



Kendal College
a brighter future

Single Equality Scheme

Kendal College

The college has produced a Single Equality Scheme to be read in conjunction with the policy on Equality and Diversity

**Scheme and
Action plan**

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Part 1 - Introduction and foreword

The College values this opportunity to assess its current position in relation to the way we promote and assess all forms and strands of equality and diversity that affect all those who access all aspects of College life and to develop new ways of ensuring that everyone is able to access the best possible opportunities to join in with the culture of Kendal College.

The overriding purpose of the Single Equality Scheme (SES) is our response to the right of everyone in college to be treated with respect and dignity in an environment that values diversity whether it be staff and students receiving equal treatment or to eliminate attitudes and behaviour that prevent equal treatment.

There are 6 strands to our SES as follows:

1. Strand 1 – Disability
2. Strand 2 – Race
3. Strand 3 – Gender
4. Strand 4 – Sexual Orientation
5. Strand 5 – Age
6. Strand 6 – Religion and Belief

The scope of this scheme will include the following groups of people:

- Learners who currently are enrolled on Kendal College courses delivered on the College campus or delivered in the College name in the workplace or through one of our partner providers
- Learners who do not currently access our courses and for whom there are significant barriers to coming to College
- Staff currently working in the college or who are interested in applying to work at the college
- Visitors to the College, in particular those who access our services including the College restaurant, salons or conference facilities
- The wider community

This single equality scheme will become a key document and a framework for how we intend to take the key objectives of equality and diversity forward. It will show how the College intends to declare and promote its responsibilities as outlined in the Duty with the main aim of:

“Promoting an ethos of equality through the recognition and support of diversity in everything we do”

Through this, we will have as our main objectives the following key themes:

- Creating a positive atmosphere of shared commitment to value diversity and respect difference through seeing diversity as a celebration of differences between people

- Delivering a first class service with an inclusive ethos where teaching and learning responds to the needs of individual learners through equality of opportunity
- Achieving a more representative workforce, recruiting from a wider pool of applicants
- Better meeting the requirements of funding, audit and inspection bodies in relation to equality
- Promoting greater understanding of diversity among learners which will benefit society at large and support community cohesion

It will be the intention of the College to ensure these key themes are integrated into every facet of College life and will be monitored as part of the College quality cycle of self-assessment and included within the College strategic plan.

Graham Wilkinson
Principal

Part 2 – Vision, Values and Principles

Embedding equality into the College necessitates a whole-College approach and it will be our responsibility to ensure we become agents of change and set an example within our local community. We will ensure that our college is accessible to learners from all backgrounds and take account of community cohesion when developing new provision. We recognise the benefits of a single equality scheme to the college in stating its commitment to equality of opportunity and sets out our priorities for the duration of the plan.

To do this we have considered the following factors:

Involving staff at a senior level – Strategic responsibility for equality and diversity lies with a senior manager and there are clear links into other key agenda such as Every Child Matters, Skills for Life. **Assessing** impact of policies, procedures and practices is the responsibility of the appropriate senior managers working with their teams. The scheme and its linked procedures are **reviewed** and updated on an annual basis. Departmental self assessment, applicable to both curriculum and support areas, includes reference to equality and diversity and will make a contribution to the overall grade. Rights and responsibilities of learners as well as our responsibility to raise awareness to our employers and subcontractors are identified within the scheme.

Comment [b1]: Action plan

Comment [b2]: Action plan

Identifying and sharing a clear vision – staff development events, team **meetings**, staff briefing and inclusion within self assessment and lesson observation are all ways in which the vision of equality is being cascaded around the College and its staff. Within the timescale of the scheme, there will be an emphasis on ensuring that equality is fully embedded within all College activities. New staff induction will introduce staff to the opportunities presented through equality and diversity and we will welcome suggestions from our staff on how to improve community cohesion. Updates to college policies will be circulated to staff and a check on understanding carried out to ensure **compliance**.

