



Disability Equality Scheme

SUE COOLE
Vice Principal, Learner Support & Community Links

Originally Agreed: December 2009
Revised/Amended August 2010



Disability Equality Scheme

This Policy is available in other languages and formats upon request by telephoning the College on 0845 52 12345.

Policies and Procedures made by the Principal and Chief Executive under Delegated Authority from the Corporation

These policies and procedures are made by the Principal and Chief Executive of the College using the powers delegated by the Corporation in accordance with the Instrument and Articles of Government.

They are intended to ensure that the matters concerned are not only conducted fairly, appropriately and in accordance with the law where required, but also promote the purposes of the College and its customers.

The policies and procedures may be revised or amended from time to time in the light of experience or changing circumstances.

If you have any observations on these policies and procedures, please write to the Principal and Chief Executive.

.....
Jan Hodges
Principal and Chief Executive

.....August 2010

Equality Impact Assessment

Date of Equality Impact Assessment	25 th August 2010
Name of policy, practice, process or procedure	Disability Equality Scheme
What is the main aim or purpose of the policy, practice, process or procedure?	To meet legislation in eliminating discrimination re disabled people and promoting equality of opportunity
Who is responsible for creating/implementing this? Please state job role	Sue Coole Vice Principal, Learner Support & Community Links
Names of staff, students, stakeholders involved in the equality impact assessment process	Sue Coole, Sandy Connors, Sharon Cousins, Equality and Diversity Group

Information to support the impact assessment process

What evidence is already available to help inform the impact assessment process and to promote the general and specific duties related to equality and diversity? (Consider both quantitative and qualitative information)	Equality and Diversity Reports Development Plans re E & D Development Plans & SARs re Learning Support
In what areas are there concerns that the policy, practice, process or procedure could have a differential impact? (Please circle or highlight)	Age Disability Race Religion or Belief Sex (Gender) Sexual Orientation Gender Reassignment Marriage & Civil Partnership Pregnancy & Maternity Other: • Social Class/Background • Language
What are the risks associated with the policy, practice, process or procedure in relation to the differential impact?	None
What are the expected benefits of the policy, practice, process or procedure?	To eliminate discrimination within the College to promote opportunity for learners and staff

Equality Action Plan

Please list any recommendations for action that are planned as a result of this impact assessment

(Categories: Age, Disability, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex (Gender), Sexual Orientation, Gender Reassignment, Marriage & Civil Partnership, Pregnancy & Maternity, Other - Social Class/Background, Language)

Identify groups	Action required/changes and modifications to outline of the promotional benefits	By Whom	By When	Evaluation and Date
Race, Social Class & Background	To provide the Disability Equality Scheme in a variety of mediums as required (Statement on Scheme)	Sue Coole	25.08.10	January 2011

If the action proposed will not fully eliminate negative impact, why is this and how can it be justified?	N/A
General comments/concerns	None

- This document has been impact assessed against the Communication Guidelines and Equality Impact Assessment process

Disability Equality Scheme

Report for 4th December 2009

(Amended in August 2010 re merger titles. A full rewrite of the Scheme will be incorporated into the Single Equality Scheme which will become operational by October 2010)

- South Essex College recognises the need for ongoing development of the Disability Equality Scheme and consequently will update the Scheme and the Action Plan from time to time as required.
- South Essex College intends to incorporate the Disability Equality Scheme into a Single Equality Scheme however this will not now take place until after 1st January 2010 when South East Essex College officially merges with Thurrock and Basildon College and adopts its new responsibilities and title as: South Essex College of Further and Higher Education.

1. Introduction Context and Legislation

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 has been amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. The legislation introduces general and specific duties to promote disability equality. The general duties require South Essex College 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 towards disabled persons
- Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and
- Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons

The specific duties require the College to publish a Disability Equality Scheme which sets out the framework on how it plans to meet the general duties.

Rights under the Act

The DRC code of practice confirms:

The Act gives protection from discrimination to a 'disabled' person within the meaning of the Act. A 'disabled' person is someone who has physical or mental impairment which has an effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. That effect must be:

- Substantial (that is, more than minor or trivial) and
- Adverse; and Long term (that is, it has lasted or is likely to last for at least a year or for the rest of the life of the person affected).

Physical and mental impairment includes sensory impairment. Hidden impairments are also covered (for example, mental illness or mental health conditions, learning disabilities, diabetes or epilepsy).

The Social Model of Disability

The Social Model of Disability has been used by disabled people when campaigning for civil rights and anti-discrimination legislation for 30 years. The Disability Rights Commission confirms 'A Social Model approach states that people with impairments are disabled by physical and social barriers'. The 'problem' of disability results from social structures and attitudes, rather than from a person's impairment or medical condition. This approach has influenced a rights-based view of equality for disabled people and represents the key to understanding and implementing the Disability Equality Duty, the aim of which is to understand and dismantle the barriers which exclude and limit the life chances of disabled people'.

