

**Inspiring Futures – Changing Lives**

# **Single Equality**

## **Scheme**

## **1.Introduction**

Sussex Coast College, Hastings is committed to Equality and Diversity in everything we do

- in access to all our curriculum, academic or vocational, for all those who wish to learn.
- in the to delivery of the highest quality education and training to everyone.
- in employing staff and all our employment practices
- in our partnerships with other bodies
- in our procurement of goods and services

We will work with our community to raise and work on issues of equality and to promote the advantages of a diverse and mixed society. Our curriculum aims to develop in a manner that meets the needs of our community and the ability of our students to compete in the local, national and international arena.

## **2.Context**

Sussex Coast College, Hastings is the major provider of post-sixteen education in the Hastings and Rother area. With nearly 10,000 students on courses ranging from Skills For Life to Information and Communication Technology, at levels catering for the needs of students with learning difficulties to degrees in higher education and for ages from 14 to 80. There are few families in the area who do not have contact with the college at some time or in some way. This puts us in a unique position to make a difference to the economy and learning of the Hastings and Rother area. It is both a privilege and a responsibility that the services we provide will contribute to raising the educational and vocational achievement and skills of all learners from all backgrounds and races. We take our duties as set out in the ?? extremely seriously.

This Single Equality Scheme (SES) demonstrates our commitment to fully meet our obligations as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

It is a key element, within our strategic objectives. We are seeking not just to do what is required in statute, but also to embrace the spirit of the Equality Act so we can become a beacon organisation that others look to for best practice. We do, however, realise we have some way to go but we are now, more than ever, ready to meet the challenges ahead.

## **3.Our Position**

We see equality and diversity as an issue of quality of teaching and learning. We do not envisage teaching to be 'outstanding' unless it takes into account issues of equality and diversity and prepares our students to work in a culturally diverse society either within the UK or internationally. As an employer we will ensure that all our processes are in line with good practice in Equality and Diversity

#### **4. Our Statutory Duty**

The College is required to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Promote equality of opportunity between people from different groups.
- Promote positive attitudes between people from different groups.
- Promote good relations between persons of different groups.
- Help people to fulfil their potential.
- Meet needs of students and staff.
- Demonstrate positive action.

To promote Equality and Diversity, we need to understand fully the impact our work can have from the perspective of our students, service users and our employees. We must consider how our work affects all learners and take action within our remit and scope to remove any discrimination or adverse impact.

- assess and consult on the impact of our policies on equality and Diversity.
- monitor our policies for adverse impact
- publish the results of these assessments, the consultation we undertake and the monitoring to which we commit
- ensure public access to information and services.
- collect monitoring data relating to: staff and students
- publish the results of the monitoring
- analyse the data to find any patterns of inequality
- take any necessary action to remove barriers and to promote equality and diversity

## 5. Our Single Equality Scheme aims to:

- Cover **the protected characteristics** of
  - Race
  - Disability
  - Gender
  - Age
  - Sexuality orientation
  - Religion and Belief
  - Gender reassignment
  - Pregnancy and maternity
  - Marriage and Civil Partnerships

Plus

- Economic and Social Inclusion

We aim to

- Ensure the development of a curriculum that enables all sections of our community to raise their aspirations and to achieve their maximum potential.
- Support learning programmes at appropriate and accessible levels for all potential learners, enabling progression.
- Promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the content and delivery of our learning programmes.
- Provide a learning and working environment which is safe and free of bullying and harassment relating to the above characteristics.
- Provide a learning environment which is accessible to all.
- Work with local bodies, statutory or voluntary, to develop and provide a College which is central to the Hastings and Rother community and its regeneration programme.
- Support bidding for funds which will help us achieve these aims in partnership with others in the community.
- Actively participate in the moves to promote and regenerate Hastings and Rother as a place which welcomes people from diverse cultures, faiths and beliefs<sup>1</sup>, and ways of living.
- Celebrate the achievements of individuals and groups who have assisted the progression to equality of opportunity.
- Aim to recruit, retain and develop a workforce that reflects the diverse nature of the locality and employ the very best staff available to enable us to reach our aims.
- Implement a continuing professional development plan in Equality and diversity for all staff.