Comment [b3]: Action plan

Comment [b4]: Action plan

Selling the benefits of equality and diversity – when College staff see the benefits to all of equality, then we will have taken clear steps towards the ethos of an inclusive College. Presentations are given to curriculum and support staff through team meetings, a staff briefing sheet prepared and distributed widely to show them easy ways in which they can be involved and to try to de-mystify the changes that they need to include within their teaching and service delivery. An Equality and **Diversity** module is delivered as part of the new staff induction programme.

Comment [b5]: Action plan

An annual collaborative college student event is preceded by college heats whereby teams of students put together a piece to celebrate diversity. All curriculum areas are encouraged to make entries and the celebration will be made a key part of tutorial **activity**.

Comment [b6]: Action plan

Communicating progress and celebrating success – we celebrate the successes of all our students and staff without specific reference to diversity and this is an area we intend to develop further through our action plan. Staff will be encouraged to put forward progress made with their own teaching or service that can be used as best practice for staff who may find it difficult to make changes to support equality.

Comment [b7]: Action plan

Positive action in respect of widening access will be more effectively communicated. This can be especially evidenced through increased provision for those not in employment and through the development of training linked to vacancies under the umbrella of the “JobWorks” programme.

Involving staff in the change process – more staff need to be prepared to volunteer to discuss their fears and concerns at every stage of the change process through discussion groups, team meetings and staff briefings. By getting more staff involved, equality will be more easily embedded into everything we do and will not be seen as solely the responsibility of our Study Services department.

Comment [b8]: Action plan

Staff development – in addition to ways of cascading of information as described above, equality is included within the overall College staff development programme. The programme has in the past included outside expertise and specific training sessions on dyslexia and deaf awareness, dealing with mental health and race equality. Individual training has also been given to staff on use of specialist equipment such as loop systems. Further staff development activities will be included within the timeframe of the scheme and there are number of DVDs available to staff to support small group work and curriculum tutorial. Additional training is also provided by experienced staff within the Study Services team to support tutors of disabled learners in the use of specialist equipment and strategies for dealing with different disabilities such as mental health or learning difficulties.

Recruitment of Learners – the importance of placing learners onto appropriate programmes is key to their individual success and continued participation in learning. Our curriculum has been developed to provide training at a level that suits individual needs and includes appropriate use of the foundation learning in developing provision below level 2 whilst at the same time, encouraging learners onto level 2 and higher provision where they are capable. All guidance is carried out under the framework of the matrix standards to ensure impartiality and involves a specialist tutor as well as support tutors where required.

We are increasingly seeing more learners who are unemployed and working with them to provide training into work with progression onto higher level training. We recognise the importance of both curriculum development and information, advice and guidance in ensuring we reach targets to support more people into work.

Governance – our governing body is committed to ensuring the college fully meets the targets presented within the scheme. Recruitment of new

governors will continue to seek representation from across the community and to widen the college's involvement in community cohesion and taking positive action to meet the needs of all individuals.

Investors in Diversity (IiD) – the college is committed to achieving recognition for its approach and actions in respect of equality and diversity and is seeking accreditations through the IiD kitemark.

Part 3 – Actively engaging with people

We promote our commitment to equality through a number of different channels:

- College Prospectus and allied materials
- Course information
- College website
- Student handbooks
- College strategic plan

Images included in our publicity materials reflect the diversity of our college community and are scrutinised for unintentional bias. We will seek to develop this theme further to demonstrate inclusion of all types of learners within group activities and through wider promotion of success stories from under-represented groups.

Comment [b9]: Action plan

An action of high priority for the College will be to develop the genuine and active involvement of people from under-represented groups so that we can find new ways of widening participation through developing a greater understanding of need. Building on the relationships that already exist with key stakeholders such as Job Centre Plus, we will seek to find partners who can share decision-making with us to shape our actions and outcomes towards our shared vision. This will include the involvement of people in identifying the barriers faced by people using Kendal College,

Comment [b10]:

Equality and Diversity Forum – our termly forum, includes representation from a wider membership of the college community as well as external members from key stakeholder groups. We continue to seek wider membership so that different community and specialist learning groups are represented. The terms of reference for the group include scrutiny of data in respect of participation by under-represented groups, delivery of the action plan within this scheme and a review of the progress of impact assessment. Each curriculum area and support area is invited to be represented through designated champions whose role it is to cascade the work of the group to colleagues. Sub-groups are tasked with looking at different aspects of college life such as teaching and learning, marketing and promotion and recruitment of staff and learners.

