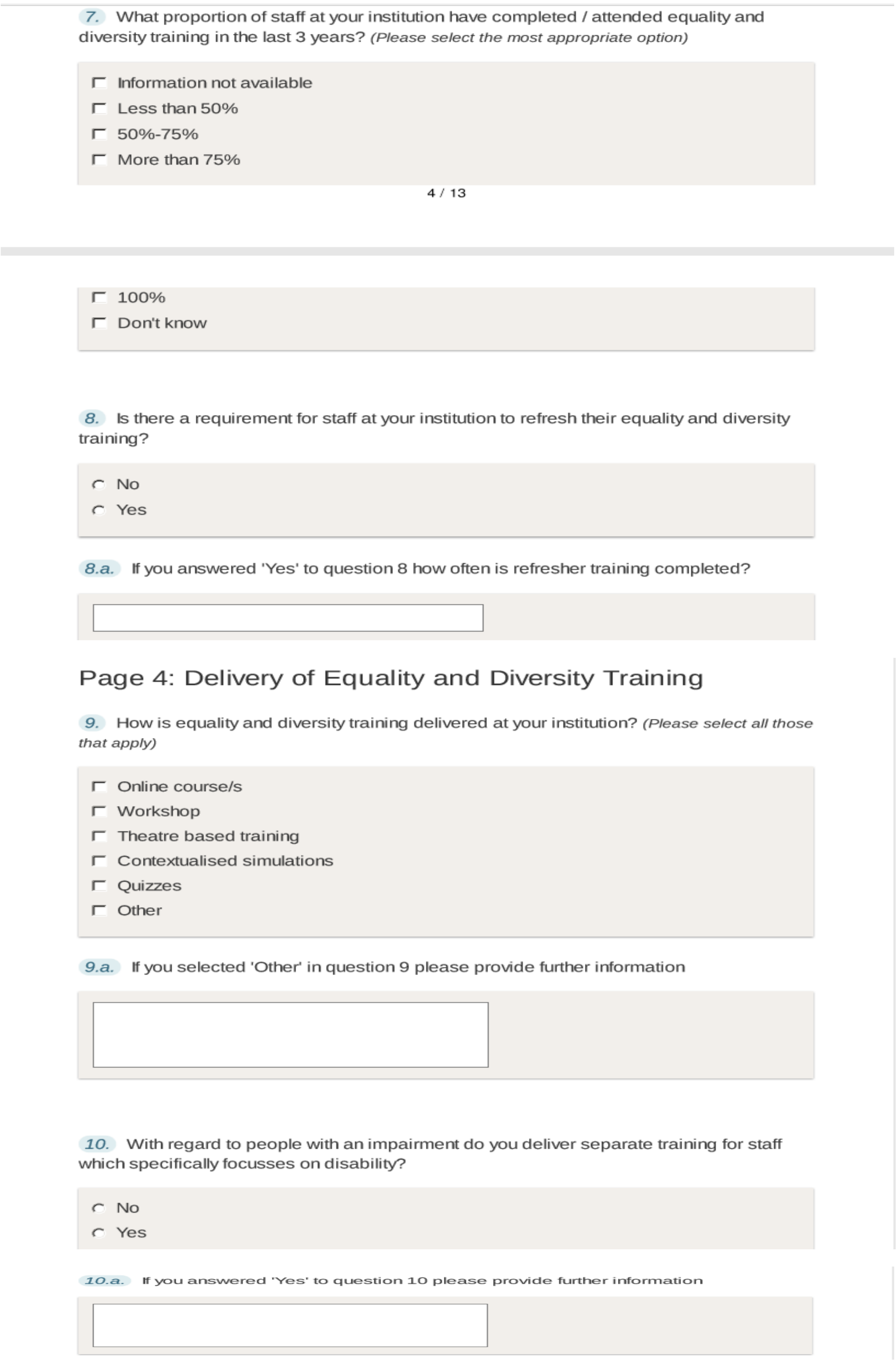
5. Is equality and diversity training mandatory at your institution?

- ○ No
- ○ Yes

5.a. If you answered 'Yes' to Question 5 for which categories of staff is the training mandatory? *(Please select the most appropriate option)*

6. What target, if any, has your institution set for staff participation in equality and diversity training? *(Please select the most appropriate option)*

- ○ No target
- ○ Targets set locally by departments
- ○ Up to 75% completion - target set by institution
- ○ 75%-90% completion - target set by institution
- ○ 100% completion - target set by institution
- ○ Don't know



7. What proportion of staff at your institution have completed / attended equality and diversity training in the last 3 years? *(Please select the most appropriate option)*

☐ Information not available
☐ Less than 50%
☐ 50%-75%
☐ More than 75%

☐ 100%
☐ Don't know

8. Is there a requirement for staff at your institution to refresh their equality and diversity training?

○ No
○ Yes

8.a. If you answered 'Yes' to question 8 how often is refresher training completed?

