

## **DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY FOR BOLTON SIXTH FORM COLLEGE**

### **Forward**

As set out in its equal opportunities policy, its strategic plan and mission statement the College is actively committed to promoting the rights of staff and students with a disability. The College has embraced the disability agenda, as set out by the DDA and SENDA and is fully committed to the eradication of direct and indirect discrimination and harassment of staff and students. The College is proud of achieving the DWP's Disability Symbol and of its new buildings and plans for the town centre Campus, which are compliant with and beyond the DDA.

As per its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act, the College will regard as paramount the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons with and without a disability when performing its functions. This has been underlined in staff training events, assemblies, focus groups, lessons and tutorials and through the activities of the Equal Opportunities Standing Committee and the Student Council.

Under the DDA and the new Disability Bill, a 'disabled person':

***“has a physical or mental impairment which has an effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day functions. The effect must be substantial, adverse or long term (having lasted or likely to last for twelve months or more) and includes”***

- Sensory impairment and hidden impairments (e.g. dyslexia, epilepsy)
- Severe disfigurements
- Recurring and progressive conditions (e.g. MS, HIV infection, multiple sclerosis and cancer)

**VISION:** The vision of the College is to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability or learning difficulty so that all students maximise their potential and take advantage of the wider opportunities available to them at College.

**CONSULTATION:** the College has involved staff and students who have declared they have a disability/learning difficulty in the construction of this policy and in assessing the impact of current practice. This has been through focus groups and staff INSET. It has also used the expertise available from external agencies, such as the LSDA and DWP. The College is a member of the BADGE disability consultation group in the town.

**IMPACT ASSESSMENT:** All College staff took part in INSET training in July 2006, with a resultant impact assessment and action plan produced by all departments and service areas. A wider impact assessment was produced by the Senior College Manager responsible for equality and diversity and will be reviewed annually via the College's Equal Opportunities Review document.

Further INSET on mental health and wider disability issues is planned for 2008/09.

### **1.0 Requirements of staff**

It is incumbent upon staff to work towards this commitment through their professional duties. All staff will be expected to:

- Promote equality of opportunity
- Celebrate diversity
- Challenge stereotypes about those with a disability/learning difficulty
- Educate students for life and work in a multi-ethnic society
- Encourage integration of students from different backgrounds [ethnic, religious, gender, socio-economic, age, sexuality and disability]

This will be shown most obviously by teaching staff through the lessons and tutorials delivered and in the schemes of work that are produced. Initial guidance was set out for staff in a DDA training session in 2006 and is detailed in the College's Learner Support documentation. Additional guidance and accompanying training on dyslexia took place in summer 2005 and more is planned later in the 2008/09 academic year.

This policy will be launched to staff via a Disability Awareness Training Day in July 2006. All new staff receive this training as part of their induction. Equal opportunities training takes place regularly, the most recent being on inter-ethnic relations, held in May 2008.

Specific responsibilities under the policy apply to management staff, such as Heads of Department, Student Managers and all staff employed in recruitment and selection of candidates, who will be expected to monitor the workings of the policy via consideration of relevant performance indicators.

The policy is significant for all staff, teaching and non-teaching. All employees are asked to consider the significance of disability in the context of their work and are trained to avoid unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtless comments and stereotyping.

### **2.0 Monitoring of the policy**

It should be noted that race equality is already monitored as part of the College's Equal Opportunities Policy.

#### **2.1 Students**

Through existing reporting mechanisms, middle and senior management staff monitor the workings of the policy by producing the relevant performance indicators via their termly Self Assessment Report (SAR). Any 'equality gaps' should be highlighted and an action plan produced. Such action might include attracting more applicants with a disability onto specific AS courses, or to apply for places at university.

The College is committed to extending its existing good relations with its feeder schools and the LA in relation to attracting more applications from students with a disability.

The Assistant Principal (T&L) is responsible for collecting submissions from college managers and producing a comprehensive report on an annual basis, using benchmarks set for previous years at the college and on a national level where available.