The College aims to continue to develop a more enabling environment and a non-discriminatory culture throughout the College community. This will require continual monitoring of the environment, services and facilities provided by the College to learners, staff and other users of the College.

South Essex College Strategic Plan 2009-2013 (Draft)

South Essex College's new Strategic Plan for 2009-2013 is still at the draft stage due to ongoing feedback from the wide ranging consultation with learners, staff, key stakeholders and partnerships

Vision: Transforming Lives Through Learning

- Providing outstanding education and skills training to create excellent opportunities for the people and employers of South Essex.

Core Values:

- Focusing on learners and delivering excellence in learning and teaching
- High quality services and standards
- Inspiring and empowering staff and learners to achieve their full potential
- Inclusive ,supportive, welcoming and safe
- An innovative and creative approach
- Working in effective teams and partnerships

Key Strategic Priorities:

- Learner Success
- Raising aspirations and participation
- Meeting learner, skill and community needs
- 21st century learning environments
- Effective and efficient delivery operation

Key Performance Measures

- Success rates /Inspection results /external review and audit
- Learner numbers
- Learner and employer satisfaction rates
- Delivery of capital projects and accommodation strategy
- Outstanding financial management and control/achievement of key HR performance measures.

Key Messages related to Disability Equality

- The College has an inclusive approach to staff and learners and takes positive steps to promote equality of opportunity. The College aims to promote opportunities and to enable people with disabilities to work and learn at the College.
- The College's publicity reflects the range and variety of people with disabilities who learn and work at the College.
- The College has fair and appropriate systems for the recruitment and selection of learners which ensures that learners with disabilities and difficulties are not disadvantaged.
- The College has robust systems in place for assessing individual's needs; this includes both hidden and physical disabilities. Support and teaching staff work together to meet the needs of learners with disabilities and difficulties to ensure access to the curriculum, equipment and physical resources.
- Learners and staff are aware of how they should treat people with disabilities and the College's expectation on this.
- The College actively seeks the views of learners and staff with disabilities and difficulties and acts on these views.
- The College monitors the participation of staff and learners by disability and has a clear policy on equality of opportunity.

- College staff/learners participate in equality and diversity training and activities aimed at raising awareness of people with disabilities and difficulties.

Local Context

The College has over achieved its learner number recruitment targets for 2006-2008 for 16-18 Further Education learners and is set to continue this trend for 2009-2010. Higher Education has continued with year on year growth with the Adult Learner Responsive contract value exceeded; based around the key priorities of Full Level 2, Full Level 3, Skills for Life and the Foundation Learning Tier.

Over the last three years there has been significant growth in learner numbers with a consistent year on year rise with the catalyst being the central Southend Campus, the College reputation, the overall success via the Ofsted Inspection Visit in 2008 and the continually rising success rates, together with improvements in retention and achievement.

Proportion of Disabled People

	UK*	Essex*	SEEC Staff+	SEEC FE Students++
Population	58,789,194	1,310,835	1091 (07/08) 1043 (06/07) 1013 (05/06) 988 (04/05) 1004 (03/04)	9207 (07/08) 9094 (06/07) 9083 (05/06) 8932 (04/05) 10264 (03/04)
Population declaring disability/long term illness	10,855,853	215,471	23 (07/08) 18 (06/07) 16 (05/06) 9 (04/05) 10 (03/04)	1008 (07/08) 732 (06/07) 729 (05/06) 672 (04/05) 1027 (03/04)
Percentage of the Population	18.5 %	16.4%	2% (07/08) 1% (06/07) 1% (05/06) 1% (04/05)	11% (07/08) 8% (06/07) 8% (05/06) 8% (04/05) 10% (03/04)

* National Census Data

** It is recognised that 1% (Nationally 5/6%) is low for staff declaring a disability and this is reflected in the DES Action Plan.

+ From South East Essex College's MIS system and the annual Equality & Diversity Report

++ Student numbers are based on headcount and not enrolments

It is acknowledged that not all disabled people identify themselves as having a disability, or are reluctant to disclose their disability. These statistics must, therefore, be taken in context. Staff has an opportunity to disclose a disability when recruited and a Medical Disability Register is being introduced in 2009/2010 so that all staff have an opportunity to declare a disability whilst in service.

