

University of Ulster

Consultation on the Equality Impact Assessment on the University's Decision to close the Aquatic Facilities at Jordanstown

28 October 2005

Executive Summary

This Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out as a result of the University's decision in June 2004 to close its aquatic facilities at Jordanstown. The facilities include a main swimming pool, a diving pool and a hydrotherapy pool, which were used by a range of people including University staff and students, the local community and a number of external groups including some local schools, one swimming club and the local health trust. The University considered the decision to be an operational one, and therefore, although the impact of the decision on the various users was discussed, it was not considered necessary at the time to conduct an EQIA.

Subsequently, following an appeal to the University Visitor and the receipt of advice from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) the University willingly decided to conduct a full EQIA into the decision and established an EQIA Sub-group to carry it out.

In carrying out this EQIA the Sub-group has used the definition of differential and adverse impact which is included at paragraph 3.6 of the Equality Commission's **Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment:**

Differential impact suggests that a particular group has been affected differently by the policy (either favourably or unfavourably), while adverse impact is an indication that the effect is less favourable (ie negative) and is potentially unlawful.

The Sub-group has also considered the examples of key indicators of adverse impact provided in the guidance and concluded that the most relevant was in relation to "changing a policy which reduces benefits disproportionately for one group".

Based on the evidence it considered, the sub-group concluded that differential and adverse impact could only be construed in relation to age and disability

but this is consequential upon some affected people within these categories who have not been supported in finding alternative facilities, and the report includes suggestions regarding possible mitigating actions.

The Equality Unit is now publicly consulting on the EQIA. The consultation period ends on **23 December 2005**.

Section 1 - University of Ulster

- 1 The University of Ulster (UU) was established by Royal Charter in 1984 and operates across four campuses: Coleraine (including the Portrush Site), Jordanstown, Belfast and Magee.
- 2 The two governing bodies of the University are the Council and the Senate. The Council is responsible for the strategic direction of the University. The Senate is responsible for the academic affairs of the University.
- 3 The Vice-Chancellor is the Chief Accounting Officer of the University. (Professor Richard Barnett is currently the Acting Vice-Chancellor.) The Vice-Chancellor is supported by four Pro-Vice Chancellors who are appointed by Council. Seven Directors are responsible for the administrative functions of the University covering: Development and Alumni Relations; Finance; Human Resources; Information Services; Physical Resources; Corporate Planning and Governance; and Public Affairs.
- 4 The University is academically organised within five faculties:
 - Arts;
 - Business & Management;
 - Engineering;
 - Life & Health Sciences; and
 - Social Sciences.
- 5 The scale of academic provision makes UU the largest of the universities on the island of Ireland. The University provides a range of courses from sub-degree to doctoral level and provides study opportunities in a range of modes of attendance. The introduction of modular course structures, the design of a single credit framework and the trimester year, to include a summer semester, has extended the

learning opportunities for students. The development of e-learning opportunities has grown since the launch of Campus One in 2001.

The University Vision and Mission

6 The University's vision is 'To be a model of an outstanding regional University with a national and international reputation for quality'.

7 The University's mission derives from its Charter and its objectives are to:

- Preserve and advance knowledge and enrich social, cultural and sporting life through teaching, learning, research and knowledge transfer;
- Provide teaching of the highest quality and encourage learning that will meet the personal and occupational needs of society;
- Contribute to wealth creation and economic prosperity through teaching, research and technology transfer;
- Stimulate enterprise and creativity and promote awareness of the forces of global changes;
- Nurture the values of inclusive citizenship and respect for diversity.

Student Profile

8 The University's student population is currently in the region of 29,000 full-time and part-time students. Over 80% of UU undergraduate students come from Northern Ireland. The remaining undergraduate participation is made up of students from the Republic of Ireland, the rest of the United Kingdom and from over 70 other countries around the world. The University is consistently amongst the most popular universities in the United Kingdom in terms of applications for undergraduate places.

- 9 On the Jordanstown campus there are currently approximately 9000 full-time and 5400 part-time students.

Staff Profile

- 10 The University employs approximately 3700 staff, including academic, academic-related, technical, secretarial, clerical and manual and crafts staff. Staff are based on all of the University's campuses, with approximately 1700 employed on the Jordanstown campus.

Section 2 - Section 75 Obligations

- 11 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires the University of Ulster in carrying out its functions, relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- Between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - Between men and women generally;
 - Between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - Between persons with dependants and persons without.
- 12 In addition, and without prejudice to its obligation above, the University must also have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.
- 13 The University is fully committed to the fulfilment of its Section 75 obligations in all of its functions, including the objectives as a teaching, research and examining body within the provision of its Charter and Statutes. The University ensures that effective implementation of these obligations is supported with the necessary resources in terms of people, time and finance.

Equality Scheme

- 14 The ECNI approved the University's Equality Scheme in July 2002. The Scheme outlines the University's commitment to fulfil its Section 75 obligations.

Purpose of the EQIA

15 The Sub-group has carried out this Equality Impact Assessment to consider:

- Differential and adverse impact upon any of the 9 categories set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- Where adverse impact is identified, to assess measures which might mitigate the adverse impact; and
- The potential for alternative action, which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.

Section 3 - The Background To The Decision To Close The Facilities

The Background to the Decision to Close the Aquatic Facilities

16 The University periodically reviews its academic resource and estate. In 2003/04 this Review highlighted a number of significant operational issues associated with the aquatic facilities, including the swimming, diving and hydrotherapy pools. The Review revealed that the pools had effectively reached the end of their lifecycle and required substantial capital investment. The Review further revealed that there was a net deficit of approximately £250k annually between income and expenditure mainly due to low pool usage. As shown in Table 1 below, the actual costs of running the pool increased by 7.4% between 1999 and 2004, which constituted approximately one third of the annual Sport and Recreation budget.

Table 1 Actual recurrent costs associated with the aquatic facilities

	'99-2000	'00-01	'01-02	'02-03	'03-04
Direct Staff Costs	£104,856	£117,477	£111,283	£121,863	£133,812
Direct Variable Overheads	£152,446	£149,933	£153,822	£152,604	£155,908
Income	£8,125	£8,957	£11,780	£25,457	£21,862
Net Cost	£249,178	£258,453	£253,864	£249,010	£267,858

Note: These figures included only those costs and revenues which are directly attributable to that activity, ie those costs which can realistically be expected to be saved on the closure of the activity. Consequently there are no costs charged for Finance, Human Resources, depreciation etc.