Page 4: Delivery of Equality and Diversity Training

9. How is equality and diversity training delivered at your institution? *(Please select all those that apply)*

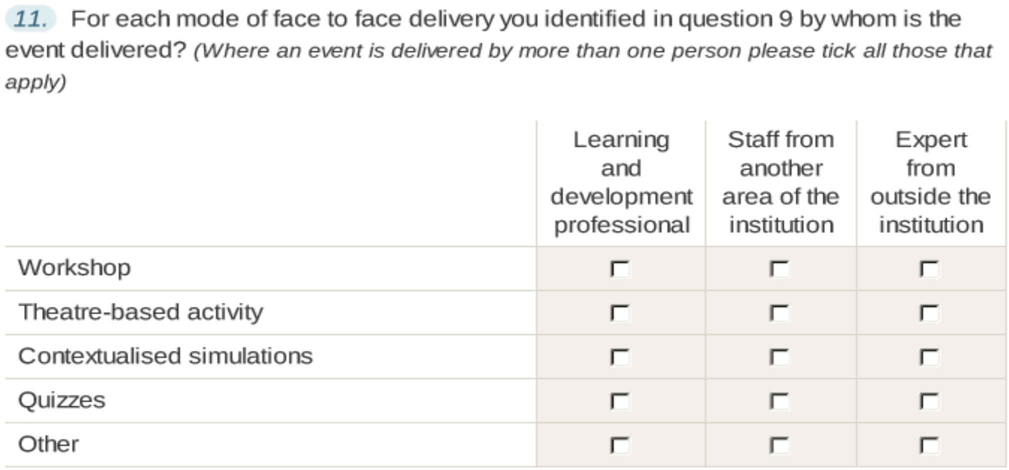
☐ Online course/s
☐ Workshop
☐ Theatre based training
☐ Contextualised simulations
☐ Quizzes
☐ Other

9.a. If you selected 'Other' in question 9 please provide further information

10. With regard to people with an impairment do you deliver separate training for staff which specifically focusses on disability?

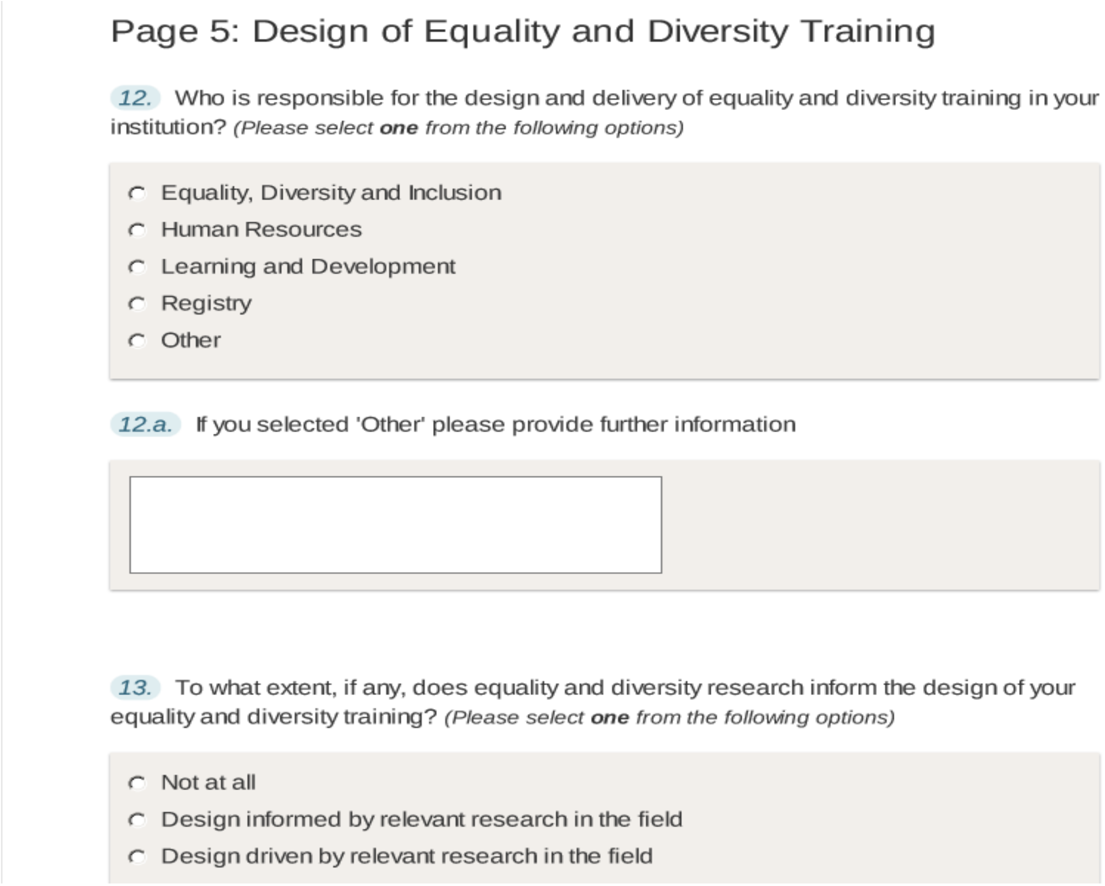
○ No
○ Yes

10.a. If you answered 'Yes' to question 10 please provide further information



11. For each mode of face to face delivery you identified in question 9 by whom is the event delivered? *(Where an event is delivered by more than one person please tick all those that apply)*

