

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

Context

The College's Equality and Diversity Strategy should be viewed in the context of the College Mission and Corporate Strategy and its Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

This strategy has been developed in the context of current legislation, primarily, The Equality Act (2010).

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the College's Equality and Diversity Action plan and its associated Strategy and Action Plans.

Mission Statement

The mission of Doncaster College is

'Meeting Learner Needs and Aspiring to Excellence'

The College Strategic Plan 2011-14 identifies the College's commitment to ensure equality and respect for all those who train and work in the College.

Strategic Objective 1 states that the College will:

'Ensure access to, and promote progression within, a range of personalised learning opportunities in a culture that listens to learners, values and celebrates diversity and learner success, opposes discriminatory practices and where staff and students feel and are safe.'

The Equality and Diversity Action Plan will be responsive to the changing profile and needs of its stakeholders, and will fully embrace national developments around all aspects of equality and diversity and comply with government legislation.

The College will set challenging targets for equality and diversity performance and, moreover, measure their impact.

Wherever possible, the College will go beyond minimal requirements established by prevailing laws and practice and thereby contribute to the setting of standards of excellence practice for others to follow.

Rationale

This document sets out the strategy for equality and diversity at Doncaster College.

This strategy informs and continues to be informed by the wider strategic planning process. It is recognised that the key strategic driver for the College is the Learning and Teaching Strategy, which is to be underpinned by this Equality and Diversity Strategy as a key enabling strategy to move the organisation from a teaching organisation to one which focuses on the learner experience transforming itself to a learning organisation.

Fundamental Principles

The promotion of equality of opportunity and access is of paramount importance and, therefore, we believe that:

- Individuals who apply to us as a student or as an employee will receive fair treatment and be treated on the basis of their ability.
- All staff will operate within the College's ethical framework for equality and diversity and actively promote equality and diversity and be trained to tackle discrimination and deal with bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- We will be active in the promotion of inclusivity by providing a learning and working environment which actively promotes and encourages participation and success.
- Discrimination affects the ability of groups and individuals to take part on an equal basis with others at work, in education and training, and in all aspects of everyday life.
- By providing a culture of shared values and mutual respect we can positively challenge prejudice and bullying and promote an ethos and image that positively reflects the College's commitment to equality and diversity.
- All stakeholders will take an active part in promoting and embedding equality and celebrating diversity by refusing to take part in jokes or behaviour which offends or degrades others.
- Any prejudicial behaviour by any member of the College is unacceptable and will be challenged.
- All College publications will promote and reflect the College's commitment to equality and diversity.
- The curriculum content, materials and delivery will reflect the College's commitment to equality and diversity.
- Education promotes social change by combating exclusion and, in this regard, all staff are committed to promoting learning amongst those who have been traditionally alienated by education.
- Meeting the individual needs of all learners is of paramount importance.
- Policies, functions and procedures will be screened to ensure fairness and equity.
- We will ensure policies and procedures make sense and are accessible to learners.

The College Equality and Diversity Strategy

The strategy will be responsive to the changing profile and needs of its students, and will fully embrace national developments and comply with government legislation.

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The College will set challenging targets for equality and diversity performance and, more over, measure their impact. In particular, it will set challenging targets to close the inequality gaps for students.

The Equality and diversity Action Plan sets out how the College both as an employer and a learning community will:

- Advance equality of opportunity
- Close the equalities gap
- Eliminate discrimination and tackle bullying, harassment and victimisation across all protected characteristics
- Foster good relations among all groups of people.

All College staff will be individually responsible for promoting equality and diversity in relation to their work role and as a member of their respective teams.

Equality and diversity will be integrated into the strategic and operational planning process through the College's ethical framework such that what the College has come to term its "golden thread" runs through and touches all College activity. This "golden thread" emerges from the College's core values developed by, and for, all staff:

- Good progression rates in line with sector norm achieved internally and externally into education, training and employment
- Compliance with legislative and local requirements for safeguarding, health and safety and equality and diversity
- Equality and diversity, safeguarding and health and safety practices continue to be self-assessed as good
- Achievement gaps continue to decrease
- Learner and employee feedback demonstrates that they feel safe and respected at College
- All new and existing employees undergo mandatory training in equality and diversity, health and safety and safeguarding that is updated every three years
- Incidents associated with health and safety, safeguarding and bullying and harassment are dealt with appropriately and effectively in accordance with College procedures
- Overall reduction in accidents achieved throughout the College community.

The College's commitment to access, equality and diversity will be reflected and monitored in all aspects of the College's work, including inter alia key strategies relating to:

- Learning, Teaching and Quality Enhancement
- Human Resources and Employment
- Higher Education
- International Education
- Learner Involvement – 'Voice of the Learner'
- Quality Standards and Improvement.

