

Single Equality Scheme – 2009 - 2011

1. Introduction

The College is subject to legislation to promote disability, gender and race equality and we have to comply with legal duties to tackle discrimination and harassment and to promote equality and diversity and good relations in everything we do (see Appendix 1).

We want to go beyond the general and specific duties of the disability, gender and race equality legislation that currently exists and promote equality and diversity in all areas of the College.

This single equality scheme contains commitment to actions in all of these areas and these will be the focus of our development over the next three years.

2. Our commitment and objectives

The College celebrates and values the diversity brought to its workforce and learner population by individuals and believes that the College will benefit from employing a diverse workforce, thus allowing it to meet the needs of a diverse learner population within a diverse society. The College will treat all employees and learners with respect and dignity and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from harassment and victimisation.

To this end our objectives will be that we will:-

- promote awareness of equality and diversity throughout the College and in our community
- provide appropriate access for disabled people in the College
- seek not only to eliminate discrimination, but also to create a working and learning environment based on good relationships between people regardless of gender, disability, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious belief, marital status, family responsibility and trade union activity
- create a culture that is supportive of disabled people and those who become disabled during their employment or course of study
- remove perceived barriers to entry to all curriculum areas, based on discrimination
- create a culture that is supportive of transgender issues and seek to eliminate harassment and promote equality of opportunity for staff and students who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender therapy
- provide continuous training and development for employees and learners to enhance awareness and promote equality and diversity
- seek to eliminate bullying/harassment and take action to address reported incidents
- embed equality and diversity in the curriculum
- ensure that training and work placement providers are committed to equality and diversity and adhere to our requirements

3. Consultation

Consultation has taken place when developing the College Single Equality Scheme. This consultation will continue in order to ensure the effectiveness of the Single Equality Scheme.

In addition, the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group has been set up to provide continuous feedback from external stakeholders on the effectiveness of equality and diversity in the College.

4. Impact assessment

The impact of our policies and procedures on equality and diversity will be assessed by:-

- identifying existing policies and procedures and setting a timetable for monitoring and assessing the impact of these over the period of the scheme
- analysing feedback from the annual learner survey
- analysing feedback from the annual staff survey
- undertaking staff and learner focus groups as appropriate to provide more detailed feedback such as, learner recruitment and admissions, learner progression/achievement, staff recruitment and development and other issues arising from the survey results

5. Gathering and using information

Quantitative and qualitative data will be gathered to monitor the effect of College policies and practices on equality and diversity and whether the action plan is delivering greater equality for employees and learners.

Statistical data will be collected on:-

- Staff recruitment, retention and training/development
- Student recruitment, retention and achievement

The Equality and Diversity Team will be set up to consider the monitoring information and the actions required to address the identified gaps.

The Team will be chaired by the Equality & Diversity Manager and will meet at least termly.

The monitoring data and action plans will be considered by the Senior Leadership and Management Team (SLMT) and the Corporation Board's Personnel Committee at least annually.

The annual monitoring statistics and action plans will be made available and published for staff and learners.

6. Action Plan

The Action Plan detailing the steps the College will take to meet its objectives and fulfil its general and specific legal responsibilities over the next three years is contained in the Appendix 2.

Equality and diversity actions needed to address the overall Equality and Diversity Scheme Action Plan will be undertaken in Centre/Department SARs and reflected in Equality and Diversity Impact measures (EDIMS).

7. Implementing the Scheme

The Director of HR & Projects with the Equality and Diversity Manager, will be responsible for ensuring the implementation of:-

- the action plan
- the arrangements for gathering and using information as detailed in Section 5
- the consultation process

8. Annual reporting

Annually a report will be communicated to staff and learners and made available to the general public, containing a summary of:-

- progress against the action plans
- the monitoring information gathered
- actions taken as a result of gathering information and consultation

9. Publishing the Scheme

To the public

- Our commitment to equality and diversity will be highlighted in our prospectus, annual report, annual financial statement and the Single Equality Scheme will be published on the College web site

To students

- All learners will have access to a summary of the Scheme. The Scheme and policies will be on display in the College and on the web site
- The induction programme for learners will highlight the College's commitment to equality and diversity, the action to be taken by students who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against such perpetrators of discrimination
- Tutors will reinforce this information during tutorials or work-based monitoring visits
- Monitoring data will be available on the Equality and Diversity portal

To work placement providers

- All work placement providers will receive a summary of their responsibilities under the scheme and will signify their understanding of, and agreement to, these responsibilities
- The College will publish the requirement to offer appropriate training covering diversity issues to their staff

To staff

- All staff will be made aware of and have access to a full copy of the Scheme
- The staff induction programme will highlight the College's commitment to equality and diversity action to be taken by staff who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against any perpetrators of such discrimination
- Monitoring data and action plans will be available on the HR Portal and Equality & Diversity portal

10. Scheme review

The Equality Scheme will be reviewed and revised every three years.