The University estimated that significant expenditure was required by way of "long term maintenance" to bring the aquatic facilities up to an acceptable standard. This was estimated at approx £50k pa for 5 years. Consequently the level of net expenditure incurred over the last 5 years would increase annually by this amount.

- 17 The Sub-group received reports from various sources on the costs to refurbish/replace the plant for consideration.
- 18 As the data supplied to the Sub-group were historical by nature, the Sub-group then sought clarification from the Director of Physical Resources on the current estimated cost to refurbish/replace the aquatic facilities. This was confirmed by the Director of Physical Resources to be in the order of £4M to make the facilities fit for purpose and to meet Health and Safety and Disability Discrimination Act requirements.
- 19 The University aims to make efficient and effective use of public funds in fulfilling its responsibilities. In considering the immediate impact upon the core business of teaching and learning, and in recognising the planned development of an integrated Sports Strategy at the University, the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) (then the University's most senior management team) made recommendation to Council that the pools be closed (see paragraph 3.4 for further information on SPG). Council endorsed this recommendation in October 2004.

The Background to the Decision to Conduct an EQIA

- 20 The decision to close the facilities was subsequently challenged by interested parties claiming that the procedure had failed to take proper account of the impact upon users of the pools, and the requirements of Section 75. The University's view was that the decision was an operational decision. This view was challenged and in October 2004 an appeal was made to the University Visitor.
- 21 Following the Visitorial hearing the University consulted with the ECNI and was advised that it was the Commission's view that the University should screen the decision to close the pool facilities, in accordance

with its Section 75 obligations. In line with the University's Equality Scheme and with ECNI guidance the Equality Unit then carried out an 8-week public consultation on the screening exercise. Ten responses were received:

- Four responses from individuals;
- Two responses from the Save our Pool Committee;
- A response from Disability Action;
- A response from a physiotherapist with Homefirst Trust representing both her personal views and those of other individuals;
- A response from Homefirst Trust's physiotherapy service;
- A response from the Sunshine Hour Swimming Club; and
- A response from the ECNI.

22 In addition to this 38 letters were received by the Head of Sport and Recreation immediately following the announcement of the closure of the aquatic facilities. The Provost of Jordanstown & Belfast campus also conducted a consultation exercise, to which he received 112 responses:

- 49 responses from local residents;
- 46 responses from University staff;
- 7* responses from students;
- 5 responses from local schools; and
- 5 responses from other organisations.

* Including a petition from 65 international students.

23 As a result of these consultations the University decided to conduct a full EQIA into the decision to close the aquatic facilities. Accordingly an EQIA Sub-group was established to conduct the exercise. The Sub-group is chaired by Professor Norman Black, Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor, (Academic Development and Student Support).

- 24 The other members of the Sub-group are:
- Professor Jim Allen, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Communication and Institutional Development)
 - Professor Bill Clarke, Provost, Jordanstown and Belfast
 - Mr John Carruthers, Manager, UU Clinic
 - Dr Nigel Dobson, Head of Sport and Recreation
 - Mr Dermot Feenan, Lecturer, School of Law
 - Ms Sara Hunter, Head of Equality Policy and Practice
 - Dr Peter Shirlow, Senior Lecturer, School of Environmental Studies
 - Mr Mervyn Watley, Department of Physical Resources
- 25 The Group has also received support from Angela Getty (Research Associate) in the Equality Unit and Trish McFarland (Services Development Manager) in the Department of Sport and Recreation.
- 26 These people were selected because of their relevant professional experience. The Sub-group met on four occasions to consider available data and progress the EQIA. In addition the Sub-group offered consultees the opportunity to meet for the purposes of pre-consultation. As a result of this the Chair of the Sub-group, the Head of Sport and Recreation and the Head of the Equality Unit held two pre-consultation meetings with the Save Our Pool Committee and with Homefirst Community Trust.

The Aim of the Decision

- 27 In taking the decision to conduct an EQIA the University is concerned to comply fully with its Section 75 obligations and to ensure that the Review falls within the context of its public obligations to make efficient and effective use of public funds via the rationalisation of sporting facilities, taking into consideration its core business.

Responsibility for Implementing the Decision

- 28 The Strategic Planning Group was the primary forum in the University for considering strategic and operational matters at senior management level. The Council is responsible for the strategic direction of the University, including approval and oversight of its finances and all matters pertaining to resources, including human and physical resources and risk management.
- 29 Responsibility for sport and recreation facilities comes within the portfolio of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Communication and Institutional Development). The Strategic Planning Group made the decision in June 2004. It was ratified by the University Council at its first meeting following this in October 2004. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Communication and Institutional Development) implemented the decision.

Associated Policies

- 30 The overarching policies and objectives governing the operation of Sport and Recreation Services at the University are those which are generic to all areas of Student Support Services, in that strategically the services strive to achieve:
- the highest level of service and professionalism within its area of expertise;
 - flexibility in responding to the needs of staff, students, and where appropriate, external users;
 - the operation of an excellent 'value for money' service in all its areas and, in its commercial activities to operate at zero cost;
 - objectives that will complement the University's mission;
 - a high quality environment; and

- energy in articulating, developing and effecting new strategies and business opportunities.

31 As the closure decision was considered to be operational and was made with regard to the financial viability of all other sports facilities operated by the University, the policy associated with this decision is therefore stated as “the rationalisation of sports facilities and services to ensure efficient and effective use of available resources”.

The Main Stakeholders

32 Those who may have been affected by the decision to close the pools were:

- Existing Staff and Students of the University;
- The Sports Institute Northern Ireland;
- Local school users;
- Local residents who were members of the sports centre, and used the pool;
- A number of Homefirst Trust clients;
- A number of community groups; and
- Larne Swimming Club.

Relevant Legislation

33 In the operation of this policy the following legislation is relevant:

- The Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Orders 1976 and 1988;
- The Fair Employment and Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (as amended);
- The Disability Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Act 1995, including the Special Educational Needs and Disability Order 2005;
- The Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 (as amended);

- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998;
- Legislation Pertaining to the Rehabilitation of Offenders; and
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (NI) 2003.

Section 4 - Consideration Of Available Data And Research

Definition of Data

34 In conducting the EQIA the Sub-group considered several categories of data including qualitative, quantitative, research, anecdotal and miscellaneous. These data are attached as Appendix I. The extent and sources of each category are given in the following paragraphs.

Qualitative Data

35 These data form the most comprehensive set. This includes data collected as a result of consultation exercises and from other interested parties who were:

- directly affected by the closure e.g. students, local schools, individual disabled users and external organisations;
- representing others affected including a single petition of 65 signatures mainly from international students¹ and those responding on behalf of those with disabilities and external organisations, and;
- non-users of the facilities, mainly local residents.