The purpose built College campus at Luker Road continues to have a significant impact on learners and staff with disabilities. The extensive facilities incorporate:

- Electronic Entry/Exit doors
- Ramps for wheelchair users
- Lifts for people with mobility difficulties, wheelchair users , hidden disabilities
- Accessible electronic entry/exit points for wheelchair users
- Car Parking for people with disabilities
- Braille signage in all areas
- DRC compliant signage and directions throughout the College Estate
- Adaptive technology for general and web based IT
- Provision of information available in alternative formats
- Portable loop for people with hearing impairments
- Access for wheelchair users into the Performance Pod and 'inclusive seating areas'
- Fire resistant lifts for use by people with disabilities during an emergency evacuation. Personal Evacuations Plans (PEEPS) are developed for all staff/learners that identify a disability/difficulty at recruitment /enrolment. Later declarations of disability will also have access to PEEPS.
- Colour contrast paint colours for stairways, doors, corridors etc
- Specifically designed personal care areas which have enabled us to work with learners who have high levels of physical support needs.
- Shower rooms for people with disabilities/difficulties
- Unisex toilets for people with disabilities
- Adjustable chairs, tables and equipment for learners/staff with disabilities/difficulties.

The College's other sites at Queens Road and East Street also provide accessible entrance and exit, lift provision for people with disabilities, and unisex toilets for people with disabilities . East Street also has access to parking for people with disabilities. Queen's Road staff/learners would be able to access the Luker Road Car Park and facilities.

The Ofsted Report, for South East Essex College, published in July 2008, stated that 'the promotion of equality of opportunity is outstanding'. 'The College's response to the requirements ofSpecial Educational Needs and Disability Discrimination Act 2002 (SENDA) is very good. The reporting

of performance of different groups of learners and staff is meticulous. Positive action is taken to challenge discrimination and preconceptions ‘

Learner support and guidance at the College continues to be seen as crucial to learners with disabilities and difficulties achieving their main qualification and progressing onto further education or higher education programmes. The service comprises four main areas: information, advice and guidance, academic tutorials and learner voice, academic support and learning support, which also incorporates additional tutorials and continues to be refined and developed to meet the increasingly diverse needs of the learners with disabilities. External quality measures have identified good practice throughout the whole area; this includes inspection of SPDNS, our personal care /support experts who work with learners with high levels of physical disability.

The College remains a comprehensive and inclusive organisation recruiting a more diverse range of learners with disabilities/difficulties in recent years. This has resulted in extensive work with some learners, who have extremely high support needs, to achieve funding via the Improving Choice route. Learner recruitment is often in partnership with other organisations and agencies such as:-

- Connexions (via the PA responsible for young people with disabilities)
- Local mainstream schools
- Essex & Thurrock mainstream Schools
- Special Schools (Southend/Essex /Thurrock)
- Special Needs Departments in Children’s Services
- Teachers of the Deaf
- Teachers for Visual Impairment
- Supported Housing organisations
- Learning & Skills Council (Improving Choice Project)
- HI/VI organisations and agencies
- Advocacy Services for people with mental health issues (Rethink, Cruise etc)
- Primary Care Trust
- Children’s Trusts
- 14-19 Vocational Pathways Network
- Networks for FE for : Equality & Diversity , Learner Support , Student Services provided via Association of Colleges for the Eastern Region

The College continues to work closely with the Children’s Service in Southend to identify a way of obtaining transitional information in a timely fashion to aid planning, for both learners who have statements around their disabilities, and those who are receiving support and have hidden/undiagnosed disabilities/ difficulties but are not statemented . Both Southend and Essex Children’s Services are working on reducing the number of learners with disabilities who go into residential Colleges. This is primarily a funding issue but also links into the local aim to keep young

people with disabilities in their own communities. This has had, and will continue to have, an impact on the number of young people who are applying for places at the College and have a high level of disability/difficulty and consequent support requirements.

The College remains proactive in providing a range of services and activities for young people; which are based on the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes enshrined in the Children's Act 2004:

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoying and Achieving
- Making a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well being

The College's Young People's Plan (Revised November 2009) identifies the wide range of priorities and underpinning activities that run alongside course delivery and is integrated into the Southend Children's Partnership Plans published by both Southend and Essex LEAs. A proactive approach has been made to incorporate young people with disabilities/difficulties into all activities.

The College has an enthusiastic and dynamic Equality and Diversity Advisory Group, which underlines the College's approach to people with disabilities/difficulties. This has led to the College being recognised as outstanding by Ofsted Inspectors, the LSC as reflecting best practice in Essex and once again in September 2009 gaining re-accreditation of the Matrix Award. The Matrix Assessor commented that 'the organisation's commitment to equality of opportunity was transparent throughout the Accreditation Review, with services targeted at those clients who are most disadvantaged. Support for learners with additional support needs, including literacy and numeracy, and learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities was impressive throughout the review. Furthermore, the Student Support Services partnership arrangement with a third party specialist care provider has enabled pro-active engagement, retention and achievement of learners who might not otherwise attend the College.'

An inclusive model for Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) has been introduced cross College with all College Managers undertaking training in how to use the model during 2009. The model has been implemented via a whole College Staff Development Day in July following which monitoring processes have been put into place. The Equality and Diversity Group are responsible for monitoring impact and processes and reporting to Academic Board twice a year.