Legal requirements – general and specific duties

Race Equality

Under the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000), the College has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:-

- Eliminate unlawful race discrimination
- Promote equality of opportunity
- Promote good relations between people from different racial groups

It also has specific duties to :-

- Prepare and maintain a written race equality policy
- Assess the impact of its policies on learners and staff from different racial groups
- Monitor the admission and progress of learners and the recruitment and career progress of staff by racial groups
- Set out the College's arrangements for publishing the results for assessments and monitoring
- Where reasonably practicable publish annually the results of assessments and monitoring

Disability Equality

Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the College has a general duty to:-

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- Promote positive attitudes toward disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- Take steps to account of disabled persons disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

In addition to the general duty specified, the College has a specific duty to produce a Disability Equality Scheme, to implement certain aspects of the scheme and to report on it.

Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Gender Equality

Under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (Public Authorities Statutory Duties) Order 2006 the College has a general duty to:-

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women

It also has specific duties to:-

- Prepare and publish a Gender Equality Scheme (GES)
- In preparing the GES
 - Consult employees, learners and others (including trade unions)
 - Take into account any information it has gathered or considers relevant
 - Consider the need to have objectives to address the causes of any gender pay gap
- Ensure that GES sets out actions the college has taken or intends to take to:
 - Gather information on the effect of its policies and practices on men and women
 - Use the information to review the implementation of GES objectives
 - Assess the impact of its current and future policies and practices on gender equality
 - Consult relevant employees, learners and others (including trade unions)
 - Ensure implementation of the GES objectives
- Implement the GES and the actions for gathering and using information within three years of publication, unless it is unreasonable or impractical to do so
- Review and revise the GES at least every three years
- Report annually on progress

Equality Scheme
Three year action plan to meet objectives – 2009 - 2011

	Objective and Commitments	Actions to meet objectives	When	Who
1	Promote awareness of equality and diversity throughout the College and in our community	Improve and keep up to date equality and diversity information on the Website and Portal	From 2009	EDM
		Make communication and learner material in accessible formats, and consider developing guidelines on producing accessible written materials	From 2009	MM/CLMG
		Maintain a database of staff with language skills and where possible offer a translation service to customers	Dec 2009	CSM
		Communicate and promote equality and diversity to all staff through team meetings	From 2009	CLMG
		Celebrate and promote diversity through special events during the year	From 2009	EDM/LR+SSM
		Ensure that equality and diversity is reflected in materials used at marketing events	From 2009	MM
		Ensure that our commitment to equality and diversity is highly visible on all College sites	From 2009	EDM/MM
		Publish the Scheme as detailed in Section 9 of the Single Equality Scheme	From 2009	EDM
		Ensure FE and HE course related student induction handbooks include consistent Equality and Diversity information	From 2010	HoCs
2	Provide appropriate access for disabled people in the College	Ensure that staff and learner recruitment processes encourage disabled applicants to apply and disclose their disability	From 2009	CSM/HRM
		Maintain and review DDA access throughout the college sites	From 2009	EM
		Prepare individual support plans to ensure that new disabled staff and learners have the necessary equipment support and facilities to enable them to undertake their job and courses of study with us	From 2009	WPM/HRM
		Improve signage throughout the college to ensure that it can be understood by disabled people	From 2009	EM
		Review agreements with external contractors to ensure that they provide services/facilities that are accessible to disabled people. Particular reference to the intersite bus	From 2010	EM

	Objective and Commitments	Actions to meet objectives	When	Who
3	Create a culture that is supportive of disabled people and those who become disabled during their employment or course of study	Challenge patronising or discriminatory social behaviour against, or harassment of, people with disabilities. Ensure prompt action is taken through college procedures to deal with such reported incidents	From 2009	CLMG
		Develop and communicate a policy/procedure to support students who become disabled during the course of their programme of study	Jan 2010	WPM
		Develop and communicate a policy/procedure to support new staff with disabilities and those who become disabled during their employment	Feb 2010	HRM
		Promote the services of Additional Learning Support	Jan 2010	WPM
4	Seek not only to eliminate discrimination, but also to create a working and learning environment based on good relationships between people regardless of gender, disability, age, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious belief, marital status, family responsibility and trade union activity	Ensure staff recruitment practices/policies/procedures are transparent, fair and equitable and that appointments are made based on objective criteria	From 2009	HRM
		Monitor and take action on equality and diversity related staff and student complaints	From 2009	QM
		Reduce the incidents of harassment	2010-2011	CLMG
		Take action to narrow any achievement and retention gap between groups of learners	2010-2011	HoC
		Encourage all staff to challenge inappropriate behaviour by staff and students on our sites	From 2009	CLMG
		Monitor and take appropriate action to address turnover and promotion between groups of staff	2010-2011	HRM
5	Remove perceived barriers to entry to all curriculum areas, based on discrimination	Review all marketing and promotional materials to ensure that there is no bias	From 2009	MM
		Ensure learner recruitment and enrolment practices are transparent, fair and equitable and that decisions are made based on objective criteria.	From 2009	CSM
		Take action to address identified enrolment imbalances in curriculum areas	2010-2011	HoC
		Review the student application forms to ensure wording encourages disclosure	From 2010	CSM