36 The Sub-group engaged in substantial discussion and analysis to confirm the validity or otherwise of the qualitative data and concluded that it has broad confidence in its use in making the impact assessment.

¹ Of the 65 signatories 18 were **not** on 1-year masters' courses and therefore likely to have been at the University for any length of time **prior** to the closure of the facilities. The Sub-group questioned whether the petition had been signed by actual users or potential users. At the pre-consultation meeting the Save Our Pool committee representatives were unable to confirm how many had been users.

Quantitative Data

- 37 This category includes data on overall Sport Centre membership figures, swimming pool usage by gender and external organisation, hydrotherapy pool usage by organisation, overall usage of swimming pool, hydrotherapy pool and diving pool along with census data in relation to dependants, age, disability and community background.
- 38 The Sub-group is satisfied that these data were sufficiently robust to allow us to make judgements on impact.

Research Data

- 39 Two non-commissioned research reports form this data. Each is academic in nature, both are student dissertations and both relate only indirectly to the EQIA in that both consider marketing aspects of the aquatic facilities. Of these, the Market Research Report provides some evidence of pool usage. For example, of the 75 respondents to this Survey 40 were members of the Sports Centre. The survey also indicated that the two activities which students were more likely to participate in were swimming and fitness training, with approximately 10% male and 42% female participation in swimming. However, the actual pool usage figures for 2004 indicate that 54% of users were male and 46% female. Taking both into consideration the Sub-group concluded that there was no differential or adverse impact with regard to gender.

Anecdotal Data

- 40 In its response to the Consultation Exercise of the Screening Process, the Commission advised that anecdotal data should be considered if available. In relation to the quantitative data regarding students the Sub-group inferred that a number of students were either disabled or from black /minority ethnic communities.
- 41 The Sub-group have only limited confidence in using anecdotal data in making judgements in assessment.

Miscellaneous Data

- 42 The Sub-group collected information in relation to the Access Audit of facilities within the University including the pool and the surrounding areas. The data indicated that access for wheelchair users and others with mobility difficulties presented a challenge with respect to the swimming pool.
- 43 Data were also collected at the pre-consultation in order to clarify specific issues that had arisen as part of the previous submissions and during the EQIA to questions that the Sub-group raised in relation to written evidence.
- 44 In relation to the existing facilities these data were used partly to determine impact upon disabled users.

Section 5 – Assessment of Impacts

Assessment Based on Data and Information Available

45 The Sub-group noted that there is considerable alternative provision of all the aquatic facilities within the immediate area and that, while all users could be considered as affected by the closure, many have been able to find suitable alternative arrangements (see paragraph 6.1). Taking this into account and after consideration and analysis of the available data and specific research into the current provision in those interested groups, the Sub-group concluded that while some categories of user had been affected by the decision to close the aquatic facilities there is no evidence to suggest that all had been either differentially or adversely impacted.

46 There were no data to indicate differential or adverse impact in any of the following six categories:

- Political Opinion;
- Racial Groupings;
- Marital Status;
- Gender;
- Sexual Orientation; and
- People with dependents.

47 In respect of the three other categories the Sub-group made the following conclusions:

- a) With regard to Religious Belief; the data indicated a negative impact particularly against Protestant schools. However, the predominance of Protestant primary schools using the facilities is a reflection of the Protestant primary school provision within the Newtownabbey area. Taken along with census data for the area

this led the Sub-group to conclude that there is no adverse impact with this category.

b) In reference to the available data, the Sub-group acknowledged that there may have been a negative impact in the two categories of Age and Disability. This impact is a result of the possibility of those within the category not having been able to make alternative arrangements since they are dependant upon other responsible authorities to do so. In the case of the Age category a number of primary school children do not have swimming available as a consequence of cost, because of the Education and Library Board's budget policy. Similarly, some disabled users of the hydrotherapy pool have been unable to find or use convenient alternative arrangements; again, it would seem, as a result of cost.

48 The Sub-group has considered whether this means that the decision was adverse or differential. As such it also considered what actions it may be able to take to mitigate any resulting impact. These are discussed in Section 6.

49 It is the Sub-group's view that the decision to close the facilities was not unlawfully discriminatory. Furthermore should the aquatic facilities have remained open, the University would have been vulnerable to litigation under Parts III and IV of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. However the Sub-group recognises that the decision may have had adverse impact within some groups. Possible measures which might mitigate this adverse impact are considered in the next section of this report.

Section 6 - Consideration Of Measures Which Might Mitigate Any Adverse Impact, And Alternative Policies Which Might Better Achieve The Promotion Of Equality Of Opportunity

Alternative Provision

- 50 The Sub-group is aware that there are alternative facilities available locally both in relation to swimming/diving and to hydrotherapy facilities
- 51 With regard to swimming facilities either for the staff, students and members of the local community, or for the schools which used the pool, there are alternative facilities at:
- Antrim pool;
 - Carrickfergus Leisure Centre;
 - Grove Baths in North Belfast;
 - Larne pool;
 - Six Mile Water Leisure Centre in Ballyclare; and
 - Valley Leisure Centre.
- 52 Many students living in Belfast may also use the following pools:
- Andersonstown;
 - Avoniel;
 - Olympia;
 - QUB Physical Education Centre;
 - Robinson Centre;
 - Shankill; and
 - Whiterock.
- 53 The Sub-Group noted that a number of schools have made alternative arrangements and that Larne Swimming Club has reverted to using Larne swimming pool.

54 Representatives of the disabled users have indicated that they have made alternative provision for a number of their clients. There are hydrotherapy facilities available as follows:

- Musgrave Park Hospital in Belfast;
- The Northern Ireland Children's Hospice in Newtownabbey;
- Beechgrove School in Ballymena;
- Kilronan School in Magherafelt; and
- Muckamore Abbey in Antrim.

55 The Sub-group was also informed by representatives of Homefirst Community Trust that discussions are ongoing with regard to the possibility of providing such facilities at either Hill Croft or Roddenfield schools (the two schools which previously used the facilities). The Sub-group recognises that some of the alternative hydrotherapy facilities are perhaps perceived not to be in an ideal environment, but it also notes that whilst hydrotherapy is the preferred option for many disabled people's therapy, it is not the only therapy that is available or useful.