- Use positive action to help meet the college targets

**We have:**

- Zero tolerance of bullying, discrimination, any behaviour which may make the college feel an unsafe place or of behaviours which damage or worsen the physical environment for others on grounds of the above characteristics or for any other reason.

**6. Our Single Equality and Diversity Objectives:**

1. Set out targets against which we can be measured on improvement of Equality and Diversity, in all nine categories
2. Use our Principals Performance Review (PPR) process to monitor our progress on equality and diversity issues and that it delivers increased understanding of issues so as to develop our performance on equality and diversity.
3. Develop equality and diversity impact measurements in all divisions and departments to ensure progress can be made in each of the areas of the College.
4. Develop performance indicators and quality measurements that enable us to monitor and report our progress.
5. Develop our Equality Impact Assessment process to ensure that all new processes, policies and significant changes are fully assessed and that a plan for impact assessing existing services, policies and practises is introduced.
6. To embed Equality and Diversity within all Teaching and Learning.
7. To ensure all staff and students receive an induction programme which ensures they understand the legal requirements of Equality and Diversity
8. To ensure the student admissions policy and process is audited annually and produce a report for SLT
9. To ensure that Equality and Diversity is fully introduced in all our procurement of goods and services.
10. To work with our partners to promote Equality and Diversity.

**7. Priority Areas**

Better reviewing, teaching and learning and success

- Ensuring that best practice in equality and diversity, underpins all our work.
- Promoting Equality and Diversity in all settings within our remit: through our methodology and framework for review all aspects of our work.
- Use Teaching and Learning Coaches to support teachers in identifying and delivering best practice in developing their students' understanding of all aspects of Equality and Diversity.

- To pilot a Equality and Diversity Curriculum Audit
- Ensuring that all lesson plans and schemes of work reflect equality and diversity.
- Ensuring that all resources and materials used in teaching and learning reflect equality and diversity objectives and targets.

#### Better communication and consultation

- Ensuring that our consultations, communications, marketing and promotions are inclusive, accessible and promote equality and diversity.
- Disseminating good practice and reporting to key stakeholders, including Governors, Ofsted and the Skills Funding Agency, wherever appropriate on issues of equality as revealed by our surveys and analysis.
- Promote positive images to students and staff in the College

#### Better ways of working and better value

- Ensuring that all our internal processes (including corporate planning and policy development) specifically promote equality and eliminate discrimination and harassment.
- Ensuring that our student group is reflective of the demography and aspirations of our local community.
- Ensuring that our workforce is representative of our student body and local community, provides good role models, that specific groups are represented appropriately, that talent is recognised, there is no 'ghettoisation' of jobs and roles and all staff are valued equally.

### **8.0 Embedding, monitoring and reviewing equality and diversity**

We intend to fully embed equality into the strategic planning and monitoring frameworks of the college. We believe it demonstrates that our approach is comprehensive, led from the highest level, and inclusive.

#### **The Corporation (Governors)**

The Corporation is responsible for setting and monitoring the College's strategic direction, including its approach to equality and diversity. The board holds the College's Chief Executive (Principal) and the organisation as a whole to account for the way strategic direction is translated into practice.

The Corporation will receive regular updates of progress on the Single Equality Action Plan .

### **The Principal**

The Principal has overall responsibility for ensuring that the College meets its statutory duty and that Equality and Diversity is mainstreamed into all we do. The Principal is assisted by various groups and by all staff of the College.

### **The Senior Leadership Team**

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for leading and managing the College. One of its roles is to ensure that the drive for equality and diversity is embedded in policy and practice throughout the college, ensuring that Equality and Diversity becomes a cornerstone of the work of all areas. SLT receives and approves all new and revised policies, procedures and functions. Each new policy or proposal includes an Equality Impact Assessment.

### **Equality and Diversity Committee**

The terms of reference of this committee are:

- Reports to the SLT.
- The Committee will help in the development of targets that will enable the college to become an outstanding institution for both its learners and employees.
- The committee will oversee the progress made towards all our equality and diversity aspirations and the targets linked to them. □ The committee will advise, promote and value positive action for the further advancement of Equality and Diversity.