	Learning and development professional	Staff from another area of the institution	Expert from outside the institution
Workshop	☐	☐	☐
Theatre-based activity	☐	☐	☐
Contextualised simulations	☐	☐	☐
Quizzes	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐



Page 5: Design of Equality and Diversity Training

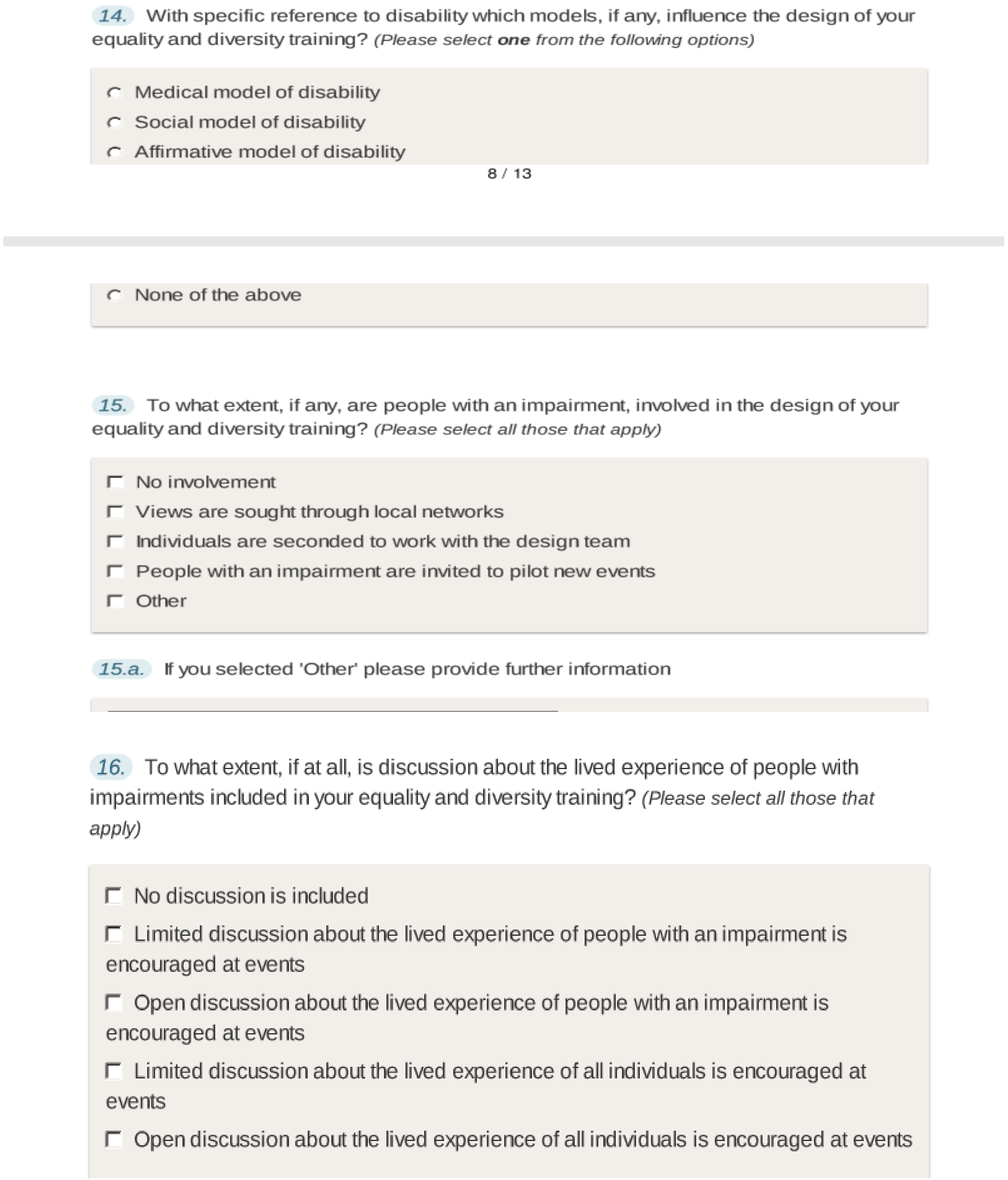
12. Who is responsible for the design and delivery of equality and diversity training in your institution? *(Please select **one** from the following options)*

- ○ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- ○ Human Resources
- ○ Learning and Development
- ○ Registry
- ○ Other

12.a. If you selected 'Other' please provide further information

13. To what extent, if any, does equality and diversity research inform the design of your equality and diversity training? *(Please select **one** from the following options)*

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Design informed by relevant research in the field
- ○ Design driven by relevant research in the field



14. With specific reference to disability which models, if any, influence the design of your equality and diversity training? *(Please select **one** from the following options)*

○ Medical model of disability
○ Social model of disability
○ Affirmative model of disability