Action to be Taken by the University – Possible Options

56 In making the following mitigation suggestions, the Sub-group did not consider the impact upon its student experience in areas other than sports that would result if significant resources had to be diverted to provide mitigation i.e. if the existing aquatic facilities were to be re-opened. The Sub-group has however, deliberated and discussed the three following possible courses of action that would facilitate mitigation, to recommend that the University Council:

- a) Considers more active participation in planning the provision of alternative pool facilities. The Sub-group recognises the importance of discussions with the North Eastern Education and Library Board and Homefirst Trust, as responsible bodies and **advocates continued and increased liaison** in order to explore the possibility of greater collaboration and partnership in providing mitigation of the impact for the two cohorts of those who remain disadvantaged; both young people (schools users) and disabled users.

- b) Considers re-opening the facilities. Based on the recent work in relation to the Grove and Falls Road pools, this option would now cost in the region of £4M (not including ongoing staffing and running costs). Whilst the Sub-group acknowledges that this would have the most wide-ranging mitigation in terms of impact on the pool users it believes that the cost is prohibitive and outweighs the benefit. Furthermore if the University were to commit to this course of action it would have a detrimental impact on the future of other sports. The money would be sourced from an existing budget and would therefore have a disproportionate effect on the development of sport and sporting facilities. The Sub-group welcomes any suggestions particularly from those other authorities affected by the closure, with regard to opportunities for and assistance with funding.

c) Considers the possibility of providing some alternative to the hydrotherapy pool. The University is currently investigating the possibility of acquiring a sports recovery facility. Although priority use for this proposed facility would be afforded to SINI, the University could consider making it available to the Trust's clients. Clearly this would have a direct mitigation in relation to disabled people.

57 The Sub-group also recommends that the University review its mechanisms to ensure that consultation, monitoring and equality screening is conducted in accordance with its Equality Scheme.

Consultees are asked for their views on these options.

Section 7 - Consultation

58 In accordance with its Equality Scheme and the requirements of Section 75, The Equality Unit now wishes to consult on this EQIA. It is our intention that the consultation should be appropriately focused and that all those affected parties are given an opportunity to respond to the consultation. Accordingly it will consult by the following means:

- All those on the University's standard Section 75 consultee list will be notified of the exercise;
- All those who responded to the consultation exercise on the screening exercise will be notified;
- Notification of the consultation will be inserted in local newspapers;
- An all-staff and all-student email will be posted to advise of the consultation exercise;
- Notice of the consultation exercise will be posted on the Equality Unit's website;
- Representatives of the EQIA sub-group will try to meet with interested parties if appropriate; and
- The HEEC Consultative Panel will be notified of the consultation exercise.

59 The consultation period will start on Friday 28 October and will close on 23 December 2005. The consultation document and response form are available at www.ulster.quality/equality.ac.uk. If you require the consultation document in an alternative format please contact the Equality Unit on 028 990368137 or email Janine Gregory at j.gregory@ulster.ac.uk

60 Responses to the consultation exercise should be sent on the enclosed pro-forma to:

Ms Sara Hunter
Head of Equality Policy and Practice
University of Ulster
Shore Road
Newtownabbey
BT37 0QB

Or to sp.hunter@ulster.ac.uk by **23 December 2005**.

Appendix I

Quantitative data

Sport and Recreation Membership Report August 2004

Sport & Recreation Services

Membership Report

Membership Type	UUJ
	2003-2004
Student	2526
Community	2052
Staff	360
TOTAL	4938

Source: Sport and Recreation

Sport and Recreation Membership Report 1 September 2005

Sport & Recreation Services

Membership Report

Membership Type	UUJ
	2004-2005
Student	3782
Community	919
Staff	218
TOTAL	4919

Source: Sport and Recreation

Gender breakdown of pool use by number of swims (1 Sept 2003 – 31 Aug 2004)

Sport and Recreation Services			
Activity Analysis - Swimming			
Membership type	Male	Female	Total swims
Student	3890	2779	6669
Community	4892	4630	9522
Staff	1619	1544	3163
Total	10401 (54%)	8953 (46%)	19354 (100%)

Source: Income Analysis Report, Sport and Recreation

Staff Membership Breakdown

Comparison Table of EO details – Staff Sports Centre Members 2004-2005

EO Category	Variable	Male Percentage	Female Percentage	Percentage Total
Marital Status 2004	Married	30.13	25.00	55.13
Marital Status 2005	Married	37.20	19.51	56.71
Nationality 2004	United Kingdom	26.92	32.69	59.61
Nationality 2005	United Kingdom	34.15	25.00	59.15
Ethnic Origin 2004	Black and Ethnic Minorities	5.76	-	6.40
Ethnic Origin 2005	Black and Ethnic Minorities	-	-	-
Religious Belief 2004	Protestant	26.28	35.26	61.54
Religious Belief 2005	Protestant	46.34	28.66	75.00
Community Background 2004	Protestant	25.00	25.65	50.65
Community Background 2005	Protestant	34.15	17.68	51.83
Disabled 2004	Yes	-	-	-
Disabled 2005	Yes	-	-	-
Dependants 2004	Yes	17.95	17.95	35.90
Dependants 2005	Yes	37.86	14.02	51.88

Data values of <5% are represented by '-' to prevent the identification of individuals.

Note: All values (bar those for Disability and Dependants) are maximum values for each respective EO category.

Source: Equality Unit

Staff Membership Trends;

Marital status up 1.58%

Nationality United Kingdom down 0.46%

Ethnic origin – BEM down 1.52%

Religious Belief – Protestant up 13.46%
Community Background – Protestant up 1.18%
Disability – Disabled down 1.31%
Dependants – staff with dependants up 15.98% (new category on EO form)

These figures have been derived from the following 4 tables:

EO Details for Male Staff Sports Centre Members 2004

EO Category	Variable	Total and (%) male staff n= 86	% Total staff n=156
Marital Status	Cohabiting	-	-
	Divorced	-	-
	Separated	-	-
	Married	54.65	30.13
	Single	15.12	8.33
	Widowed	-	-
	Missing data	13.95	7.69
	Unknown	8.14	4.49
Nationality	United Kingdom	48.84	26.92
	Ireland	12.79	7.05
	Northern Ireland	18.60	10.26
	China	-	-
	India	-	-
	New Zealand	-	-
	France	-	-
	Ukraine	-	-
	Unknown	10.47	5.77
Ethnic Origin	Asian/British	-	-
	Chinese	-	-
	Other Asian	-	-
	Other Ethnic	-	-
	White	80.23	44.23
	Unknown	9.30	5.13
Religious Belief	Christian	-	-
	Protestant	47.67	26.28
	Catholic	5.81	-
	Other	-	-
	Unknown	8.14	-
Community Background	Catholic	20.93	11.54
	Other	9.3	5.13
	Protestant	45.34	25.00
	Unknown	24.24	13.46
	Missing Data	33.72	18.59
Disabled	Y	-	-
	N	88.37	48.72
	Missing Data	-	-
	Unknown	8.14	-
Dependants	Y	32.56	17.95
	N	25.58	14.10
	Missing Data	33.72	18.59
	Unknown	8.14	-

Data values of <5% are represented by '-' to prevent the identification of individuals.