#### 1. Membership:

Representatives of;

Principal (Chair)

Student Services

International Studies

Executive Director for HR

MIS

External Community Representative

Faith / Belief Groups

Marketing and Communications

Director of Teaching and Learning

FM Manager

Student Council

Staff Unions

HoD' 2

## Governor Representative

### 2. Frequency

To meet a minimum of once a term but more frequently as necessary.

### 3. Purpose

1. To ensure the College Single Equality Scheme and its strategic priorities are explicit and promoted in all aspects of the services provided by the college.
2. To oversee the development and the implementation of the Single Equality Scheme within all aspects of the colleges work including our responsibilities as an employer.
3. To oversee the development, implementation and monitoring of Equality Duties.
4. Identify, approve and monitor equality targets and performance indicators, which are inclusive and reflect the vision of the college.
5. Monitor action plans relating to the college's Impact Assessments
6. Request, receive and evaluate reports from managers and teams, who give recommendations when necessary.
7. Monitor the effectiveness of the Complaints procedure.
8. To advise, promote and value Positive Action for the further advancement of Equality and Diversity
9. To regularly consult with staff, learners and community on Equality and Diversity, and monitor effectiveness.
10. To assist with the communication of all Equality and Diversity issues to all staff, partners and learners.
11. Audit and monitor equality, inclusive learning and widening participation through teaching observation, self-assessment and internal review.
12. To report the recommendations and actions of the committee to the Quality Council.

## **Director of Quality**

The Director acts as a co-ordinator on issues concerning equality and diversity in the curriculum and ensures that there is effective co-ordination of diversity initiatives throughout the college. The Director collates the Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) into a college-wide EDIM and action plan for the forthcoming year. The Director will deal with complaints concerning equality and diversity and advise areas on their EDIMs. The Director assists with the construction and delivery of a continuous programme of staff development for the staff of the college. The Director will monitor lesson plans and schemes of work to ensure that issues of Equality and Diversity are prevalent in the learning of our students.

## **Human Resources**

The Head of HR ensures that our Equality and Diversity objectives are followed and promoted in employment policies. The Head is responsible for the monitoring of enquiries, applications, employment and leavers from all groups. He is responsible for monitoring the take up of staff training opportunities for the revision and writing of HR policies and procedures ensuring they comply with the requirements of our this Single Equality Scheme.

HR has a responsibility for equality and diversity monitoring of staff:

- advertising for posts
- enquiries for advertised posts
- applications for all new posts within the college
- successful applicants
- current staff
- promotions
- the continuous staff development of staff
- roles and responsibilities of staff
- pay grades and salary levels

Difficulties may arise when gathering information on employees and applications for employment due to how secure and confident individuals feel in revealing personal information.

We aim to strengthen our monitoring of data through

- demonstrating commitment to equality and diversity at all levels and within all functions
- creating an atmosphere and culture of trust where staff feel sufficiently secure and confident to release personal information
- collecting and analysing employment monitoring data on a regular basis explaining why the information is needed and giving reassurance about confidentiality

- continued monitoring of our employment activities
- providing employment monitoring data to SLT.

HR leads on employment relations and provides a framework of advice for individual members of staff and means of working with recognised trade unions on matters of employment and conditions of service, including equality and diversity. We see the trade unions as our partners in tackling discrimination and championing Equality and Diversity.

We will:

- ensure we are compliant with current legislation covering equal opportunities and diversity?
- improve data about how successful our recruitment and selection processes are at attracting candidates from different backgrounds
- advertise our vacancies in ways that will attract candidates from a broad range of backgrounds  ensure there is no inherent bias in our selection process

We will look to growing expertise from within our workforce by:

- application of our rigorous appraisal system to recognise and improve the achievements and skills of staff
- developing a CPD programme that improves the chances of promotion or advancement of their careers for members of staff
- working in partnership with other colleges including higher education institutions, to provide training and sharing of expertise
- working with our partners and local organisations to improve the skill sets of our employees
- working with our funding bodies on a local and regional level to provide opportunities for our staff

### **College Management Team**

The College Management Team consists of the SLT, Heads of Divisions and Departments. The CMT lead the contribution of the teams throughout the college to the operational interpretation of the strategic aims for Equality and Diversity. They ensure that good equality and diversity practice takes place within their area and that teaching, learning and the support functions operate according to best practice. The members of the CMT support equality and diversity in their areas and ensure it is given a strong focus in strategic reviews. They are responsible for the formation, supervision and review of the Equality and Diversity Impact Measures for their area.

