

Single Equality Scheme

Including the Strategic Development Plan 2010 - 2013

This document is subject to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation, Disability.

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Dr Julie Mills
Email: Julie.Mills@mkcollege.ac.uk
Phone: 01908 637002

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1. Foreword

This Single Equality Scheme is about the College's commitment to eliminating discrimination, promoting equal opportunities and developing good relations. It supports our mission to be an outstanding College, at the heart of our city: nurturing ambition and delivering success and will ensure that we develop strategies, policies and practices across the College that recognise and respond to the needs of our students, our communities, our stakeholders and our staff.

We have already implemented a number of diversity initiatives:

- achieved the Investors in Diversity Standard;
- improved our student success rates overall;
- impact assessed policies, procedures, plans and practices and published the impact of these;
- established a strategic framework for promoting equality & diversity;
- set up an Equalities Strategic Review Group, chaired by the Principal, that drives the equality agenda for the College;
- set up an Equalities Good Practice Group: an active cross-college staff group where equality issues are promoted, challenged and developed as live issues;
- undertaken research into student, staff and stakeholder perceptions of the College's approach to equality & diversity.

We have embedded processes which:

- monitor equality data relating to staff recruitment and progression, student achievements, progression and success; and staff and student complaints and disciplinary processes;
- set targets for and identify strategies which remove barriers, promote diversity and eliminate discrimination;
- continue to improve differentiation in our teaching and learning practices, which have overall improved observation grades at good or better;
- continue to widen our communities' participation and access to learning. We are developing the curriculum and work experience opportunities to enhance employability chances for our ethnic minority and disabled students.

In revising our equality scheme and action plans we have consulted with groups about the strategic focus for the next three years. Surveys of staff, students and stakeholders have identified actions to take forward in respect of equality and diversity. The Equal Access Forum, a staff and student representative group, has reviewed the Disability Equality Action Plan and has made recommendations for action to implement over the next three year period. External stakeholders have provided feedback on the College's promotion of equality and diversity and this has provided useful feedback which informs the action plan.

Through this scheme we will continue to build on our successes, develop strategy, policies, practices and access to services and resources to make a positive difference to our students, to employers we work with, to our communities and to our staff.

2. Introduction

In the College's earlier equality scheme (available as an archived document on the College's website) detail was given both on the legislative framework and on the general and specific statutory duties which apply to all public bodies, including Further Education Colleges.

The current revised scheme remains compliant with these duties, which cover disability and gender and race, but it also looks forward to the introduction of the Single Equality Duty which will cover four additional equality strands. It incorporates the Disability Equality Duty, the Gender Equality Duty and the Race Equality Duty.

The new Single Equality Duty is due to come into force in 2011 as announced by the Government in July 2008. The new duty will cover seven equality strands, namely, age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation. The College's Single Equality Scheme as revised for 2010 takes account of all seven equality strands.

The Single Equality Scheme is a public commitment to how the College plans to meet the duties placed upon it by equality legislation and through good practice. The Scheme will promote and identify issues of inequality relating to the specific general duties as follows:

Disability: *Specific obligations under 'The General Duty to promote Disability Equality' (Disability Discrimination Act 2005)*

We will aim to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Disability Discrimination Act;
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disability;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life;
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Gender: *Specific obligations under 'The General Duty to promote Gender Equality' (Equalities Act 2006)*

We will aim to:

- eliminate sex discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity.

Race: *Specific obligations under 'The General Duty to Promote Racial Equality' (Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000)*

We will aim to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination;
- promote equality of opportunity;
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups.

In addition to the current legislative requirements our Equality Scheme also addresses the following areas of equality:

- age;
- gender identity;
- religion and belief;
- sexual orientation.

3. Equality and Diversity Strategy

The College's Equality and Diversity Strategy aims to support the College's mission through promoting a culture of shared values, mutual respect with corporate and social responsibility in order to motivate and inspire students, staff and our wider communities.