Observation of teaching and learning includes consideration of equality issues in the classroom, with staff receiving written and oral feedback in their lesson review. All departments are offered guidance from the Assistant Principals (Student Services/Teaching and Learning) about how best to include disability issues in lessons and schemes of work.

The tutorial scheme of work includes a number of activities that seek to highlight disability and wider equality issues, to celebrate diversity and to encourage integration. Staff and students have also been responsible for the production of the College's acclaimed 'Celebrating Diversity' booklet. This aims to provide information, dispel ignorance and encourage integration and is issued to all staff and students, with accompanying training, as part of the induction process.

Feedback from students will be received via the online satisfaction surveys, focus groups, student manager and tutor records and by issues brought to the attention of the Assistant Principal (T&L) and the EO Committee.

## **2.2 Staffing**

This will also form part of the annual Equal Opportunities Review, with overarching responsibility that of the Principal and Personnel, who will collect and report using the performance indicators listed at the end of the policy. Accompanying targets are set to meet national and local benchmarks.

## **3.0 Publication of the policy and annual review**

This policy will be available to staff via the College website and staff intranet, to students (via the Equal Opportunities Committee, tutorial activities and the student handbook) and made available to external bodies (via the College website and Assistant Principal (Teaching and Learning)). The annual review will be available to the same parties and presented to the College Management Team and to the Governing Corporation.

## **4.0 Failure to follow the implications of the policy**

In the event that the policy is not followed, the usual disciplinary procedures will apply, in the case of both staff and students. Any evidence of inappropriate behaviour, attitudes and language will be dealt with severely, in accordance with existing procedures.

## **5.0 Performance indicators**

The College will continue to collect the following data, already included in its annual Equal Opportunities Review, to ensure effective monitoring of disability equality. Such information will be collected and aggregated using the disability codes adopted by the LSC and held on the College's database.

### **5.1 The following indicators will be reviewed by disability, ethnicity and gender:**

#### **Principal**

Exit interviews  
Complaints procedure  
Use of the staff discipline system

#### **Vice Principal (Curriculum)**

Student satisfaction survey  
Induction survey  
Quality benchmarks  
Observation of classroom teaching and tutorials  
Appraisal reviews

#### **Assistant Principal (Marketing and Admissions)**

Applications and Enrolments  
School and LEA liaison re applicants with a disability

#### **Vice/Assistant Principal (Student Services) Librarian**

Student Council representation	Library stock and access
Timetable	
Complaints procedure	
Focus group Surveys	
Production of annual review	
Students receiving study/learning support	Child Protection
Destinations of students	Counselling
Work experience	Careers

#### **Curriculum areas**

SAR analysis, including attainment, success and retention rates  
Recruitment onto courses  
Visits and trips

#### **CIS Staff**

Change of course	Receipt of EMA
Discipline System	Attendance
Retention	Subject choice
Course change	

#### **Exams Assistant**

Achievement by course and programme area

**Premises and Estates**

Access to rooms

Maintenance and access

**Personnel**

Job advertisements/method of recruitment

Job descriptions

Sickness procedure

Staff training arrangements

Grievance procedure

Applications for training

Contractual status

Staff Turnover

## **DISABILITY EQUALITY POLICY TARGETS AND ACTION PLAN**

The following information from the College's equal opportunities review provides an overview:

- Students with a reported disability or learning difficulty, on the whole, achieved results above the College average for their particular course at A level in 2006 but slightly below at AS level
- Students with a reported disability or learning difficulty, on the whole, achieved results above the College average for their particular course at Intermediate GNVQ
- Fall in the retention rate in 2005/06, with 79.2% of students with a disability and 74.2% of those with a learning difficulty completing their course in 2005/06
- 65% of applicants with a disability (63% in 2004/05) and 85% of applicants with a learning difficulty (79% in 2004/05) enrolled at College in September 2006
- 52% of students with a disability were on the discipline system in 2005/06. This is higher than the College average of 47% though is essentially made up of those with 'other disability' and a visual impairment
- Students with a disability or learning difficulty are proportionately more likely to take up an enrichment activity than those without
  