Current students – Our Study Services team works closely with all students who disclose a disability to ensure appropriate support is put in place. One-

to-one interviews give them the chance to explore issues with learners and review service requirements in light of what they discuss.

College staff – the procedure for annual appraisal and target setting includes discussion with the staff member of changes to their personal/physical well being and barriers they might be facing. We expect this to lead to a higher rate of disclosure of disability or other barriers and an action will be needed to develop the skills of line managers to encourage disclosure.

Comment [b11]: Action plan

Actions to develop a wider network of involvement include:

- involving groups that are unrepresented in the organisation
- survey of disabled staff, learners and visitors
- Student Voices with specific involvement of disabled learners
- Setting up focus groups to look at specific issues that affect staff, students and/or visitors
- Develop a mechanism for feedback from disabled learners and visitors eg chat room, comments box etc

We seek to involve more disabled people in our decision-making processes. However, we are aware of “involvement fatigue” and ensure that their involvement is focussed and worthwhile with clear outcomes that benefit the participants.

Visitors - The College welcomes a lot of visitors into the College, to attend meetings and training events as well as making use of College services such as the restaurant and public salons. We will ensure that we do consult with these users of our facilities during the cycle of our scheme to ensure we are aware of their needs in relation to access and provision of services to support access.

Comment [b12]: Action plan

Complaints and Compliments policy – We encourage staff, students, visitors and the wider community to let us know how we are doing and ensure all issues raised can contribute to continuous improvement. We report to the college governing body on both complaints and compliments that are related to equality and diversity.

Part 4 – Leadership and Management

Senior Leadership & Management Team - There is serious and committed support from the College Senior Leadership and Management team to the ethos of providing a first class service for our learners and to breaking down any barriers that prevent learners and potential learners accessing training and facilities.

The Senior Leadership and Management Team Risk Management meeting is held once a month with a regular agenda item of Equality and Diversity where a report is produced and discussed on progress of the College towards its

Single Equality Scheme. There is also a twice yearly report on actions to a sub-committee of the governing body.

Equality and diversity impact measures (EDIMS), included within the College strategic plan, are also monitored and reported on. Strategy to operational activity is developed by the Executive Steering group that is chaired by the Principal and has a membership that includes three college directors, members of the college management team and the designated governor for Equality. The group also looks at Safeguarding.

Governance - It is the governing body that has responsibility for approving the Colleges Single Equality Scheme, through the Education, Personnel and Quality committee, chaired by Cath Dutton. This group receives annual presentations on the College's commitment to equality and diversity and its responsibilities under the Single Equality Duty as well as its inclusion in an annual governor training event delivered by a national specialist organisation.

Part 5 – Carrying out Impact Assessments

The College holds a large number of policies and procedures relating to staff, the building, collection of data, personnel, student support services, financial regulations. In addition, there is an infinite number of practices that are not documented in this way.

As a matter of course, all new procedures that require ratification from the Senior Leadership and Management Team are assessed at the time of presentation. As policies and procedures are submitted for review, they too are subject to impact assessment.

Carrying out equality impact assessment – Our assessment of the impact of the policy, procedure or practice on different types of people is recorded on a proforma (see appendix 2) and takes account of the 6 strands. The assessment considers the impact of the procedure on groups affected through the identification of any perceived barriers with suggested actions to remove the barriers. The underlying key questions are applied to the procedure to ensure consideration has been taken:

1. To promote equality of opportunity
2. To eliminate unlawful discrimination
3. To eliminate equality-related harassment
4. To promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
5. To encourage participation in public life
6. To take account of people's disabilities and support needs even where that involves them more favourably than others

It is a requirement that new policies and procedures presented to SLMT for approval have an impact assessment proforma attached to them, completed by the manager presenting the paper. Our aim is to make this process as straight forward as possible so that genuine consideration is given to the

Comment [b13]: Action plan

needs of the diverse groups of people who access the college provision and services rather than spend time on completing lengthy forms.