We will nurture ambition and deliver success in a College where everyone can participate fully and be treated equally and fairly without disadvantage arising from any personal characteristic including age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

The Equality and Diversity Strategy has three core objectives:

- outstanding student success for all students; which relates to success in all aspects of a student's learning experience including participation, retention, achievement, progression, participation in College activities;
- a talented and highly motivated workforce; which relates members of staff in all roles including volunteers, contracted staff and governors;
- vibrant and sustainable value adding partnerships; which recognises the expertise that others bring to driving forward the equality and diversity agenda.

These have been articulated into a strategic framework which sets out the focus of strategic activity over the next three years and identifies a range of qualitative and quantitative performance indicators.

Core Equality & Diversity Objectives		
Student Success	Staff	Partnerships
Outstanding student success for all students	A talented, diverse and highly motivated workforce	Vibrant and sustainable value adding partnerships
Strategic Focus 2010 - 2013		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Actively seek to work in partnership with organisations and individuals to contribute to the broad advancement of the overall equality and diversity agenda. ❖ Increase the diversity of our workforce at all levels ❖ Ensure that leaders and governors give a high profile to equality and diversity to ensure that it is central to and explicit in all aspects of the College's work. ❖ Be recognised as a Beacon of diversity excellence 		
Key Performance Indicators		
Student Success	Staff	Partnerships
Improving student success with no diversity gaps	Recruitment & selection	Value Adding Partnerships
Attendance, Retention & Achievement	Professional development: participation & success	Community Events
Value added	Promotion	Stakeholder feedback
Average points score	Reasonable Adjustment	Student involvement
Promotion of Equality & Diversity in the classroom	Sickness & Absence & Turnover	External recognition
Participation rates	Leadership & Governance	Economic benefit
Student voice	Staff Profile	Funding sources
Student progression and destination	Specialist networks	Procurement
Equality Impact Assessments		

4. Responsibilities

The Governing Body has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the College is promoting equality and diversity and meeting the requirements of equality legislation.

All members of staff and students have a responsibility to promote equality and diversity, specifically:

The Principal and Chief Executive has responsibility for equal opportunities and the promotion of diversity.

College Managers are responsible for ensuring improvements and action plans are implemented and met.

The Equalities Strategic Review Group, chaired by the Principal and Chief Executive, monitors the implementation of the Equality Schemes and their associated action plans. The Equalities Strategic Review Group recommends action plans to the Governing Body, receives reports from key personnel and reports progress on an annual basis to the College Management Team and to the Governing Body.

5. Equality Impact Assessments

Equality impact assessments provide a thorough, detailed and systematic analysis of the effects of an existing or proposed policy or practice on people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation and other areas.

Impact assessments address the 4'P's: Policies, Procedures, Plans and Practice and cover every aspect of the College's functions. This includes 'unwritten' policies, in the form of long standing custom or practice.

Equality Impact Assessments involve a diverse range of people to look for opportunities for positive impact that may have been missed or better exploited, as well as detecting actual or potential negative impact for specific groups of people such as disabled people.

By carrying out equality impact assessments, we are able to:

- effect positive changes for people who share an aspect of their identity in relation to age, disability, gender, gender identity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation - people who work, learn or use the services of the College;
- achieve real and practical improvements by taking appropriate action;
- pre-empt potential inequalities;
- ensure that equality and diversity is a central and integral part of all policy and practices across the College.

The results of all Equality Impact Assessments are published collectively within an Annual Report.

6. Use of Data

The College collects and analyses a wide range of data to assess the impact of its actions, identify diversity gaps and to demonstrate improvement.

Data pertaining to student performance is reported annually through the Self Assessment Process. Area Self Assessment Reports (SARs) include analysis of diversity data and consequent action plans include equality & diversity actions and targets. Progress towards targets is monitored through termly Performance Monitoring Meetings. The College overall SAR includes a substantial data annex comprising a three year history of performance. This SAR is approved by the Board of Governors and published on the LSC Provider Gateway.

Data pertaining to the staff body is reported annually to the Board of Governors. Recruitment, Selection, Promotion and access to resources including Professional Development is routinely analysed and improvement actions set within the Human Resources Strategy and Action Plan.