8 / 13

○ None of the above

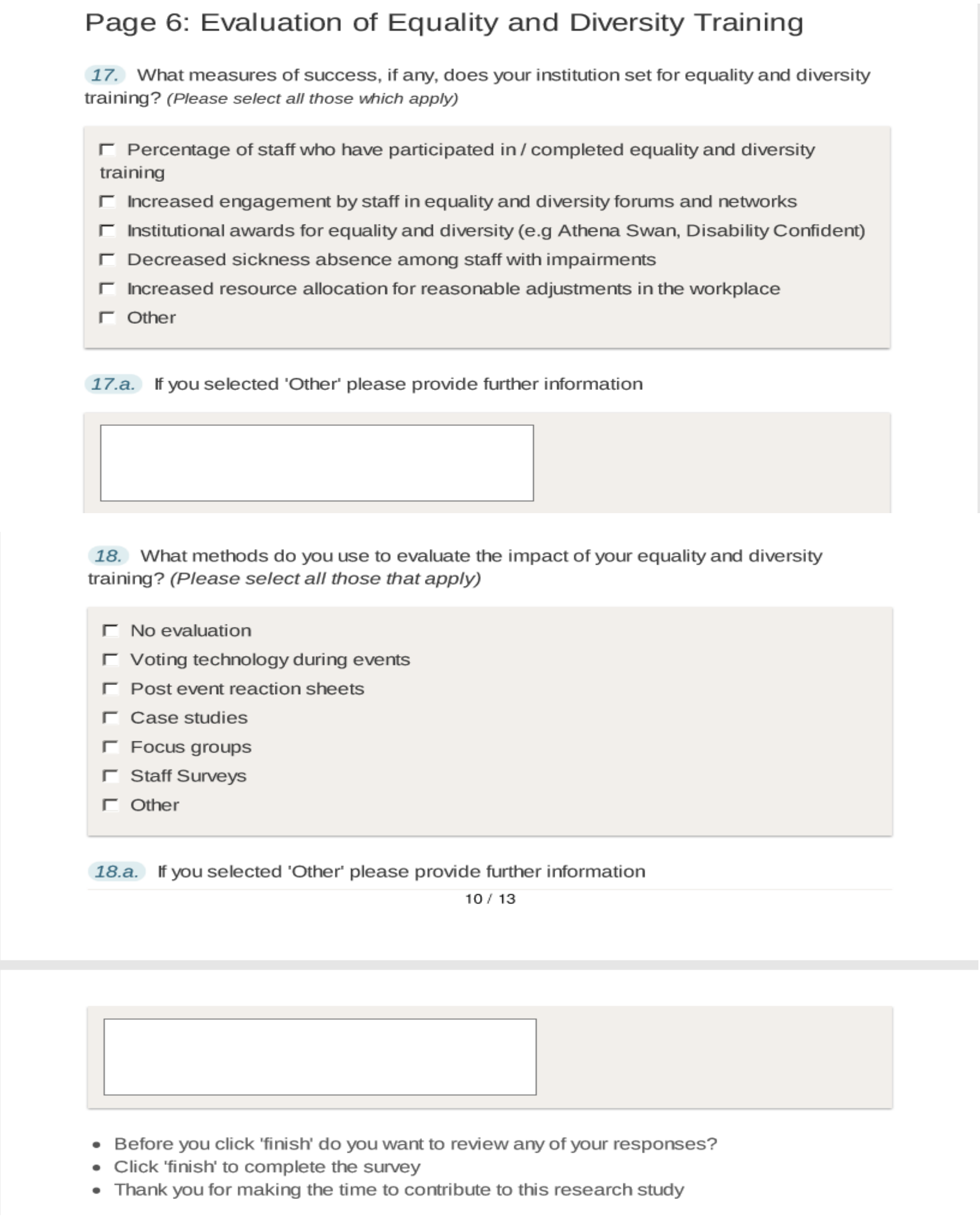
15. To what extent, if any, are people with an impairment, involved in the design of your equality and diversity training? *(Please select all those that apply)*

☐ No involvement
☐ Views are sought through local networks
☐ Individuals are seconded to work with the design team
☐ People with an impairment are invited to pilot new events
☐ Other

15.a. If you selected 'Other' please provide further information

16. To what extent, if at all, is discussion about the lived experience of people with impairments included in your equality and diversity training? *(Please select all those that apply)*

☐ No discussion is included
☐ Limited discussion about the lived experience of people with an impairment is encouraged at events
☐ Open discussion about the lived experience of people with an impairment is encouraged at events
☐ Limited discussion about the lived experience of all individuals is encouraged at events
☐ Open discussion about the lived experience of all individuals is encouraged at events



Page 6: Evaluation of Equality and Diversity Training

17. What measures of success, if any, does your institution set for equality and diversity training? *(Please select all those which apply)*

☐ Percentage of staff who have participated in / completed equality and diversity training
☐ Increased engagement by staff in equality and diversity forums and networks
☐ Institutional awards for equality and diversity (e.g Athena Swan, Disability Confident)
☐ Decreased sickness absence among staff with impairments
☐ Increased resource allocation for reasonable adjustments in the workplace
☐ Other