Source: Equality Unit

EO Details for Male Staff Sports Centre Members 2005

EO Category	Variable	Total and (%) male staff, n=103	% Total staff n=164
Marital Status	Cohabiting	-	-
	Divorced	-	-
	Separated	-	-
	Married	59.22	37.20
	Single	23.30	14.63
	Missing data	5.83	-
	Unknown	-	-
Nationality	United Kingdom	54.37	34.15
	Ireland	17.48	10.98
	Northern Ireland	15.53	9.76
	China	-	-
	Canada	-	-
	Germany	-	-
	Italy	-	-
	Sri Lanka	-	-
	Missing data	-	-
	Venezuela	-	-
	Unknown	-	-
Ethnic Origin	Chinese	-	-
	Other Asian	-	-
	Other Ethnic	-	-
	Other Mixed	-	-
	White	88.35	55.49
	Unknown	-	-
	Missing Data	-	-
Religious Belief	Christian	-	-
	Protestant	73.79	46.34
	Catholic	-	-
	Other	-	-
	Buddhist	-	-
	Unknown	-	-
Missing Data	16.50	10.37	
Community Background	Catholic	27.18	17.07
	Other	5.82	-
	Protestant	54.37	34.15
	Unknown	11.65	7.32
	Missing data	-	-
Disabled	Y	-	-
	N	95.15	59.76
	Missing Data	-	-
	Unknown	-	-
Dependants	Y	37.86	37.86
	N	42.72	42.72
	Missing Data	16.50	16.50
	Unknown	-	-

Data values of <5% are represented by '-' to prevent the identification of individuals.

Source: Equality Unit

EO Details for Female Staff Sports Centre Members 2004

EO Category	Variable	Total and (%) female staff n=70	% Total staff n=156
Marital Status	Cohabiting	-	-
	Divorced	-	-
	Separated	-	-
	Married	55.71	25.00
	Single	22.86	10.26
	Widowed	-	-
	Missing data	-	-
	Unknown	10.00	-
Nationality	United Kingdom	72.86	32.69
	Ireland	11.43	5.13
	Northern Ireland	-	-
	Ukraine	-	-
	Australia	-	-
	Unknown	8.57	-
Ethnic Origin	Asian/British	1.43	0.64
	White	88.57	39.74
	Unknown	10.00	4.49
Religious Belief	Protestant	78.57	35.26
	Muslim	-	-
	Unknown	10.00	-
	Missing Data	10.00	-
Community Background	Catholic	25.72	11.54
	Other	-	-
	Protestant	57.14	25.65
	Unknown	12.86	5.77
Disabled	Y	-	-
	N	87.14	39.10
	Missing Data	-	-
	Unknown	10.00	-
Dependants	Y	40.00	17.95
	N	40.00	17.95
	Missing Data	10.00	-
	Unknown	10.00	-

Data values of <5% are represented by '-' to prevent the identification of individuals.

Source: Equality Unit

EO Details for Female Staff Sports Centre Members 2005

EO Category	Variable	Total and (%) female staff n=61	% Total staff n=164
Marital Status	Cohabiting	-	-
	Divorced	-	-
	Separated	-	-
	Married	52.46	19.51
	Single	27.87	10.37
	Widowed	-	-
	Missing data	-	-
	Unknown	6.56	-
Nationality	United Kingdom	67.21	25.00
	Ireland	24.59	9.15
	Northern Ireland	-	-
	Germany	-	-
	Unknown	-	-
Ethnic Origin	White	93.44	34.76
	Unknown	-	-
	Missing Data	-	-
Religious Belief	Protestant	77.05	28.66
	Catholic	-	-
	Christian	-	-
	Unknown	-	-
	Missing Data	11.48	-
Community Background	Catholic	36.07	13.42
	Other	26.56	-
	Protestant	47.54	17.68
	Unknown	8.2	-
	Missing Data	-	-
Disabled	N	95.08	35.37
	Missing Data	-	0.61
	Unknown	-	1.22
Dependants	Y	37.70	14.02
	N	52.46	19.51
	Missing Data	6.56	-
	Unknown	-	-

Data values of <5% are represented by '-' to prevent the identification of individuals.

Source: Equality Unit

Trends:

Family membership has declined by 45%, corresponding 53% increase in single membership for **male** staff between 2004 and 2005.

Family membership has declined by 41%, no real change (4% decrease) in single membership for **female** staff between 2004 and 2005.

Overall, male membership increased 20%, female membership decreased 13% between 2004 and 2005. This may not be directly attributable to the pool closure.

Student Membership Breakdown 2004

Type of membership	Gender		BEM (anecdotal)		Disabled (anecdotal)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Student	935	770	35*	50*	-	-

Data values of corresponding with <5% are represented by '-' to prevent the identification of individuals.

Note: Totals do not match data provided for Membership Report 2003/04 due to differences in how and when the data has been derived from a live database. The Membership Report demonstrates a snapshot of the membership on one day in August 2004, whereas the above Student Membership Breakdown data demonstrates membership over the period 31 August 2003 to 1 September 2004.

Data for BEM and Disability have been deduced using surnames and input from Student Support staff (cross-referencing). This information should be considered to be **anecdotal**.

Note:* 30 male BEM considered to be of Chinese origin. Of these, all were born before 1985.

**48 of Female BEM considered to be of Chinese origin. Of these, all were born before 1983.

Source: Sport and Recreation/Equality Unit

Swimming Pool use by External Organisations:

North Eastern Education & Library Board - Swimming Pool Programme

	Approx number of pupils per session 2003/04	Number of ½ hour sessions per week Sept 2003 - June 2004	Approx weekly attendance*	Approx number of swims p.a. 2003/04**
Abbots Cross Primary School	28	2	56	1904
Ballyclare High School***	44	2	88	2376
Greenisland Primary School	28	2	56	2240
Jordanstown Schools	9	3	27	1080
Rosstulla School	15	2	30	1200
Silverstream Primary School	20	1	20	800
St James Primary School	19	1	19	760
Thornfield House School	16	2	32	1280
Whiteabbey Primary School	25	2	50	2000
Whitehouse Primary School	30	1	30	1200
Total	234	17 (8½ hours)	408	16320

* Extrapolated data, using data provided for approx number of pupils per session (year unknown).