The current Equality and Diversity Policy (revised 2009/10) states that:-

'South Essex College is committed to the promotion of equality and diversity for all learners, employees, and all other users of the College. We aim to ensure that the environment is one where all individuals are treated with

courtesy and respect and their contribution to the learning process is valued. We aim to create and maintain the conditions whereby learners and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, regardless of ethnic or national origin, **disability**, gender, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, social class or other distinction.

The College's Marketing Strategy continues to promote a proactive approach to developing marketing materials which reflect the diverse group of learners within the College; particularly those who have disability/difficulties. The Marketing and Publications Officer:-

- is a member of the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group
- has increased Marketing representation on E&D Group
- has disseminated information to the group along with other Marketing Department staff
- continues to have links with a transcription service
- produces Braille Prospectus as requested
- monitors adherence to equality and diversity targets during the whole production period of publications.
- has obtained and printed stories and interviews from a range of different stories and obtained a wide variety of viewpoints
- has improved representation in advertising
- provides large print formats of publications on demand
- has received praise regarding the Higher Education Prospectus re the diversity of images representing the College as an inclusive, friendly and exciting place to study.

2.0 Involvement of staff and learners in the continuing development of the Disability Equality Scheme

Equality of opportunity for people with disabilities/difficulties continues to be embedded in the College policy and practices from admissions through to progression from the College. There are fair and appropriate systems for the recruitment and selection of learners with disabilities and difficulties that promote equality of opportunity using a standard application form and transparent recruitment and selection processes.

The College is widely recognised by Ofsted and other stakeholder organisations as being committed to providing the support required to meet individual needs and requirements. A joint approach to transition planning for learners with difficulties and disabilities is well developed with local schools and continues to develop apace to incorporate and embed personalised learning. Specialist assessments, utilising a wide pool of external facilitators and experts, ensure that individual needs and requirements are met to enable them to succeed on their chosen programme. Multi-agency partnership working is very well developed and ensures access to a wide range of services to meet support requirements.

The College has dedicated staff to support those learners with physical disabilities and has a range of equipment to meet learners' requirements including laptops with voice activated software and a wide variety of adaptive technology. Improving Choice funding has enabled adaptive technology to focus on an individual's very specific needs which has provided the opportunity to grow and develop further regarding support and access via high grade technology. Learner Services staff are involved in ongoing continual professional development to become multi-skilled to support a variety of learners, an example being educational communicators for hearing impaired learners having undertaken training to enable them to support visually impaired learners and severely dyslexic learners who require communicators as well as note-takers. This development continues to be an innovative, economically viable way of meeting the needs of learners whilst enabling the organisation to retain highly specialised staff.

2.1 Involvement of staff in the continuing development of the scheme

The College continues to celebrate and value the diversity brought to its workforce by individuals. The College is committed to equality of treatment for all employees regardless of whether they have a physical or mental impairment and will treat all employees with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a positive working environment free from disability discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The College will seek to continue to not only eliminate disability discrimination, but also to create a positive inclusive ethos with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice and disability discrimination, to respecting diversity and difference, and to encouraging good relations between disabled people and non-disabled people.

To progress the above agenda, the College has set up a Staff Disability Group and Student Disability Group to monitor the improvement of provision for disabled employees and learners. In order to encourage active involvement of staff with disabilities in continuing to shape future equalities strategies at the College Staff Disability Surveys are used and invitations are sent out to all staff with Disabilities to take part in Focus groups to discuss areas of success as well as developmental needs to achieve disability equality.

Staff Disability Survey and Telephone Support System

It is recognised that a number of staff may have become disabled since they joined the College and also that a number of staff may have conditions which have only recently been covered under the remit of the DDA. Therefore the original survey aimed at helping to identify staff and managers who could benefit from having support or reasonable adjustment arrangements as required by the DDA.

Staff have been actively encouraged to come forward and be involved in shaping the services to better meet the needs of existing and future staff with disabilities. Staff who have disclosed are encouraged to provide details of their needs to a First Aiders confidential helpline which is aimed at obtaining the right level of support for the individual, as speedily as possible.

