



Single Equality Scheme

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Monitor Changes

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| 01 | New document | 04.04.11 |
| 02 | Updates following external consultation | 11.05.11 |
| 03 | Update to reflect changes to E & D Forum and Steering Group | 28.09.11 |
| 04 | Change of template | 01.02.12 |
| 05 | Update to reflect changes in practice and management responsibilities | 22.01.14 |
| 06 | Reviewed | 03.05.16 |
| 07 | Updated | 07.11.16 |
| 08 | Made changes to specific information about number of staff and the number of sites at Gateshead College. Re-ordered paragraphs and changed some sub-headers. Provided a clear description of equality and diversity. Updated commentary from last Ofsted inspection. Updated dates relation to the timeframe of the scheme and action plan. Provided an update on most recent consultations. Made reference to complaints procedures as there are a number of these rather than a single procedure. | 10.01.18 |
| 09 | Updated the number of employees as of 31/07/2018. Amended reference to the Specification of apprenticeship standards for England – Aug 2018 | 28.01.19 |

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| Key search words for this document |
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| Equality Duty |
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GATESHEAD COLLEGE

Single Equality Scheme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gateshead College

We are a large successful further education college with Beacon status and rated as outstanding by Ofsted. The College has full and part time learners following vocational and academic pathways from entry to degree level across all subject sector areas with the exception of agriculture and animal care. The College delivers: employer specific training and workforce development programmes; apprenticeships; professional qualifications; Foundation Degrees and Degrees; full time 16-18 provision.

We have c584 employees (including a casual population) working across 6 sites in Gateshead and Washington.

At Gateshead College we celebrate individuality, we are all individuals and have our own way of doing things, our own stamp and approach. It's important to not only acknowledge this, but to celebrate everything that we do. Creating the right environment, culture, processes and policies that fit our whole organisation. Our individuality is not only what makes us all unique, it is also our strength. It doesn't just apply to individuals; we have a diverse community and we are committed to maintaining an environment where diversity and mutual respect flourish and where everyone feels valued. Everyone who studies and works here has a responsibility to ensure that students and staff are free to pursue their college and work lives without any kind of overt or covert harassment or discrimination. We will continue to develop, promote, embed and evaluate so that college and work life is systematically and continuously improved for everyone.

THE STATUTORY FRAMEWORK

As a public body, Gateshead College operates within a legislative framework. In the context of the Scheme, the legislation below has a particular bearing on the implementation of College responsibilities; the previous individual duties (race, gender, disability) are now subsumed within the public sector equality duty (the Duty). The legislative frameworks are:



- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 - The Department for Education published an updated Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) August 2018
- The Equality Act 2010: Public Sector Equality Duty.

What is the Equality Duty?

The Equality Duty is a duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions (a public function is a function of a public nature for the purposes of the Human Rights Act 1998). It ensures that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work – in shaping policy, in delivering services, and in relation to their own employees.

The Equality Duty supports good decision-making – it encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities so that policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people’s needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people’s opportunities, public bodies are better placed to deliver policies and services that are efficient and effective. The Equality Duty therefore helps public bodies to deliver the Government’s overall objectives for public services. The Equality Duty is set out in section 149 of the Act.

What changed?

The Equality Duty replaced the three previous public sector equality duties – for race, disability and gender.

The Equality Duty covers the following protected characteristics:

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|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Age | Disability | Gender reassignment |
| Pregnancy and Maternity | Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality | Religion or Belief – this includes lack of belief |
| Sex | Sexual Orientation | It also applies to marriage and civil partnership , but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination |

The Equality Duty is designed to reduce bureaucracy while ensuring public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

Who does the Equality Duty apply to?

The Equality Duty applies across Great Britain to public bodies listed in **Schedule 19** to the Act, and to other organisations when they are carrying out public functions.



The aims

The Equality Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have **due regard** to the need to:

- **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

Having **due regard** means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by public bodies – such as in how they act as employers; how they develop, evaluate and review policy; how they design, deliver and evaluate services, and how they commission and procure from others.

Having due regard to the need to **advance equality of opportunity** involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is low.

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed by discrimination law. For example, it may involve making use of an exception or the positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic – such as providing computer training to older people to help them access information and services.