** Extrapolated data. Based on school programme of 34 weeks per annum using data provided for approx number of pupils per session (year unknown)

***Based on a school programme of 27 weeks.

Source: Sport and Recreation

Note: Schools using Jordanstown pools were determined via allocation by NEELB, not University.

Our figure exceeds NEELB figure of 12,138 for estimated attendance (Oct 2003). Our figure does not include data for special schools.

These numbers of children affected by school closure have been quoted in correspondence as follows:

Whitehouse School – 240 pupils p.a.

Silverstream – 180 pupils p.a.

Ballyclare High School – 192 pupils p.a. (4 classes each comprising 24)

Thornfield House School – 240 pupils p.a.

Other users

	Number of ½ hour sessions per week Sept 2003 -June 2004
Belfast High School (30wks p.a.)	6
Larne Swimming Club	4
MENCAP	2

Note:

Belfast High School Average numbers pupils per session = 40

MENCAP (Sunshine Hour Swimming Club) = 30 people per week

Source: Sport and Recreation

Larne Swimming club Age breakdown (SOP):

143 members with 130 of them under 18 years of age - of whom around 33 are between 5 and 11 years.

Hydrotherapy Pool Bookings/Users :

	Mean number of pupils per session 2003/04	Number of 1 hour sessions per week Sept 2003 - June 2004	Approx weekly attendance	Additional user information
Hillcroft Special School	3	1	3	134 users
Roddens Vale School	3	1	3	
Cedar Lodge	4	1	4	
United Hospitals	5	4	20	10-15 children per week
Homefirst Community Trust	5	8	40	90 disabled children, 80 disabled adults
Sense NI Education Centre	4	2	8	17 users
Total	24	17hrs	78	

Source: Sport and Recreation

Usage of Aquatic Facilities:

Students and staff –

Swimming Pool Academic use – 5 hrs per week term time only

Hydrotherapy pool academic – 5 hrs per week

Recreational swimming – 36 hrs per week

Schools programme – NEELB – 8 hrs per week

External groups includes Belfast High School – 6 hrs per week

Student clubs – 4 hrs per week

SINI – 4-5 hrs diving pool only

Swimming classes – 6 hrs per week

Hydrotherapy

United Hospitals – 4 hrs per week

Homefirst – 6 hrs per week

Hillcroft 1 hr per week

Roddens Vale 1 hr per week

Cedar lodge – 1 hr per week

Reports on Swimming Pool Refurbishment

Report by Cogan and Shakleton, consulting Engineers, on Building Services, Mechanical, electrical and filtration for main pool, diving pool and physiotherapy pool, 23 January 1998, Cost of **refurbishment** = £1m

Germac Filtration Services Ltd, Swimming pool & water treatment engineers, Report on **upgrading** the plant, 5 June 2002 = £50k

Census Data

Data has been extracted from the Northern Ireland Census 2001 in relation to Northern Ireland, NEELB and Newtownabbey, for comparison.

Population:

Usually Resident Population:

Usually resident population of Northern Ireland = 1,685,267

Usually resident population NEELB = 394,384

Usually resident population of Newtownabbey = 79,995

Source: N.I Census 2001 (KS01)

Population aged 5-17:

19.95% (337,053) N.I. population (1,685,267) is aged 5 to 17
(26.79% or 451,483 is aged 0 to 17)

19.06% (75,170) NEELB (394,384) is aged 5 to 17
(25.81% or 101,791 NEELB is aged 0 to 17)

18.06% (14,447) Newtownabbey (79,995) is aged 5 to 17
(24.44% or 19,550 Newtownabbey is aged 0 to 17)
Source: N.I. Census 2001 (KSO2).

16,602 (20.75%) Newtownabbey population is aged 3-17
Source: Extrapolated from Table S306

Parents aged 16 to 74 with dependent children:

All parents aged 16 to 74 with dependent children in NI = 398,150

All parents aged 16 to 74 with dependent children in NEELB= 94,185

All parents aged 16 to 74 with dependent children in Newtownabbey = 18,678

Note: (Dependent child is a person in a household aged 0 to 15 (whether or not in a family) or a person aged 16 – 18 who is a full-time student in a family with parent(s).

Source: N.I Census 2001, Table CAS031

Households with Dependent Children:

36.47% (228,564) NI households include dependent children

36.01% (53,164) NEELB households include dependent children

34% (10,643) Newtownabbey households include dependent children

Source: N.I. Census 2001, Table KS21

All adults (16 to pensionable age) in households in NI with dependents = 466,544
All adults (16 to pensionable age) in households in NEELB with dependents = 108,457
All adults (16 to pensionable age) in households in Newtownabbey with dependents = 21,201
Note: (Dependent child is a person in a household aged 0 to 15 (whether or not in a family) or a person aged 16 – 18 who is a full-time student in a family with parent(s).
Note: Pensionable age at the time of the Census (29 April 2001) was 65 for men and 60 for women.
Source: N.I Census 2001, Table CAS014

Limiting long-term illness

41.31 (258,897) NI households include one or more persons with a limiting long-term illness
37.87% (55,910) NEELB households include one or more persons with a limiting long-term illness
37.58% (11,763) Newtownabbey households include one or more persons with a limiting long-term illness
Source: N.I. Census 2001, Table KS21

Persons with a limiting long-term illness by age bands:

All NI persons with a limiting long-term illness = 343,107
All NI persons aged 0-15 with a limiting long-term illness = 22,092
All NI persons aged 16 to pensionable age with a limiting long-term illness = 175,899
All NI persons pensionable age and over with a limiting long-term illness = 145,116

All NEELB persons with a limiting long-term illness = 73,522
All NEELB persons aged 0-15 with a limiting long-term illness = 4,374
All NEELB persons aged 16 to pensionable age with a limiting long-term illness = 36,969
All NEELB persons pensionable age and over with a limiting long-term illness = 32,179

All Newtownabbey persons with a limiting long-term illness = 15,306
All Newtownabbey persons aged 0-15 with a limiting long-term illness = 854
All Newtownabbey persons aged 16 to pensionable age with a limiting long-term illness = 7,368
All Newtownabbey persons pensionable age and over with a limiting long-term illness = 7,084
Source: N.I. Census 2001, Table CAS319