- 3.9% of applications for staff vacancies were from candidates who declared a disability
- A small number of staff have incurred a disability during their course of service
- 3.1% of staff have declared a disability though there may be under-reporting

## Short Term Disability Bill Action Plan (1 year)

Action	By Whom	By When
1. Ensure departmental representatives are selected and attend future meetings	RJH with HoDs	Next meet
2. Amend meeting cycle to incorporate half termly meetings of the committee	RJH with AJH	November 08
3. Be the representative of the College at the town's BADGE meetings	SMC	Ongoing
4. Raise concerns of learner services team re lack of in class and learner support for students	RJH at SMT	15/10/08
5. Identify date for INSET training for staff on mental health issues	RJH with SMT	15/10/08
6. Identify date for INSET training for staff on general disability/learning difficulty and refresher on DDA, with a repeat of the successful workshops held in 2006	RJH with SMT	15/10/08
7. Use RJH's office at Farnworth for learner support	SCC	Ongoing
8. Identify permanent 'home' for learner support at Farnworth	AJH with SCC	ASAP
9. Produce brief guidance sheet for staff acting as reader or scribe	SCC	Oct 24 <sup>th</sup>
10. Add acting as reader/scribe to the agenda of the October 24 <sup>th</sup> INSET	RJH	INSET 15/10/08
11. Facilitate arrangements for mental health training	KAH, RJH	Ongoing
12. SCC and KAH to update and circulate learner support flyer	SCC/KAH with RYD	ASAP
13. Continue to update information on students with a disability/learning difficulty to Unit E	SCC	Ongoing
14. Contact Mishka to create a Moodle page for Learner Support	RJH	ASAP
15. Contact MBF re Moodle training for learner support team	KAH	ASAP
16. Raise issues around support for Ismail, specifically a dedicated room with a hoist and arrangements for when SP is absent	RJH with SMT	ASAP
17. Send reminder email to staff teaching Ismail re the 'reasonable adjustments' requirement of the DDA and the need to include him in class visits.	RJH	ASAP
18. Write piece on Angela's training visit for staff dealing with Ismail to BITK	SP	Half term
19. Identify whether EO monitoring form can be part of staff questionnaire issued at October INSET	RJH with SMT	Oct INSET
20. To design the above monitoring form	DD/AO	Oct INSET

21. To ensure governor representation at the DDA Committee	LAH	Next meeting
22. Ensure focus groups of students with a disability/learning difficulty	RJH/SMC	Ongoing
23. Contact learner support students re issues arising for the next meeting	SCC	Next meeting

## Medium Term Action Plan (3 years)

Point	Action	By When	By Whom
1.	Ensure that the retention, attainment and success rates of students with a disability or learning difficulty are at the sector average	July 2009	All staff
2.	Continue to encourage staff who develop a disability to report this, so that the College population better reflects the national average (10% with a disability)	July 2009	Personnel/ DDA committee
3.	Ensure all College buildings are fully accessible to staff/students with a disability and that new buildings adopt the most appropriate technology to support such stakeholders	September 2010	SMT/Governors
4.	The College achieves the DWP Disability Symbol in each of the next 3 years	March 2009	LMJ/DDA Committee
5.	Raise the enrolment of students with a disability to the LEA average	September 2009	Marketing & Admissions with learner support
6.	Take further steps to encourage applications from potential staff members with a disability	September 2009	LMJ with personnel
7.	Embed the system of senior and middle management reporting to include all aspects of equality and diversity, including more extensive consideration of specific disabilities	December 2008	HoDS, SCMs and SMT
8.	Continue to improve systems for learner support so that this benchmarks facilities and top-performing colleges	September 2009	Learner Support team, SMT

### Long Term Action Plan (5 years)

<b>Point</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>By When</b>	<b>By Whom</b>
1.	To ensure all College accommodation more adequately meets the needs of staff and students with a disability	2008- 2010	Governing Corporation
2.	Ensure that all College staff are confident in delivering lessons and tutorials to students with a disability and learning difficulty and make any necessary individual adjustments	2010	SMT