Taking account of disabled people's disabilities - The Equality Duty also explicitly recognises that disabled people's needs may be different from those of non-disabled people. Public bodies should therefore take account of disabled people's impairments when making decisions about policies or services. This might mean making reasonable adjustments or treating disabled people better than non-disabled people in order to meet their needs.

Specific Duties



The focus of the specific duties is transparency in how we are responding to the equality duty. It is important to note that institutions must meet both the equality duty and the specific duties – it is not enough to meet the specific duties alone.

There are three specific duties:

- publication of information
- equality objectives
- manner of publication

***Diversity** is about recognizing and valuing difference, where everyone is respected for who they are.*

***Equality** is about creating a fairer society, where everyone can take part and where everyone has the opportunity to be all they can be.*

All involved in successful learning need to understand themselves what it means to live in this diverse society, and to help young people understand what it means for them.

The Single Equality Scheme

It is deemed good practice to have a Single Equality Scheme in order to identify and focus on key objectives/priorities.

The scheme forms part of our strategic framework to comply with The Equality Act 2010. This framework also includes the College Equality & Diversity Policy.

This scheme describes how we, (Gateshead College) will fulfil our statutory duties to:

- promote equality of opportunity and diversity;
- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- place the advancement of inclusion, equality and diversity at the centre of what we do;
- ensure that the College operates best practice as an employer and service provider in pursuit of equality and diversity.

Single Equality Action Plan

The scheme sets out in the Single Equality Action Plan (SEAP), our equality objectives for the period 2019 – 2021 and how we intend to deliver them.



The SEAP is used to assess progress towards improving equality and diversity and meeting our key strategic-priorities.

The SEAP describes the contributions that individuals and departments will take against each of the priorities to help the College excel in the field of equality and diversity and ensure our policies, services and legislative activities take due regard to the equality strands.

Our Values

Our values express who we are and how we do things at Gateshead College. We expect everyone to behave in line with these values as they go about their day to day work on behalf of the college, we will not accept anything less.

- **Achievement** – We will always set the highest standards for ourselves, never accepting second best. We will stretch ourselves and our students so we all reach our full potential. Seeing our students achieve their ambitions is our greatest reward.
- **Excellence** – We want to excel in everything that we do. We approach every challenge with the determination to succeed and set ourselves the highest standards, always with the aim to outperform them. We work hard because we want to be the best and do the best for our students and stakeholders.
- **Partnership** – We work with others who share our values, high standards and aspirations. By teaming up we learn and discover new ways of doing things and can have a greater impact. We believe in long-term relationships.
- **Positivity** – We approach everything with a creative, can-do attitude. Positivity is contagious, it boosts the happiness, productivity and creativity of those around us.
- **Purposeful** – We are focused, effective and accountable. We concentrate on the things that will drive us forward and which we deliver the greatest results for our students, stakeholders and organization
- **Respect** – We are a team. We respect each other and value our differences. By being open and honest we build trust which is the foundation of all our relationships with students, partners and each other.

We want to secure and build upon our position as the best vocational college in the region and the sector; the college which gives students 'Employment Edge'.

This Single Equality Scheme summarises Gateshead College's commitment to inclusion and promoting equality and diversity. This is integral to Gateshead College's values.

Equality Analysis

The College has an Equality Duty to continue to examine policies, practices, services and functions to ensure they are fair and that none of them create adverse impacts or barriers for protected characteristic groups – see above.



The Equality Act 2010 does not specify how public authorities should analyse the effect of a new or revised policy or a service change, and has changed the terminology from 'equality impact assessment' to 'analysis of the effects on equality'.

The purpose of an Analysis of effects on Equality (AoE) is to improve the work of Gateshead College, by promoting inclusion and ensuring that services, strategies, policies and programmes do not fall foul of any of the prohibited discrimination types such as discriminating directly or indirectly against students and staff.

This requires the College to scrutinize what they do, how we do it and the decisions we make by means of an analysis of the effects on equality to ensure that our decisions do not have a negative or adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics.

The basic principle of equality analysis is to embed equality into the mind set of all so it becomes “business as usual” in everything we do. Equality Analysis will identify opportunities to improve or change policy, practice or process to promote equality in line with the statutory duties.

DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Scoping

The Scheme has been shaped and is underpinned by some established principles.

- The Scheme will reflect Gateshead College’s Mission, Purpose, Vision and Values.
- The operation of the Scheme will be open and transparent.
- Equality Analysis will be undertaken to support operation of the Scheme.
- Gateshead College will operate lawfully and within its remit.
- The Scheme will support us in fulfilling the aims of our Equality and Diversity Policy.

Consultation

In developing this scheme in 2011, we consulted with the following organisations:

- Equality North East
- Gateshead Council
- Public Services Academy
- Northumbria University
- NGI
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- Nissan
- Norcare

Representatives from Equality North East now have a place on our Equality Steering Group and are involved in reviews of the Single Equality Action Plan.



Views of our Workforce

We undertook internal consultation discussions and shared drafts with key stakeholders in the College such as the recognised trade unions (UCU and UNISON), Equality Steering Group, Equality Forum members, management team, leadership team and every individual member of the College staff.

Learner Involvement

Internal consultation on the implementation of the Scheme was undertaken with the students. Further consultation was undertaken with the Sabbatical President prior to the release of updated versions of the Scheme. Consultation was sought with the Sabbatical President during review of the Single Equality Action Plan 2016-19.

In addition to the above our Board of Governors have been consulted.

Gathering and Analysing Information

In creating this Single Equality Scheme, we researched our data sources, reviewed the quality of these sources and put plans in place to address any identified gaps. These plans are declared in our Single Equality Action plan.

Workforce Data

In 2007 the Board of Governors approved the implementation of a new HR information system, removing the disparate systems in place at the time. This new technology has enabled us to analyse and evaluate diversity data more effectively and identify any disparities in areas such as recruitment, training, pay, promotion, grievance, disciplinary measures and complaints. Our “self-service” functionality has improved our ability to capture diversity data directly from our employees which we have used to inform our decisions and actions.

In addition, we have used information gathered from our staff surveys.

Staff destination data has also been used in the analysis.

Learner Data

The level of data analysis and rigour has been improved through extensive E&D data collection which results in detailed equality data being available for our student population. This data can be analysed using our Digital Dashboard system available to identify outcomes, patterns and trends. In addition, we are also able to draw on intended and actual destination patterns of students who have completed their courses during the previous academic year.

Ofsted

At our most recent Ofsted visit Inspectors commented about the ‘highly inclusive ethos at the college, where relations between learners and staff are characterised by high levels of trust and respect, is replicated in the classroom and workshop. Tutors and assessors are skillful at integrating equality and diversity into their teaching and reviews, so that learners and apprentices can confidently explore areas, such as sexuality and cultural differences.’ The college was awarded a Grade 1 Outstanding for its outcomes for learners, quality of



teaching, learning and assessment, and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Resulting in a grade 1 for overall effectiveness. Inspectors commented:

'The college has not only maintained its 'truly inclusive' approach as identified at the last inspection, but has continued to develop this area. Targeted training to all staff has raised awareness and understanding even further, enabling staff to tackle equality and diversity issues confidently. A 'zero tolerance' approach to bullying and harassment ensures extremely low levels of incidents occurring.'

'Most importantly no groups of learners underperform compared to their peers or to national rates. Learners develop outstanding employability skills so that they have the 'employment edge'.

'Learners' progression between levels and to positive destinations when they leave college is outstanding.'

'The college has been a major partner in a superb programme aimed at enabling learners with learning disabilities or autism to develop the skills needed to gain employment. The number who successfully achieve this is outstanding. The College Foundation is an excellent source of support which enables learners to access learning, buy equipment or undertake trips and visits as part of their programme or personal development. Staff successfully encourage recipients to contribute in some way to the Foundation in return for this support.'

'The college's approach to safeguarding all learners and staff is outstanding.'

Performance Review and Assessment

The performance review mechanism is the main method of assessing the quality of individual learning programmes and driving their quality improvement for the benefit of learners and stakeholders. Since 2011 performance review has placed a greater emphasis upon identification and analysis of equality characteristic data. Curriculum Operations Managers and Assistant Principals use this data in making judgments during the annual Curriculum Review and Evaluation, and Self-Assessment processes.