### **All Staff**

Every member of staff has a key role in promoting Equality and Diversity in the workplace and with our learners and partners. There are many opportunities to increase their knowledge through staff training days, seminars and bespoke training in their areas. All Teacher Education Courses have input on equality and diversity and embedding this within the curriculum.

To enable staff to fulfil their duties we are implementing a training programme that will cover all staff in the college:

- all staff have attended a short introduction to equality and diversity. This was to place it directly with thin the remit of quality of experience of the student and outstanding teaching and learning
- a series of 45 minute sessions are planned to explain the legal requirement of equality legislation held a various times of the day to ensure the attendance of all staff.
- individual consultations by the Director of Quality with all curriculum and support teams on the role that their area can play in ensuring that we are a beacon in terms of equality and diversity
- Teaching and Learning Coaches have been established to promote and support best practice in Teaching Learning. □ further training is then planned which will be designed to meet the needs of each area within the College

### **Developing our SES**

We realise the challenge we face in collecting, collating and acting on information to ensure we raise standards, including tackling race discrimination and promoting race equality and diversity. We have consulted with external agents and bodies and drawn on the experience of several areas of the college including the School of English and International section.

### **Policies and procedures**

We are currently undertaking a review of all our policies and procedures. This includes those that affect students, staff in place and recruitment, marketing and internal/external communications Each policy/procedure has an author/owner who is responsible for

undertaking its regular review and checking its impact using the published Equality Impact Assessment toolkit.

When using the Equality Impact Assessment the College will:

- clarify the main aims of the policy/procedure and the users that will be affected
- consider the data/research available to assess likely impact on equality
- complete the screening stage and decide whether further assessment is necessary
- if further assessment is needed, assess the likely impact on equalities:
  - is it discriminatory?
  - is it unlawful?
  - is it justifiable in law?
  - does it advance or restrict equality?
- consider alternative ways of delivering the policy, or procedure in order to minimise negative impact or eliminate unlawful discrimination
- assess whether any further research or consultation is needed to investigate the impact of the proposal on diverse groups
- consult relevant stakeholders
- make arrangements to monitor and review its impact.

At the end of the assessment a copy of the assessment report will be attached to the policy and passed to the Quality Co-ordinator. If no issues are apparent then the policy and the EIA will be passed to the SLT for approval.

All key policies and procedures are passed to the Corporation and the Equality and Diversity Committee for information and comment.

### **Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs)**

Each Service and curriculum area produces its own equality and diversity impact measures as part of the SAR and SSAR process. This is a translation of the strategic aims of the college to the individual areas and concretises the actions necessary to meet the college's obligations and duties. The Director of Teaching and Learning is able to advise.

These EDIMs are then sent to the Director of Quality who collates them into a College wide EDIM. This forms part of our annual review of our Equality and Diversity Action Plan.

## **Single Equality Action Plan (SEAP)**

The Single Equality Action Plan sets out our planned actions to achieve our obligations and duties under the law as outlined at the beginning of this document. Much of this contains the constant review and if necessary rewriting of our policies and procedures but also must be read in conjunction with the college EDIMS. Where the SEAP is to cover three years EDIMS cover the progress over one academic year.

If as a result of the monitoring and policy investigations carried out under the SEAP further long term planning becomes apparent these will be added into our SEAP.

### **Conclusion**

We have great ambitions but these are linked to the regeneration of education in Hastings and of the area itself. To have less than these ambitions would be failing those who have invested, and continue to invest, time, money and energy into our move. We would also be failing the people of the Hastings and Rother area who deserve the best. These people have the right to be able to compete in an environment that is increasingly becoming regional, national and international.

We mean to raise the aspirations of our community, to break the cycle of unemployment and low incomes and to be a central element of the regeneration of the area.

To enable us to do this we must welcome and encourage the best to work and study in Hastings and prepare all our staff and students for the challenges ahead. A major way in which we will do this is to provide an environment and atmosphere that encourage all, no matter what their race, religion and belief, sex, age, disability, sexuality, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy status or culture, to come and participate in a journey that is both challenging and exciting.