Staff Disability Focus Group

There continues to be a very positive interest from staff with disabilities in being involved in a Focus Group which aims to actively involve, engage and consult staff with disabilities to ensure that 'we get it right', particularly when developing the revised Disability Equality Scheme and the action plans. The Staff Disability Focus Group meets each term with the aim of hearing from staff who have a physical or sensory impairment, mental health difficulty, chronic or progressive illness/ condition which has a substantial and potential long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out everyday tasks, about their views on:

- how effective the measures taken by the College so far have been to meet their particular needs and the needs of people with disabilities generally
- what needs to be done further to remove barriers and to promote equality for disabled people

We have some valuable feedback from both the Staff Survey as well as the meeting of the focus group which has been collated below:

Feedback from disabled staff

Areas of Success	Developmental Needs /Areas for Action.
<p>Signage in the Pod and visual alert for learners/staff with Disability.</p> <p>Temperature in the building has improved due to the ongoing employment of specific heating and cooling specialists. This has improved the working conditions for staff with chronic back/shoulder/ arthritis health issues.</p> <p>Lift Queuing system, on ground floor for both staff and learners has improved ease of movement around the building .Signage, outside the lifts , has also been improved and the purpose is far clearer.</p>	<p>More awareness raising required to continue to encourage staff with disabilities to disclose</p> <p>More information required about help, support and resources available for staff & learners with disabilities.</p> <p>Continue to explore flexible options for disabled staff, part time contracts rather than hourly paid contracts.</p>

<p>Recruitment literature has been improved regarding the College's commitment to disability equality and support requirements.</p> <p>Recruitment process for applicants declaring a disability has been improved by automatic short listing of applicants who reach the essential Job Specifications.</p> <p>Two Ticks for Disability achieved.</p> <p>Staff Disability Focus group has supported staff to declare a disability and various support mechanisms are in place to eliminate difficulties.</p> <p>Inclusive Risk Assessment process in place for staff and learners which informs requirements re Personal Evacuation Plans</p> <p>Access to the Luker Road building improved via automatic door opening at the top of the ramp.</p> <p>Continuing support for staff who have become disabled while at work to receive support via a phased return and Occupational Health support.</p>	
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2.2 Involvement of Learners in the Disability Equality Scheme

Continuing recognition of the update of the Disability Equality Scheme the College has continued with a variety of methods for applicants and learners with disabilities to remain actively involved.

The group comprises learners with a wide variety of disabilities difficulties, these included, for example: cerebral palsy, Duchenes Muscular Dystrophy, Auto-immune hepatitis, Depression, Asperger's syndrome and general Learning Difficulties. At termly meetings learners are given the opportunity to identify initial aspects of the college experience they consider to be 'good' and 'bad' in relation to studying at the college with a disability. Following on from this highly informative activity learners are asked to identify the aspects they would like the college to address. The findings of

these meetings are presented by the learners to the cross College Equality and Diversity Advisory Group.

In addition Equality and Diversity themed suggestion boxes have been situated in all the College Receptions and in the Library. These provide learners with a further opportunity to feedback views to the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group. The Suggestion Boxes have become far less popular as a feedback mechanism following the growth of the on line Student Forum and Student Council's Forums which are on SeeNet (the College's intranet facility). Learners use this as an ongoing mechanism to raise issues which relate to their College experience, curriculum, resource requirements etc.

In order to further ensure learner involvement in every aspect the College intends to continue with these approaches as they have proved to be extremely useful at initiating cross College change.

Areas of Success /Actions	Areas of development from previous Disability Scheme
Door at then top of the ramp opens automatically.	Door handle on Entrance Door at the top of the slope not easy for wheelchair users. Door needs to open automatically
<p>Ground Floor: Priority use of lifts for Wheelchair users or those with mobility issues.</p> <p>Notices re use of lifts rewritten with clearer message</p> <p>1st Floor Priority use of lifts in place for 2009/10 following requests from learners.</p>	<p>Use of Lifts: Wheelchair Users - those with mobility issues need to be given priority lift usage.</p> <p>Notices need to be rewritten to provide a clearer message for learners and staff and need to be placed both inside and outside of the lifts.</p>
Timetabling improved to meet individual requirement. Supported by priority lift usage.	Timetabling of some learners with personal care needs does not always allow them to have a rest/recreation break
This requirement is no longer needed due to the priority lift usage system.	Use of the Fire Lifts by Wheelchair Users and those with mobility difficulties may solve time and access issues.

3. South Essex College's Methods for Impact Assessment.

The College introduced an initial model of Impact Assessment which proved to be far too cumbersome and bureaucratic and did not easily provide feedback from learners /staff/stakeholders and users. The College reviewed its process following guidance from Dr Christine Rose, DDA Consultant. :-

- Developed an overall College approach to the production of materials/ policies etc that encapsulates good practice for people with disabilities. The College approach identifies colourways, font size, font format and where possible will apply SMOG testing or simplification of wording to aid access to information for all learners.
- Mapping all policies, procedures, plans and practices in each Faculty and Business Support Team
- Prioritise policies, procedures, plans and practices as high, medium or low in relation to the scale, significance or impact on disabled people.
- Gather information and evidence to inform the impact assessment process
- Make a judgement using all the evidence available and consider all six parts of the general duty to inform the judgement.
- Explore the options re adverse impact /opportunities to promote disability equality and amend/make necessary changes
- Implement monitoring processes and procedures regarding impact assessment completed
- Compile a summary report of the findings re each Impact Assessment undertaken to feed into an annual published report

In line with legal requirements the College is carrying out Disability Impact Assessments against all policies, procedures, plans and practices. This extensive work across the College is being led by the Director of Student & Community Services and members of the Equality and Diversity Group and other members of staff who are identified by their good practice.