Ethnic Group:

99.15% usually resident population of Northern Ireland is 'white' (14,325 N.I resident population = black and ethnic minority groups)

99.27% NEELB are 'white' (2879 residents = black and ethnic minority groups)

99.01% Newtownabbey is 'white' (792 residents = black and ethnic minority groups)

Source: N.I Census 2001, Table KS06

Community Background:

43.76% (737,473) N.I. = Catholic

53.13% (895,382) N.I. = Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)

0.39% (6,572) N.I. = Other religions and philosophies

2.72% (45,839) N.I. = None

29.54 (116,501) NEELB = Catholic

66.97% (264,119) NEELB = Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)

0.34 (1,341) NEELB = Other religions and philosophies

3.16 (12,462) NEELB = None

19.36% (15,489) Newtownabbey = Catholic

76.21% (60962) Newtownabbey = Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)

0.45% = Other religions and philosophies

3.98% = None

Source: N.I. Census 2001, Table S306/KS07b

Community Background for Newtownabbey Dependents:

16,602 (20.75%) Newtownabbey population is aged 3-17.

Of these:

22.7% (3771) = Catholic

69.8% (11,588) = Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related)

0.3% = Other religions and philosophies

7.2% = None

Source: N.I. Census 2001, Table S306

Qualitative Data

Responses from Known Pool Users

i.e. respondent has indicated that they are/were regular pool users. This category includes responses from the NEELB, Heads of local schools, United Hospitals, Homefirst Community Trust etc from each consultation opportunity. As such, some organisations/people may have responded more than once, in some cases using identical/similar text. Where this has occurred, identical comments have been counted once only. This table represents a summary of the nature/context of the comments made in relation to the S75 categories; with similar comments grouped together. Unique comments are also identified the Community/Good Relations section of the table.

S75 Category	Nature/context of comment	Total Number
Religious Belief	It is difficult to assume they (other venues) would have the same neutrality in terms of location	1
Total number of comments = 1		
Racial Group	As a foreign student will have nowhere to go in my leisure time. There is a large number of international students in same situation as me.	1
	Chinese students were among the most frequent users of the pool	1
Total number of comments = 2		
Age	Will impact on school children	29
	Will inconvenience school's PE Staff	1
	Will impact on youth groups	1
	Will impact on adults/staff	9
	Will impact on older people	2
	Age groups will be affected/ Affects all sorts of people from young to old	2
	Disadvantage students	8

Total number of comments = 52		
Disability	I am disabled/have a health condition and will be affected	5
	I am disabled. The closures will have a deleterious effect on my condition	1
	I am disabled. The closures have had a deleterious effect on my condition	1
	Groups of disabled people (disability groups) will be affected	10
	Trainee physiotherapists will no longer receive training in this invaluable skill	1
	Physiotherapists will be affected	1
	A much needed resource for rehabilitation	3
	Hospital patients using hydrotherapy pool will be affected	2
	Has had significant adverse impact on hospital patients who previously used hydrotherapy pool	2
	Detrimental effect on people with health/medical conditions/special needs	1
	Will have the greatest impact on those who are weakest and most vulnerable	1
	Swimming is possible for nearly all medical conditions and is a valuable asset/an enormous benefit	1
A swimming pool is often the only sporting facility that some disabled people can use	3	
Total number of comments = 32		
Dependants	My children/family will be affected	19
	My family and I only use the pool facilities (so will not be/did not renewing/renew membership)	3
	University has taken away the only means of exercise that a whole family can do together/swimming is a family activity	2
	Children deprived of school swimming lessons	5
Total number of comments = 29		
Multiple	Disabled children will be affected	3
	Disabled children at Special Schools will be affected	6
	Disabled adults/staff will be affected	3
	Disabled students will be affected	1
	Disabled pupils will not have access to hydrotherapy	4
	Disabled pupils have not had access to hydrotherapy –detrimental effect	1
Total number of comments = 18		
The Community	Disadvantage wider/local community/local residents	9
	Affect relationships between schools and the university in the long-term	1
	Deny public a healthy lifestyle of swimming	1

Removes vital facility/resource from the wider/local community	6
It is a facility provided for the good of the community it serves	1
Will be sadly missed/cause great suffering by/to all the groups who used it	2
With the university supposing to have strong links with the local community, Its (the pools) closure will have a strong negative effect	1
The provision of a local pool helps to integrate the University in to the local community and will help to negate the ill feeling caused by the high volumes of traffic generated by the University	1
Pool is a great asset to the University and to the community it serves	3
It is an university ambassador to the local community	1
Given that the university has reach out to the local community as part of its mission, this would appear to be contrary to this ethos	1
Its standing within the community (and its relationship with those who live in close proximity) is also damaged by this course of action).	1
It is the Board's contention that the pools are not just a University facility but have, over the years, become a community facility	1
Total number of comments = 29	

Non-users

i.e. respondent has not indicated that they are/were regular pool users.

S75 Category	Nature/context of comment	Total Number
Racial Group	International students were disappointed on arrival when discovered pools were closed	1
	Overseas students have no transport to travel to other pools	1
	It withdraws an important on campus recreation facility; international students will be hit particularly hard	1
	UU will not be able to attract foreign students	1
Total number of comments = 4		
Age	Will affect competitive and non-competitive swimming from the (swimming) club	1
	Will impact on school children	5
	Will impact on adults/staff	6
	Disadvantage students	6
Total number of comments = 18		
Disability	Groups of disabled people will be affected	1
	Many disabilities are hidden disabilities, so how does the university know how many disabled users are affected?	1
	The cascade effect has meant we have had to scale back some of our sessions with disabled people	1
Total number of comments = 3		
Dependants	My children/family will be affected	2
	Pool served to bring families together	1
Total number of comments = 3		
Multiple	My disabled child will be affected	1
	Disabled children at Special Schools will be affected	1
	Disabled children at Special Schools have been affected	1
	My disabled son who is a student will be affected	1
Total number of comments = 4		

The Community	Disadvantage wider/local community	5
	Disadvantage Co. Antrim residents	2
	Would be vandalism to deliberately destroy a pool that is well above average standards in a community not well blessed by this kind of facility	1
	Decision sends message to wider community about who and what are valued in sport and recreation	1
	Brings such joy and happiness to a wide range of people	1
	The local community has been very tolerant to the behaviour to the students which at times leaves much to be desired. The university should reciprocate by granting the local community and schools the opportunity of using the pool facilities.	1
Total number of comments = 11		

On behalf of users

i.e. respondent has indicated that they writing on behalf of pool users. This category includes a petition from International Students, responses from representatives of disabled users (and potential users) of the hydrotherapy pool (clients of Homefirst Community Trust), the Save our Pool Committee, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy and the Chief Executive of the NEELB.