	Objective and Commitments	Actions to meet objectives	When	Who
6	Create a culture that is supportive of transgender issues and seek to eliminate harassment and promote equality of opportunity for staff and students who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender therapy	Communicate the specialist counselling support service available to staff and students	From 2009	LR+SSM
		Obtain specialist advice on how to support people who intend to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender therapy	2009	LR+SSM/HRM
		Provide time off for staff and students to attend medical appointments who undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender therapy	From 2009	LR+SSM/HRM
7	Provide continuous training and development for employees and learners to enhance awareness and promote equality and diversity	Design and deliver a staff development programme to cover all aspects of the Single Equality Scheme	From 2009	T+DM/EDM
		Ensure that the programme is accessible to both full and part time staff	From 2009	T+DM/EDM
		Include equality and diversity on induction programmes for staff and learners. Ensure staff induction is accessible to both full and part time staff	From 2009	T+DM/LR+SSM
		Design and deliver a learner training programme to cover all aspects of the Single Equality Scheme, some of which to be delivered through the Group Tutorial system	From 2009	T+DM/EDM
		To provide equality and diversity awareness training for Governors	2010-2011	EDM
8	To seek to eliminate bullying/harassment and take action to address reported incidents	Make visible our commitment to elimination bullying and harassment	2010-2011	EDM
		Ensure information on how to report and the support available for staff and students on bullying and harassment is clearly available and promoted to staff and learners	2010-2011	LR+SSM/HRM
		Take immediate action on reported cases of bullying/harassment	From 2009	LR+SSM/HRM
		Develop simple guides for staff and learners on the procedures for reporting/ dealing with bullying/harassment	2010-2011	LR+SSM/HRM
9	To continue to provide regular monitoring data for equality and diversity	Standardise the equality and diversity statistics and action planning system across the College	From Feb 2010	EDM
		Annually report equality and diversity statistics and ensure that this information is used in the strategic/quality cycle	From Feb 2010	EDM/HRM
		Communicate the statistics to staff/learners and externally	From 2009	EDM
		Ensure that staff, learners and the Corporation Board reflect the workforce population	2010-2011	EDM/HRM
		Take action to address gaps and trends identified through the monitoring statistics	2010-2011	EDM/HRM

	Objective and Commitments	Actions to meet objectives	When	Who
10	To consult on the effectiveness of the Equality Scheme and equality and diversity generally in the College	Ensure that the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group is used as an effective consultation forum and its membership is representative of the community	From 2009	EDM
		Ensure that the LPOC includes equality and diversity questions and that actions are taken based on the analysis of these	From 2010	EDM/QM
		Ensure that the staff survey includes equality and diversity questions and that actions are taken based on the analysis of these	From 2010	EDM/T+DM
		Obtain feedback from specific groups of staff and learners to identify their requirements and obtain feedback on the effectiveness of equality and diversity in the college generally and the Single Equality Scheme	From 2009	LR+SSM/EDM
		Monitor and take action on equality and diversity issues arising from TLOs	From 2009	EDM/QM
		Monitor equality and diversity in the college and the effectiveness of the Single Equality Scheme through the Equality and Diversity Team	From 2009	EDM
11	To impact assess equality and diversity policies and procedures	Conduct impact assessments on all policies and procedures in the College	From 2009	EDM/CLMG
		Ensure that impact assessment becomes part of the normal procedure for developing policies	From 2009	EDM
12	To embed equality and diversity in the curriculum	Ensure that tutors challenge inappropriate behaviour from learners in the classroom with regard to equality and diversity	From 2009	HoC/CLMG
		Ensure that tutors and other staff themselves are aware of equality and diversity and use appropriate language and behaviour	From 2009	EDM/HoC
		Review course materials to ensure equality and diversity compliance	2010-2011	HoC
		Provide opportunities to discuss and raise equality and diversity issues as part of the curriculum	2010-2011	HoC
13	To ensure that training and work placement providers are committed to Equality and diversity and adhere to our requirements	Make work placement and training providers aware of the College's equality and diversity policies/procedures and requirements	From 2009	EDM
		Check work placement providers commitment to equality and diversity before learners are placed with them	From 2009	EDM

Key:-

EDM	-	Equality and Diversity Manager
MM	-	Marketing Manager
CSM	-	Customer Services Manager
CLMG	-	College Leadership and Management Group
EM	-	Estates Manager
WPM	-	Widening Participation Manager
HRM	-	Human Resources Manager
QM	-	Quality Manager
HoC	-	Heads of Centre
LL+SSM	-	Learning Resources and Student Services Manager
T+DM	-	Training and Development Manager