The aim is to empower Faculties and Business Support Team following the training and support workshops held in 2008/09 & 2009/10 to identify the steps outlined above and to help staff to work through the processes required. Following this each Faculty /Team will be able to identify their own staff who will be supported to manage the impact assessment process.

4. Gathering and using staff disability information

The information gathered during recruitment provides some indication of the number of staff who consider that they have a disability.

In addition the College records data on disabled staff and reports annually on the following (please see the annual Equality and Diversity report):

- Recruitment activity (number of applications received/short listed/performance in selection activities/selected)

- Types of post (academic/business support/management)
- Length of service and turnover
- Formal Grievances, Disciplinary actions and invitation to Probationary review meetings
- take up of and success rates in staff development activities
- Appraisals
- Internal promotions
- Performance in annual salary reviews

The 2008-09 data is shortly to be analysed and the annual report drafted which will enable an analysis of any progress made and any actions required. The College aims to actively engage and involve disabled staff to assess the impact of its policies and practices to help identify barriers and address any directly or indirectly discriminatory practices.

5. Gathering and using student disability information

The College collects information about student disability status at application, interview and enrolment. In addition learners are able to declare disability at any point on their course and if sanctioned by the student, this information is fed back to Registry via Personal Tutors where it is logged on the electronic system. The data on disability status is used for monitoring processes in the following reports:-

- Enrolment (which includes information on application)
- Retention
- Complaints

Within these reports the disability status of learners is reported and compared with local and national figures where available.

The emphasis on Safeguarding has identified the need for processes for monitoring the student disciplinary process and student feedback by disability. This system is now in place with reporting mechanisms via both the Safeguarding Board and the Equality and Diversity Group.

In addition, the self-assessment process continues to require Heads of Faculty to report the retention and achievement of learners by disability status and compare this with college performance. Differences in performance are highlighted in the reports and actions for improvements are set. The process is repeated in College SAR and the data from this is used to review the College EDIMS.

Localised feedback is also gathered by Student Support Services from supported learners with disabilities/difficulties. The information gathered tends to inform service levels provided by the Student Support Services Team as opposed to cross College issues. This information will be used to inform the Team SAR and Development Plan.

6. Putting the information gathered to use to review action plan and later disability schemes (Staff)

Section 2 outlines the key action points suggested by the disabled staff. Some of these views reinforce some of the points already made at the Equality and Diversity Steering Group and discussions are underway to take some of these points forward.

Putting the information gathered to use to review the action plan and later disability schemes (Learners)

Section 2 outlines the key action points suggested by the disabled learners. Some areas for development are already reflected in the existing Equality & Diversity Action Plan and EDIMS and will be taken forward as part of the revised Disability Equality Scheme.

As identified in Section 4 the self assessment process is designed to incorporate feedback from learners. Disability data is analysed by Heads of Faculty and their staff, and strengths and areas of development identified which feeds into the School SAR and is incorporated into the College SAR and Development Plans.

The College continually strives to improve its data capture regarding learners with disabilities via admissions, enrolment and whilst on course. Non-declaration of learners with disabilities is sometimes identified during student reviews and disciplinaries and is often related to 'hidden' disabilities such as mental health, ADHD etc. This is reflected in the Disability Scheme Action Plan and improved disclosure will provide a more accurate Individual Learner Record (ILR) which will provide improved information for future planning.

The College is still working with Southend Children's Partnership to identify systems that need to be developed to enable the LEA to provide accurate transitional information for learners moving from school to College. This information will include statementing support requirements alongside academic records; this will enable the College to provide more accurate data with which to support learners and to provide more accurate ILR returns, SARs and Development Plans.

Areas of Success re Disability Equality

- Ethos of College and zero tolerance of harassment and bullying for all learners, including those with disabilities/difficulties.
- Annual Celebrating Success event for all learners
- Learning Support promoted during Induction for learners with difficulties/disabilities (especially hidden disability)
- Partnership with agency providing personal care for learners with disabilities
- Raised threshold of learners with disabilities receiving support