17.a. If you selected 'Other' please provide further information

18. What methods do you use to evaluate the impact of your equality and diversity training? *(Please select all those that apply)*

☐ No evaluation
☐ Voting technology during events
☐ Post event reaction sheets
☐ Case studies
☐ Focus groups
☐ Staff Surveys
☐ Other

18.a. If you selected 'Other' please provide further information

- Before you click 'finish' do you want to review any of your responses?
- Click 'finish' to complete the survey
- Thank you for making the time to contribute to this research study

E: Presentation to NEYSDF

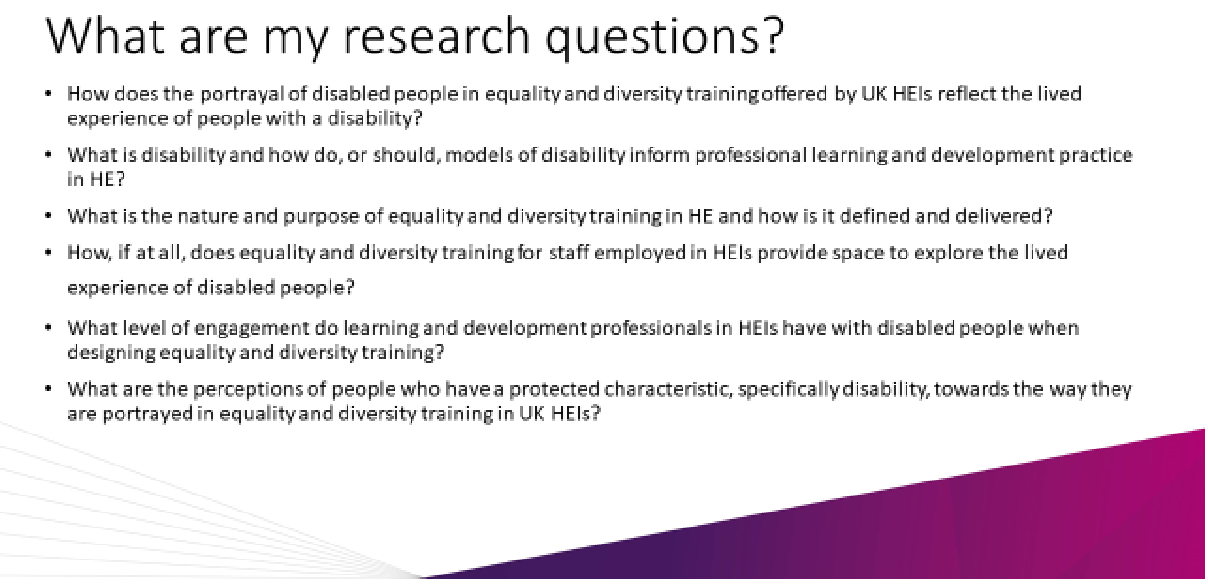
Research study: An invitation to participate

Representations of Disability: A study of how people with an impairment are portrayed in equality and diversity training in UK Higher Education Institutions

A presentation to NEYSDF colleagues

17th October 2018

Who am I?



What are my research questions?

- How does the portrayal of disabled people in equality and diversity training offered by UK HEIs reflect the lived experience of people with a disability?
- What is disability and how do, or should, models of disability inform professional learning and development practice in HE?
- What is the nature and purpose of equality and diversity training in HE and how is it defined and delivered?
- How, if at all, does equality and diversity training for staff employed in HEIs provide space to explore the lived experience of disabled people?
- What level of engagement do learning and development professionals in HEIs have with disabled people when designing equality and diversity training?
- What are the perceptions of people who have a protected characteristic, specifically disability, towards the way they are portrayed in equality and diversity training in UK HEIs?

What have I been curious about so far?

- The language of disability, disablism and ablism
- The drivers for equality and diversity training in HE
- Compliance cultures *(the tickbox)*
- Delivery mechanisms for equality and diversity training
- Models of disability in a social context
  - Accommodation and containment
  - Compensation and social activism
  - Citizenship

What primary research do I have approval for?

What am I asking of you?

- To observe an Equality and Diversity training session at your HEI
- A range of ④ HEIs from the region would be ideal
- Agree a convenient date for me to come to your HEI
  - Between Late November 2018 – end February 2019
- Information sheet for trainer and participants
- Attend and observe
- Create the collage!

Plans to share my research findings

- Headline findings to participating HEIs
  - Data analysis
  - Copy of the Collage
- SDF Conference session 2020
  - Overview
  - Findings
  - Recommendations

Next steps................