Periodic surveys of students, staff and stakeholders are undertaken to explore issues in more detail. Reports analysing the responses and identifying actions are published on the staff and student intranet.

National, Regional and local data is used to inform actions and establish benchmarks.

7. Development and Action Plans

The Single Equality Scheme Strategic Development Plan, attached to this Scheme, sets out the themes, focus and key actions related to each of the College's core strategic equality and diversity objectives. Delivering this development plan will ensure the College actively promotes equality and diversity, tackles discrimination and narrows the achievement gap.

The plan is supported by a detailed operational plan for each of the seven equality strands which will enable the College's progress in delivering its equality duties to be scrutinised.

Implementation of the plans will be reported to the Board of Governors on an annual basis.

For the purpose of this document, the terms "Governing Body" and "Corporation" should be interpreted as having the same meaning.

8. Single Equality Scheme Strategic Development Plan 2010 - 2013

❖ Outstanding Student Success

Themes	Focus	Key Actions for 2010	Lead
Student Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase student engagement with agenda setting and decision taking in respect of Equality and Diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish student devised Interest Groups through Student Council ○ Ensure student involvement in contract re-tendering processes 	LM: VP Curriculum
Resource Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide appropriate written guidance ○ Improve physical resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issue written guidelines in respect of appropriate language to promote diversity ○ Improve the functionality of student space 	LM: VP Curriculum JM: DP
Events and Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Co-ordinate student and staff events to celebrate diversity and challenge discrimination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop co-ordinated programme to align student and staff activities ○ Distribute and evaluate resources for use with students/staff 	JM: DP LM: VP Curriculum
Support for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Multiple pathways for students to access appropriate and timely support in dealing with diversity issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review student induction ○ Increase signposting ○ Develop Youth Work practice 	LM: VP Curriculum
Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase the opportunities for promoting diversity and challenging discrimination within formal learning settings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review teaching and Learning Observation Scheme ○ Share good practice via intranet and Champion Initiative 	LM: VP Curriculum
Effective use of data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve the interpretation of data to ensure it informs Area Reviews and development plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Extend the focus on diversity data in Performance Monitoring Meetings ○ Revise Self-assessment documentation 	LM: VP Curriculum JM: DP

❖ Talented, Diverse and Highly Motivated Workforce

Themes	Focus	Key Actions for 2010	Lead
Recruitment, Selection and Retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Policy and Procedures for Recruitment and Selection ○ Target Setting ○ Retain Diversity Accreditations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review the information and guidance supplied to prospective applicants and shortlisted candidates ○ Refresh training for those involved in making recruitment and/or selection decisions 	JM: DP

Training and Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mandatory Training ○ Leadership and Governance ○ Informal Learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review content of all mandatory training ○ Introduce appropriate training in respect of additional diversity strands ○ Develop, deliver and evaluate training for Governors and senior leaders 	JM: DP
Promote an open culture in which staff feel valued and able to progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Equality and Diversity Champions ○ Monitoring ○ Disclosure and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Formalise Diversity Champion role building on the Equalities Good practice Group(EGPG) ○ Extend the range of staff data monitored and reported on ○ Pilot a confidential staff mentor scheme 	JM: DP
❖ Vibrant and Sustainable Value-adding Partnerships			
Themes	Focus	Key Actions for 2010	Lead
Equality Impact Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Widen the membership of groups undertaking Equality Impact Assessments ○ Re-prioritise Policy/Plans/Procedures/Practice for scheduled Equality Impact Assessments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Simplify Equality Impact Assessment Documentation ○ Consult with students staff and stakeholders ○ Simplify Equality Impact Assessment documentation 	JM: DP
Coordinate engagement with partner organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnership Engagement Plan ○ Corporate Social Responsibility Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Define the nature of partnership working ○ Map and publish engagement with other organisations 	JM: DP LM: VP Curriculum
Actively seek opportunities to take the Equality and Diversity Agenda forward through securing development funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Collaborative bids ○ Synergy and simplification 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convene Focus Group to explore possibilities ○ Timetable for key bidding opportunities 	JM: DP