- Student Services relocated to a more accessible location for learners with disabilities
- Physical access improvements, e.g. ramps, doors, etc.(see above for fuller details)
- Improvements in marketing materials (see above for fuller details)
- Open nature of College and readiness to provide support for learners with disabilities
- Supporting learners with complex and cognitive needs on mainstream and discrete courses
- Achievement and progressions for learners with moderate/severe learning difficulties
- Identification of a number of learners with disabilities/difficulties who have not been picked up at school. Significant resources required for assessment
- Excellent on-programme support for learners with disabilities provided by learning support
- Emergency evacuation plans for disabled staff and learners (PEEPS, fire lift, etc.)
- Additional Flashing Alerts have been installed
- Review of Lift usage for learners and staff
- Disability Guide produced
- Blind student consulted on new College signage
- Audit of Library undertaken by Student Disability Group
- Audit of Scoff undertaken by Student Disability Group
- Additional funding achieved for learners via Improving Choice
- The Disability Group featured at Southend Council's Voice and Influence Fair
- Learning Support Manager nominated for prestigious LSIS Award for Student Liaison Officer
- Support for staff with disabilities/difficulties following long term sick leave

Areas to address re Disability Equality

- Continual reviewing of disclosure processes to develop new procedures and forms, including support plans
- Accuracy of ILR and SIR data and what we do with it
- Continue to embed DDA into day-to-day processes such as self assessment
- Monitoring the effectiveness of adjustments made for staff and learners with disabilities/difficulties
- Engaging learners with disabilities/difficulties to encourage independence and development of coping strategies
- Tutor reliance on learning support rather than recognising their own responsibilities to learners with disabilities/difficulties
- Confidence and knowledge of all staff to support learners with disabilities and difficulties – especially learners with ADHD/mental health difficulties

- Tutors understanding of their need to make adjustments for learners with disabilities/difficulties and meeting the expectations of learning support
- Customer care for learners with disabilities/learning difficulties
- Inconsistency of interview experiences of disabled learners
- Continuing training for staff/learners in line with legislation re. the DDA and Disability Scheme
- More awareness raising required to get across the message that it is okay to have a disability and that there are systems and processes to help staff with disabilities
- More information required about help, support and resources available for staff and learners with disabilities
- Need to promote staff well being more
- Continue to explore more flexible options for disabled staff, part time contracts rather than hourly paid contracts
- Monitor disability in Staff surveys as another valuable source of user evaluation.

Publication and Procedures

The College produces an annual Equality and Diversity Report which analyses data gathered for both learners and staff. As a result of the analysis an Action Plan is developed which the Equality and Diversity Advisory Group regularly monitor. The Equality and Diversity Group reports directly to the College Executive and also the termly Academic Board, which ensures that processes and procedures are reviewed and evaluated on a regular basis.

The Equality and Diversity Report incorporates the College's Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) which are integrated into the College's Self Assessment report and Development Plan.

The Equality and Diversity Report is placed on the Colleges Internet and intranet sites and is available in hard copy, as requested. The College Corporation receive the Equality and Diversity Report and analysis of the report at one of its Board meetings.

Appendix A

The Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan

The Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan is based on 7 key Themes

1. Promoting positive attitudes
2. Establishing a framework
3. The Student Experience
4. Learning and Teaching
5. Employment
6. The Estate
7. The wider community
8. Equality & Diversity Impact Measures

Timescale

Year 4: December 2009 – November 2010

Year 5: December 2010 – November 2011

Year 6: December 2011 – November 2012

The above timescales will need to be incorporated into the Single Equality Scheme which will be required to be completed by the end of 2011.

1. Promoting Positive Attitudes

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress /Update
1.1	Promotional Activities	Continue with awareness raising activities and disability promotion for College	To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people. Measure impact	External Agencies /Student Services /Student Forums /Staff Forums	Yr 4,5,6	
1.2	Information	Further information to staff/learners about 'what is a disability'	To further raise awareness and encourage people to disclose. Measure impact	Leaflets	Year 4,5,	
1.3	Staff development	Continue training for staff/learners in line with legislation re DDA and revised Disability Scheme	To ensure that training on equal opportunities and promotion of disability equality is available to all staff	College staff	Year 4,5,6,	
1.4	Information	Improve information for disabled people in staff/student publications, intranet & websites	To improve the information available to people with disabilities	N/A	Yr 4,5,6	

2. Establishing a Framework

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
2.1	Action Plan	Publish an annual report on the progress of the DES Action Plan	Ensure that the DES and action plan are progressed and agreed	N/A	Year 4,5,6, (Nov)	
2.2	Policies	Review existing Equality and Diversity Policy re disability (staff & learners) and amend as necessary	To inform the College learners and staff of their rights and responsibilities related to the DDA and the DES	N/A	Annually	
2.3.1	Involvement of Disabled People	Review existing processes for involving Disabled People	To continue to involve disabled people , particularly in line with disability issues	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
2.3.2.		Ongoing consultation with disabled people		£2000 refreshments/ expenses	Year 4,5,	
2.4.1	Impact Assessments	Equality Impact Assessments procedure established	To assess the impact of policies and procedures on people with disabilities	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
2.4.2	Impact Assessments	Policies are screened for disability equality relevance and key policies identified for Impact assessment	To assess the impact of policies and procedures on people with disabilities	Staffing resources	Year 4,5,6,	
2.5.	Policy	Review disclosure processes for disabled staff/learners	To identify barriers to disclosure for staff and learners and amend recruitment, admissions and enrolment processes	Staffing Resources & Consultant	Year 4,5,6,	