- Would you allow me to observe an E+D training session in your HEI?
- When would be a good time for you?
- Expressions of interest by Friday 2nd November 2018
- Please contact me on:

F: Observation information collection template

Date and time of event *(how regular are these events?)*	
Location / University	
Event title	
Style of event (workshop, simulation, theatre etc)	
How was knowledge tested in the session? Quiz / Q+A?	
Event facilitator / job role	
No of participants / representing (academic / PSS)	

Research Question	**Information to be gathered from observation**
What is the nature and purpose of equality and diversity training?	*How the event is described in the title / aims and objectives*
What is disability and how do, or should, models of disability inform professional learning and development practice in HE?	*How is 'disability' explained?* *Frequency of words used by facilitator and participants*
How, if at all, does equality and diversity training for staff employed in HEIs provide space to explore the lived experience of disabled people?	*Whether the lived experience of impairment and disability is given space in the session?*
How does the portrayal of disabled people in equality and diversity training offered by UK HEIs reflect the lived experience of people with a disability?	What images are used by the facilitator in the slides and presentation material? What stories / metaphors are used by facilitator and participants in discussion about the lived experience? What personal stories / experiences are shared by people with impairments in the room?

Information gathered

Event aims and objectives (as listed on promotional literature / powerpoint slide)		
Definitions? What explanations are offered for and by who?		
impairment	Facilitator	
impairment	Participant/s	
Disability	Facilitator	
Disability	Participant/s	
Equality	Facilitator	
Equality	Participant/s	
Diversity	Facilitator	
Diversity	Participant/s	
Lived experience discussion Specifically referenced on agenda / slide? Brought up in conversation? Nature of conversation?		
Models of disability discussion Specifically referenced on agenda / slide? Brought up in conversation? Nature of conversation?		

Frequency of use (IIII)

Word / phrase	Used by the facilitator	Used by a participant
Disability		
Disabled people		
People with disabilities		
Impairment		
Disablism/ Disablist		
Ableism / Ableist		
Equality		
Diversity		
Medical model		
Social model		
Affirmative model		
Other words used?		

Images / stories / metaphors

	Facilitator	**Participant/s**
Image / picture / handout		
Real life experience of another person		
Personal life experience		
Metaphor		

G: Researcher notes from observation C

Equality and Diversity training observations – Information collection sheet

Date and time of event *(how regular are these events?)*	27th February 2018
Location / University	[redacted] University
Event title	Disability awareness in learning & teaching
Style of event (workshop, simulation, theatre etc)	Workshop.
How was knowledge tested in the session? Quiz / Q+A?	Discussion
Event facilitator / job role	[redacted] - L+OD - Disability support
No of participants / representing (academic / PSS)	14

Frequency of use (𝍸)

Word / phrase	Used by the facilitator	Used by a participant
Disability	𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍷𝍷𝍷𝍷	𝍸 𝍷
Disabled people/ Students	𝍸 𝍷𝍷	𝍷𝍷
People with disabilities		
Impairment	𝍷𝍷𝍷𝍷	𝍷
Disablism/ **Disablist**		

Ableism / **Ableist**		
Equality	||	

Diversity		
Medical model		
Social model		
Affirmative model	mobility difficulty / ı	
Other words used?	reasonable adjustments 𝍸 learning difficulties /	Anxiety / reasonable adjustments // mental health condition /

Information gathered

Event aims and objectives (as listed on promotional literature / powerpoint slide)		understand the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in relation to L+T Explore how to facilitate learning for disabled students Consider techniques to help you create a more inclusive environment for disabled students.
Definitions? What explanations are offered for and by who?		
impairment	Facilitator	
impairment	Participant/s	

impairment

Disability	Facilitator	Long term 'Physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on ability 'Not minor, not trivial' – mobility, sensory, stroke, diabetes – speech"
Disability	Participant/s	An illness 'Physical or mental' 'Less able' – a 'sustained, ongoing problem' Depression, anxiety, blind, deaf, mute autism, asperger, paralysed Chronic disease 'Visible and invisible' neurodiversity & neuroplasticity'
Equality	Facilitator	

+ bulimia, ME, severe depression

We can be creative with assessments.

Lived experience discussion Specifically referenced on agenda / slide?	
Brought up in conversation?	Student with a visual impairment – didn't want to make her feel uncomfortable
Nature of conversation?	person with Visual Impairment with assistance dog – doesn't get the job 'because we don't want a dog in the office' ... but is this really about discrimination? – Classified as a disability? HIV / cancer / multiple sclerosis from the point of diagnosis. – ... adjustment in the moment"

level of severity is or a spectrum

Students have to "prove they have a disability" – GP letter – psychologist statement etc

"encourage disclosure about disability"

Images / stories / metaphors

	Facilitator	Participant/s
Image / picture / handout	graph from advance HE – proportion of students who disclosed as disabled (find slide from advance HE?) – Lowered kerbs – automated doors/push button – sign language interpreter – Disabled student allowance	reasonable adjustments 'laptops don't grow on trees' (... why should we provide them?) – equipment resources technology } to create a "level playing field"