S75 Category	Nature/context of comment	Total Number
Religious Belief	The neutral environment of the pool has been a major factor in people choosing to swim there	1
Total number of comments = 1		
Racial Group	The 65 signatures submitted by overseas students indicate the adverse impact in terms of racial group	1
	Beneficiaries were overseas students	1
Total number of comments = 2		
Age	Will impact on school children	2
	Will impact on adults/staff	1
	Disadvantage students (under 25s)	1
Total number of comments = 4		
Disability	I use the hydrotherapy pool for physiotherapy and will be affected	2
	Groups of disabled people will be affected	1
	It is the society's view that closure of the hydrotherapy pool Will have a detrimental effect on physiotherapy services provided to patients in the Larne, Carrick and Newtownabbey areas	1
	Will have a detrimental/significant adverse impact on physiotherapy services provided to the disabled	1
	Seems to fly in the face of the wishes and rights of disabled people	1
	Significant adverse impact on clients who previously used hydrotherapy pool	1
	Discriminates against/ Will impact disproportionately on less-able/disabled members of the wider community	2
	Would be denying those who rely on its therapeutic benefits, namely those with mental and physical disabilities	1
	Will deny those most in need/who are already severely disadvantaged,	1
Swimming is possible for nearly all medical conditions and is a valuable asset/an enormous benefit	3	

Total number of comments = 14		
Multiple	Will have significant impact on my disabled child who uses the hydrotherapy/pool	15
	Will have significant impact on disabled sibling	3
	Vital facility for disabled children	1
	Would hope the matter could be resolved in such a way that our (disabled) tenants will not be upset and taken out of their routine	1
	Will have significant impact on my disabled child who was on a waiting list to use the hydrotherapy/pool	2
	Will have significant impact on my disabled client who was on a waiting list to use the hydrotherapy/pool	1
	Will have significant impact on my disabled associate who was on a waiting list to use the hydrotherapy/pool	3
	Will have significant impact on my disabled associate who used the hydrotherapy/pool	1
	Vital facility/source of therapy for the disabled/injured adults	2
	Vulnerable adults are losing one of their most valuable facilities	1
	Disabled children will be severely disadvantaged in terms of the quality of (physiotherapy) treatment they receive	3
Disabled adults will be severely disadvantaged in terms of the quality of (physiotherapy) treatment they receive	2	
Total number of comments = 35		
The Community	Unique facility will be lost to whole community	6
	Over the years the swimming pool has become an important community facility	1
	When the pool was built in the 1970s it was funded on the understanding that it would provide healthy exercise, not only for staff and students, but also for the greater community.	1
Total number of comments = 8		

Research Data

The Sports Centre at Jordanstown Campus, Market Research Report (40 members, 35 non-members UG students) compiled 04/12/98

Summary of main conclusions;

- There is a low proportion of female members compared to male members
- The main area of concern highlighted by the survey was the quality of the changing facilities
- The two most popular sports were swimming and fitness training, (swimming = approx 10% male participation, 42% female)
- The main body of sports centre members are students
- 50% of members live outside a 5-mile radius of the centre, therefore it is probable that the sports centre at Jordanstown is not the centre closest to them. Nevertheless, 35% still travel specifically to use the centre.
- The survey has indicated that the sports centres policy of letting members use the swimming pool without administering a usage charge should be re-evaluated as this accounts for a high percentage of the throughput of the sports centre. The survey also indicates that it would be feasible to increase the membership fees if the funding generated could be used to improve the facilities.

MSc Dissertation – Developing a Marketing Strategy for the Department of Sport and Recreation at the University of Ulster, Jordanstown – 1998, Trish McFarland (1111 users and non-users);

- User respondents 57% female, 42% male
- User respondents 71% held student membership
- 75% user respondents aged 18-25
- 41% users used sports centre up to 3 times a week
- 58% users agreed facilities were very good (88% satisfied with variety of activities offered)
- 48% users agreed changing rooms well maintained
- 53 non-users = female, 47% = male
- 35% non-users do not use the sports centre as facilities did not suit their needs
- Sports centre management is not satisfied with the standard of service provision in terms of the physical evidence and it is striving continually to improve the facility image by refurbishing facilities and introducing new developments....Removing the 1970's functional appearance of the centre and converting it into a user friendly environment will take considerable time and money,

UU SU Strategic Review of Student Sport (2002):

- The swimming pool is in major need of maintenance and overhaul and without funding may fail to meet health and safety standards.
- From CVCP Survey (174 institutions) - only 25% of institutions had swimming pools
- The indoor pool requires major investment ahead of the 50m pool being constructed

Miscellaneous Data - Access Audit

Swimming Pool access for wheelchair users and users with mobility difficulties was extremely difficult. For those users who couldn't use the stairs access was gained via the lift from the service street to Dining Room C. This proved very unsatisfactory as the lift was constantly breaking down. For a period of approximately six months whilst the lift was being upgraded there was no other way for disabled users to access the pool. During this period Sports Centre staff carried some disabled users up and down two flights of stairs in order to facilitate their access to the pool.

Until the footbaths were removed from the poolside entrance to the changing rooms, access to pool side was time consuming and very inconvenient for disabled users. Access was totally dependent on Sports Centre Staff coming off poolside whilst supervising the pool, to give access via pool reception.

Due to the nature of the pool (1m at either end) and the fact that access was via steps that were cut into the sides of the pool - disabled access was extremely difficult and was virtually impossible in some cases. Access to the water was only possible if sports centre staff assisted.

Staff from Physical Resources, Student Support and Sport and Recreation Services investigated the possibility of provided a hoist on poolside to assist disabled users gaining access to the pool. A number of companies were consulted and the following issues arose with the hoists that were on the market at that time:

- The pool surround was crumbling, physical recourses advised that it was not possible to install a load bearing hoist that had to be drilled into the pool surround
- There were no hoists on the market at that time that could have been installed elsewhere in the pool.
- The pool ceiling was so high that it would have been impossible and impractical to have installed a hoist that could attach to the ceiling.

It became obvious that we required a custom built hoist to facilitate our needs – following a number of meetings with a local engineering company it was agreed that this was not possible.

However, as the design and shape of the room was conducive, Homefirst Community Trust donated a hoist for use by hydrotherapy patients using the hydrotherapy pool.

Source: Sport and Recreation.