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
2.6.1	Monitoring	Continue to collect and monitor EO data annually including information from formal complaints ,student disciplinaries and feedback from learners with disabilities	To use statistical data to inform Heads of faculties /Teams of strengths and weaknesses around learners with disabilities and to identify these issues through departmental SARS and Development Plans. To feed into the College SAR & Development Plans	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
2.6.2		Continue to collect and monitor staff EO disability data annually	To identify disability issues related to staffing in the areas of recruitment, selection, appraisal, staff development , promotion, pay & exit strategies	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data not yet available for 2008/09
2.6.3	Policies	Review Staff Dignity at Work Policy and student Bullying and Harassment Policy	To eliminate harassment and bullying of disabled people	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
2.6.4	Systems	Review the data available for the ILR & SIR for accuracy	Obtain information related to disabled people and check accuracy with learners and other information sources	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
2.6.5		Develop system to obtain transitional information from LEA , Children's' Services	To obtain historical information related to learners with disabilities related to statements & support as well as academic grades	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	

3. The Student Experience

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
3.1	Information	Review the opportunities learners are given to disclose a disability and provide further information on the advantages of disclosure	To increase disclosure and improve data on the experiences of learners with disabilities	N/A	Year 4,5,	
3.2	Student Support	Review existing provision and identify improvements for disabled learners	Provide a consistent and cohesive service for learners with any disabilities	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	

4. Learning & Teaching

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
4.1	Information	Develop and provide further guidance to teaching staff on accessible course design, delivery and assessment	To improve awareness of disability equality among teaching staff and further develop the skills required to make adjustments to meet expectations for support for disabled learners learning programme	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
4.2	Staff Development	Provide teaching staff with training sessions around specific disabilities	Sessions aimed at lessening tutor reliance on learning support and developing skills to support learners with disabilities Assess impact via Learning Observations	N/A	Year 4,5,6	
4.3.	Resources for Learning (IT)	Review assistive technology and adaptations to computer equipment and make recommendations	To ensure access to equipment for learners with disabilities	TBA	Year 4,5,6,	

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
4.4.	Student Support	Review procedures for individual exam arrangements including alternative assessments	To ensure arrangements are suited to the individual and are in line with awarding body regulations	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
4.5	Learning & Teaching	Review delivery methods and the impact on learners with disabilities	To improve access to the curriculum for disabled users	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
4.6	Equality & Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs)	Review achievement methods for learners with disabilities	To close the achievement gap to 2% for disabled learners when compared to non disabled learners.	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	

5. Employment

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
5.1	Disclosure of information	Review the opportunities provided for staff to disclose that they have a disability	To increase disclosure amongst staff	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
5.2	Information	Further develop information on provision for staff with disabilities	To improve information available	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
5.3	Recruitment	Review recruitment processes to ensure that they take account of people with disabilities	To demonstrate equality in line with being a two ticks employer Assess impact of two ticks system	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
5.4	Information	Information provided re: well being	To provide information about fitness facilities available to staff To link to Healthy College and Young People's Plans	N/A	Yr 4,5,6,	
5.5	Information	Communication with staff with hearing impairments	To explore ways of effective communication for staff with hearing impairments	N/A	Yr 4,5,6,	

6. The Estate

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
6.1	Estate management	Review notices for Lifts	Ease of access to lifts for people with disabilities	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
6.2	Estate Management	Continue to meet statutory responsibility regarding accessibility , signage etc	To ensure ease of access to the College buildings for people with disabilities	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	

7. The Wider Community

Action No	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
7.1	Services	Review information available to disabled people to access College services Provide training and advice re disclosure of disabilities	To ensure that disabled people can participate in all campus activities	N/A N/A	Year 4 Year 5 Year 6	
7.2	Widening participation	Open events & recruitment fairs to be managed by Student Support Services & Managers	To encourage participation of learners to progress onto FE/HE courses as appropriate	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	
7.3	Involvement of disabled people	Develop links with local & community groups and agencies	Systems in place to sustain links with people with disabilities	N/A	Year 4,5,6,	

8. Equality & Diversity Impact Measures

EDIMS Disability	Section of Policy or code	Action	Objective	Resources	Timescale	Progress Update
8.1	Services	To reduce data unknowns to 5%	To develop fuller data for interrogation	N/A	Year 4	
8.2	Services	To close the achievement gap to 2% for disabled learners when compared to non-disabled leavers	To identify curriculum and delivery gaps to meet/minimise the risk to Schools (Head of Business, Heads of Schools)	N/A	Year 4	