XX

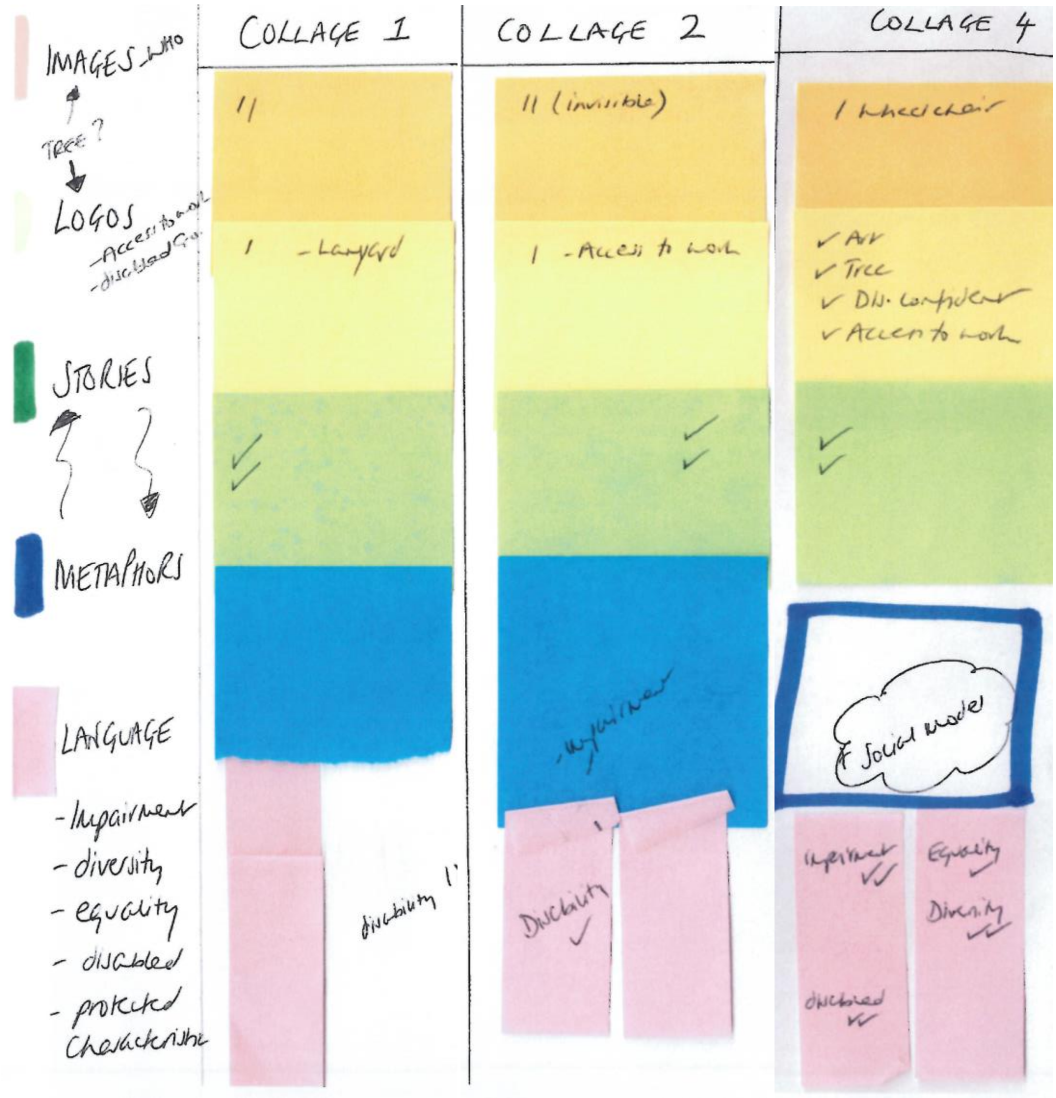
Real life experience of another person	When you've met 1 person with autism then you've met 1 person with autism - everyone's lived experience is different - discussion around reasonable adjustments people in the room have made:	- Students on field trips have access to a phone - - accessible room - giving handouts in advance "- it spoils the didactic path of the lecture I'm giving"
Personal life experience	"don't be afraid to explore the issues" "Notice - Check - Share"	Felt "freaked out" - I didn't know how to deal with a student with a visual impairment. - Sometimes the change required can be really subtle... so talk to individuals .. what do they want & need.

Metaphor	Let's be proactive	"We just went into the workshop and made a ramp ourselves" - paralysed student with an assistant

H: Outline Semi-structured interview questions

Topic area	**Suggested questions / prompts**
Definitions	Q. How do you define yourself? Q. What do the terms 'disablism' and 'ableism' mean to you?
Lived experience of people with an impairment	*Ask the interviewee, using the item they have brought with them, to talk about what being impaired means to them* Q. As a person with an impairment how would you describe your 'lived experience'?
Equality and Diversity training in Higher Education	Q. How would you describe the purpose of equality and diversity in Higher Education? Q. What equality and diversity training have you attended / participated in while working in this institution? Q. In your experience of attending / participating in equality and diversity training in Higher Education what are your reflections about the way in which people with an impairment are portrayed?
How people with an impairment are currently portrayed in equality and diversity training in HE	*Using the collages created to form a basis for discussion* Q. How do you feel about the way Higher Education Institutions are describing and portraying people with an impairment in their equality and diversity training? Q. How do these portrayals reflect your lived experience? Q. What alternative suggestions might you have for how learning and development teams can enhance the way they deliver equality and diversity training in Higher Education?
Future direction for equality and diversity training	Q. What involvement do you think people with an impairment should have in the design and delivery of equality and diversity training in Higher Education?
	Q. What additional reflections do you have that you think would be useful to end our conversation?