Priority for impact assessment, with the exception of new and reviewed procedures, is for those that have a direct impact on learners in areas such as admissions, induction, student visits, tutorial, complaints, use of library and IT resources and teaching and learning. Overall responsibility for impact assessment lies with the relevant Senior Manager working with their teams.

The stages of impact assessment are as follows:

Stage 1 – screening of procedure to establish if there is likely to be a negative impact on anyone. A recommendation for full impact assessment is made. A note is made on the policy about the decision taken, signed and dated by the manager who makes the decision.

Stage 2 – full impact assessment carried out. In this case the manager responsible for the function reviews the procedure to identify which strand will be affected and the causes of inequality. Where there is a clear action that can be taken to eliminate discrimination, then that action is taken and the procedure amended to reflect the change. This is then ratified at SLMT meeting and published within the college. It may be the case that the procedure provides an opportunity for positive impact such as tackling discrimination. Consideration is also given to legislative requirements.

Stage 3 – Monitoring and Review. An **action** plan will be kept of all amendments identified following impact assessment and will be monitored at the monthly risk management meeting with an annual report to governors.

Comment [b14]: Action plan

Part 6 – Gathering Information

Data collection against the 6 strands is an important element of our scheme but is only effective if changes are made to curriculum, marketing and other procedures to reflect the evaluation of the data. We routinely collect data about learners on our enrolment form but have adopted the social model in terms of not requesting specific disability or learning support needs at point of entry.

Data relating to the South Lakes community and our potential learners is also collected and is used to support our marketing and widening participation strategies linked to getting more people into training and work. Further data analysis will be carried out to find areas of low participation as well establishing links between postcode areas with retention and achievement statistics, especially with the inclusion of new areas of training such as Train to Gain, Skills for Jobs and 6 **months** and progression into work following training.

Comment [b15]: Action plan

Disabled Learners - Information relating to disabled learners has been collected to fit in with the needs of the Learning and Skills Council individual learner record requirements. As previously mentioned, we have changed our

collection methods to reflect a more social model. Data is now captured during the one-to-one assessment interviews with Study Services Staff following discussions on support needed. An analysis is produced by the Head of Information Services on the number of disabled learners accessing College courses by type of disability and by course. For the purposes of the scheme, disability is differentiated as follows:

- Mobility
- Visual
- Sensory
- Learning difficulty
- Mental health
- Medical condition

There are many other ways the College can capture data relating to disability many of which are informal through the different opportunities for disclosure. The personal tutor has an important role to play here in ensuring the information relating to disability support needs is disclosed to appropriate and agreed members of staff for follow up and action.

College Staff - Applicants for posts at the College are invited to declare support within the equal opportunities section of the application form and this information is withheld from the interviewing panel to ensure disabled candidates are equally considered alongside non-disabled applicants. The college holds the Positive About Disability kitemark and will interview any disabled applicant who meets the essential criteria for a post. Existing staff are provided with the opportunity to disclose changes to their individual circumstances at annual appraisal and our personnel department updates data held on staff through an annual questionnaire. Through the new staff induction procedure, disclosure of support needs or any identified barriers is encouraged.

Part 7 – Putting the Scheme into Practice

This scheme will be made available to all college staff via the college intranet and published externally via the college website. The duration of the scheme is three years from that date and there will be an annual review in November of each year including a report to governors.

The scheme will be available on the College website at

www.kendal.ac.uk

Printed copies of the scheme will also be available from Student Services at Kendal College and can be obtained in person, by calling

01539 814700

Or emailing

enquiries@kendal.ac.uk

The scheme can be made available in different formats on request to Student Services.

The action plan that supports our three year scheme will be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Forum three times per year following updates on the achievement of milestone targets by the SES working party.