This strategy covers all aspects of College business and relates to both staff and student activities including:

- Employment and selection procedures
- Staff appraisal

- Staff remuneration
- Promotion and training
- Recruitment, selection and enrolment of students
- Curriculum content and development
- Course delivery and assessment
- Teaching and learning materials and methods in relation to KPIs
- Self Assessment
- Complaints and compliments
- External contracts
- Partnership work.

Structures and Systems

The College operationalises the policy and this strategy through its Equality and Diversity Action Plan, which is developed and monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee. Updates are provided to Governors termly, together with an Equality and Diversity Annual Report

Equality and diversity corporate and strategic objectives will be determined and agreed by the College Executive with individual Executive members responsible for specified aspects of College work.

Equality and diversity data in relation to students will be analysed by the Assistant Principal Learner Support and Inclusion and Head of Inclusion and priority areas for action and improvement targets identified and agreed. Equality and diversity data for staff will be analysed by the Vice Principal Resources and priority areas for action and improvement targets identified and agreed.

The analysis will inform the Equality and Diversity Action Plan, and individual areas equality and diversity objectives and targets, which will be reviewed and integrated within the College's business planning cycles.

The plans will be verified and validated by the College's Senior Management Team and Equality and Diversity Committee.

The College will publicise its equality objectives, through its Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

Critical Success Factors

- Visible commitment of senior management and Governors to equality and diversity, in particular, a culture and ethos which promotes equality and diversity and provides for an environment which is safe from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation in the spirit of anti-discrimination legislation.
- Active participation and involvement of all staff in the promotion of equality and diversity.
- Active listening to the voice of the learner.
- Acceptance of measurement and benchmarking as key components in the evaluation of College services.

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- Integration of equality and diversity objectives in relation to all College decisions, strategies policies and procedures.
- Ensuring the College's policy, systems and procedures are regularly reviewed in line with Government legislation and organisational requirements.
- Training and developing all College staff in equality and diversity legislation and implications for the delivery of College services, including procurement.
- Developing and implementing an effective communication strategy to embed organisational culture and core values.
- Ensuring that staff operate within the College's ethical framework.
- The setting of challenging targets and using data to monitor, analyse and improve engagement and performance by different groups of learners.
- Ensuring that diversity is part of our culture
- Ensuring that achievement and progression data of different groups are collected, analysed and used to form set targets to improve the performance of the underachieving groups.
- Training for learners, teaching, support staff, Governors and employers on all aspects of bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

Next Steps

The College has strategically linked its Equality and Diversity Strategy to its equality and diversity key objectives thereby to its Equality and Diversity Action Plan, as follows:

1. To actively promote an ethos and culture that positively reflects the College's commitment to Equality and Diversity thereby advancing educational and social inclusion and equality of opportunity
2. To ensure that all students and potential students are aware of, and comply with, Equality and Diversity Policies and Procedures, in accordance with The Equality Act (2010)/Public Sector Equality Duty (2011)
3. To ensure that all staff and potential staff are aware of, and comply with the College Equality and Diversity Policies and Procedures, including all protected characteristics*, in accordance with The Equality Act (2010)
4. To ensure all external partnerships and employer engagement provision complies with the legislation, including all the protected characteristics *, in accordance with The Equality Act (2010) and thereby close the equalities and achievement gap
5. To provide an accessible and inclusive physical environment and facilities which positively reflect the College's commitment to Equality and Diversity and to ensure that external contractors comply with the requirements of The Equality Act (2010)

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6. To take proactive steps to eliminate unlawful discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation across the protected characteristics* in accordance with The Equality Act (2010) and take proactive steps to promote good relations for and between all social groups
7. To ensure that the College's quality assurance framework, including curriculum content and design, materials and delivery is underpinned by and reflects the College's commitment to Equality and Diversity, across all protected characteristics* thereby promoting inclusion
8. To provide learner support services which are inclusive and take proactive steps to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations among all groups of people.
9. To provide the appropriate financial resources to effectively implement the College's Equality and Diversity Policies and to ensure that the College procurement policy and associated activities are in accordance with The Equality Act (2010)
10. To ensure there is effective monitoring in all aspects of the College's student reporting mechanisms to close the equalities gap and actively promote equality of opportunity across all the protected characteristics*
11. To ensure there is effective monitoring in all aspects of the College's staff reporting mechanisms to close the equalities gap and actively promote equality of opportunity across the protected characteristics*.

*Protected characteristics:

Age
Disability
Race
Sex
Sexual Orientation
Religion or Belief
Marriage and Civil Partnership
Maternity and Pregnancy
Gender Reassignment