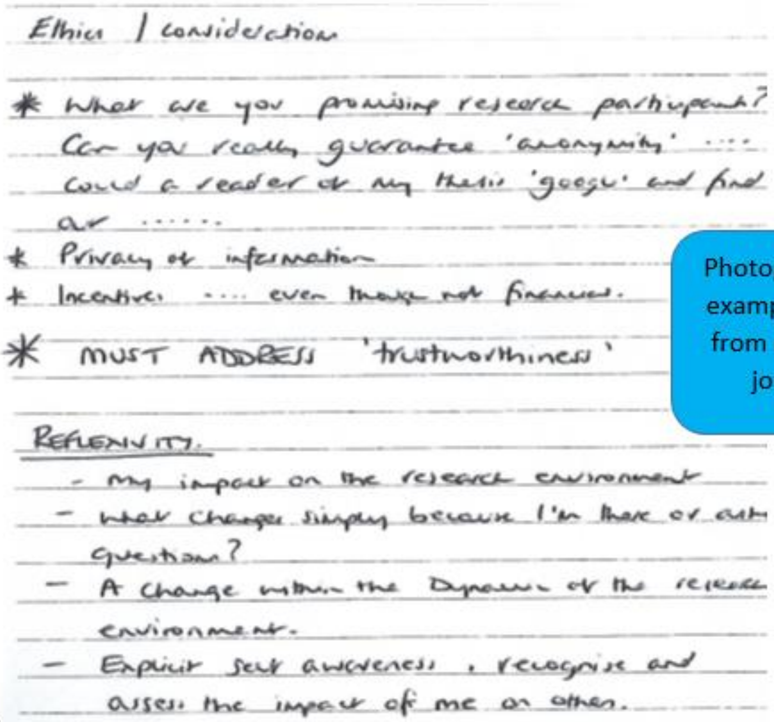
I: Coding sample



The image, above, is a photograph of a partial coding activity typical of the thematic data analysis approach described in section 5.4

J: Journal entries

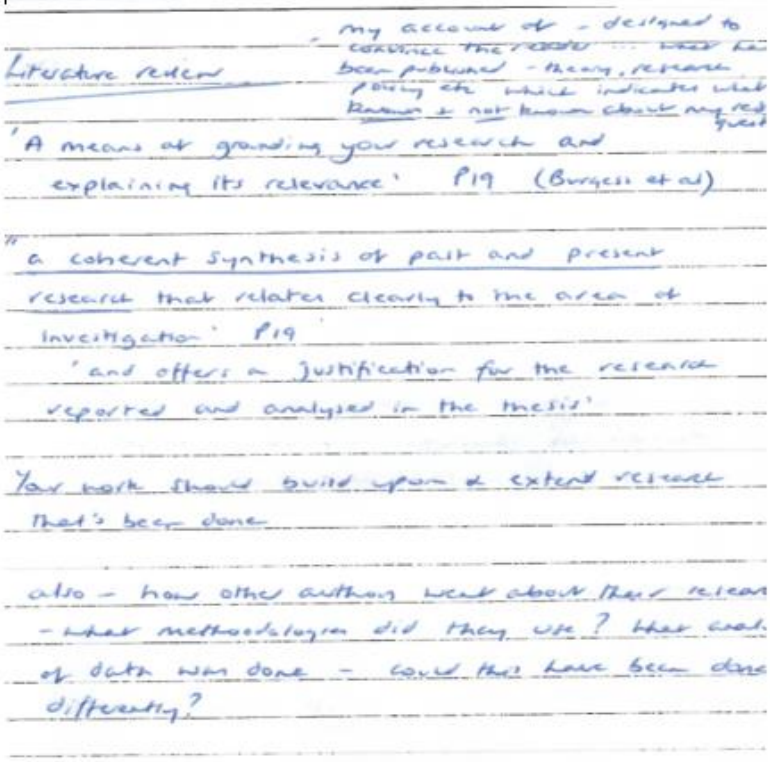
Photographs of example pages from research journal


Ethics / consideration

* What are you promising research participants?
Can you really guarantee 'anonymity' ....
Could a reader of my thesis 'google' and find
out ......
* Privacy of information
* Incentives .... even those not financial.

* MUST ADDRESS 'trustworthiness'

REFLEXIVITY.
- My impact on the research environment
- What changes simply because I'm there or ask
questions?
- A change within the Dynamics of the research
environment.
- Explicit self awareness, recognise and
assess the impact of me on others.


Literature review - my account of - designed to convince the reader ... what has been published - theory, research policy etc which indicates what known & not known about my res quest

'A means of grounding your research and
explaining its relevance' P19 (Burgess et al)

"a coherent synthesis of past and present
research that relates clearly to the area of
investigation' P19
'and offers a justification for the research
reported and analysed in the thesis'

Your work should build upon & extend research
that's been done

also - how other authors went about their research
- what methodologies did they use? What anal.
of data was done - could this have been done
differently?