There is a clear focus on equality and diversity within Curriculum Review through lesson observations and the review of planning and preparation for learning. Evidence collected includes for example, whether the tutor demonstrates inclusive practices, takes opportunities to promote and extend the students' knowledge of equality and diversity issues where they might be appropriate to the vocational area and if awareness is raised with student groups who may need to be aware of their responsibilities in respect of equality and diversity legislation when in the workplace.

Identified Priority Areas 2019-2021

Our equality scheme plan builds on previous schemes. It demonstrates, through our three-year action plan how we intend to move beyond compliance and focus on eliminating all forms of discrimination and inequality for the betterment of the people who use Gateshead College. The equality scheme's action plan is an evolving document that will be reviewed



and updated during the next three years with annual progress reports. Stakeholders will continue to be consulted and engaged with, to ensure that attention is given to matters which are important according to circumstances.

Communication & Awareness

The Scheme and SEAP will be available internally and externally in a range of accessible formats.

The Scheme and objectives will be integrated into Gateshead College business processes.

Accountability

The accountability for meeting the statutory duties and for the delivery of the Scheme rests with Gateshead College's Board of Governors.

The Principal/ Chief Executive has overall responsibility for Equality & Diversity and implementation of the College statutory duties.

The Principal/Chief Executive has designated the Director of Student Experience, and the Director of People and Organisational Development, as being responsible for championing and monitoring equality, diversity and inclusion across Gateshead College.

Reporting, Monitoring Progress and Review

The Equality & Diversity Steering Group, is chaired by the Director of Student Experience:

- drives the implementation of the Single Equality Scheme and action plan by on-going monitoring of performance and achievement of objectives
- identifies emerging issues and develops remedial actions
- Considers, discusses and implements best practice

The Director of Student Experience, and the Director of People and Organisational Development are responsible for ensuring the Equality & Diversity Policy is meeting its commitments by monitoring its implementation strategy.

In addition, the Director of Student Experience and the Director of People and Organisational Development produce and present a report to the Board of Governors as summarised below on an annual basis, highlighting areas of improvement and priorities arising for the following academic year.

- Progress against the objectives identified in the Single Equality Scheme and the delivery of the annual action plan reported by Chair of the Equality & Diversity Steering Group.
- Performance analysis of third party deliverers – Assistant Principal - Standards and Performance



- Use of positive statements and images across all aspects of College communication in order to promote our commitment to equality and diversity – Director of Marketing and Communications
- Summary of progress to narrow learner equality achievement gaps - Assistant Principal - Standards and Performance
- Summary of issues from recognised trade unions as required (UCU/UNISON) by the Director of People and Organisation Development
- Summary of adjustments made for individuals to enable equal access to college resource and services – Learning Services Manager
- Summary of complaints/grievances received in year from learners and staff - Director of Student Experience and Director of People and Organisation Development
- Staff and learner profiles with comparisons drawn against the local community - Director of People and Organisation Development, Director of Student Experience and the Funding and Data Manager.

All staff are responsible for supporting the achievement of the strategic priorities.

Course and service review and evaluation will provide the mechanism to identify gaps, actions for improvement and the subsequent impact of these actions in following years.

Gateshead College has a baseline of its workforce profile and student data. Annual analysis of this data will be used to measure the impact against our strategic priorities.

Expectations of Gateshead College Providers

All partners of Gateshead College have a responsibility to meet their legal obligations in their own right. Gateshead College trusts the professionalism of these organisations and institutions to operate and respond to their own public sector duties.

All those delivering publicly funded education and training are expected to use data, information and analysis to inform continuous improvement. This includes equality of access, retention and outcomes for all their learners.

Related Documents

- Equality & Diversity Policy (EQY-POL-001)
- Student Harassment/Bullying Procedure (STM-PRO-009)
- Complaints Procedures (STM-PRO-021-01, 023-03, 024-01, 025-02, 026-01, 027-01, 028-01, 029-01)
- Harassment Policy (HR-POL-003)
- Analysis of the Effects on Equality Guidance (QTY-QSD-GDE-004-01)
- Prevent Policy (GC-POL-007)