



“Creating brighter futures”

Single Equality Scheme

2013-2016

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Principal's foreword



I am pleased to write the introduction to the Weston College Equality Scheme.

Our aim is to provide a welcoming environment, complemented by support (where appropriate) and opportunities that are accessible to all sections of the community.

This Equality Scheme sets out our commitment to equality and diversity across all college functions and activities. It is both strategic and practical and communicates our vision and the actions required to make that a reality. It explains how we meet and exceed our legal requirements to support the achievement of strategic business objectives.

Our College ethos and strapline is 'Creating Brighter Futures' and our commitment to equality and diversity arises from this key aim.

I am very proud of all that Weston College offers to our students. Exciting courses, superb facilities and innovative methods of delivery ensure everybody has the opportunity to achieve great success.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Paul Phillips'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr Paul Phillips, OBE

Principal and Chief Executive, Weston College

Introduction

The College ethos and strapline is ‘Creating Brighter Futures’ and our commitment to equality and diversity arises from this key ambition.

Our equality strategy mirrors the College’s Strategic Plan and equality is embedded within each of our Corporate Aims.

- To ensure a safe, stimulating and innovative learning and working environment responsive to the needs of the individual, the business and the wider community
- To support the learning environment through an embedded culture of inclusion, equality and partnership
- To create a secure and welcoming environment for our students and staff
- To harness technology to provide an innovative, flexible and varied learning and working environment
- To improve opportunity and enable learners to succeed, progress and meet future challenges by providing high quality teaching, learning and assessment
- To listen and respect the views of students, the business community and our staff
- To remain a financially robust organisation through long term financial health enabling the delivery of all Corporate Aims and Objectives

The College aims to create a secure and welcoming environment for all members of our community. So that everyone can enjoy learning to achieve their full potential, Weston College expects all staff, students and visitors to maintain our culture of RESPECT.

The college community of ‘Our culture’ of RESPECT is underpinned by the following:

Yourself	Other people
√ We make and support healthy choices	√ We treat everyone fairly
√ We ask for help when we need it	√ We listen to each other
√ We report any harassment or bullying	√ We celebrate our diversity
√ We challenge inappropriate behaviours	√ We promote equality
√ We contribute positively	√ We are inclusive and friendly
√ We communicate our needs	√ We think about the impact of what we say and do
√ We tell people when they’ve got it right	√ We offer help when we can
√ We give constructive feedback when people get it wrong	
√ We accept help when we need it	
√ We are ambitious for ourselves	

The opportunity to learn	The environment
√ We aim to achieve our full potential	√ We are a safe place
√ We attend punctually	√ We keep college property clean and tidy
√ We complete our work on time	√ We aim to make all the College accessible
√ We notify the college when we can't attend	√ We support college policies
√ We switch off mobile phones during lessons, meetings and whilst using the library	√ We dress appropriately
	√ We use technology appropriately
	√ We eat and drink in designated areas

This Single Equality Scheme brings together our equality ambitions and plans across for all members of the college community and all of their protected characteristics. Its objectives demonstrate our wholehearted commitment to continued action in tackling inequality and promoting diversity. This Scheme will be developed over a period of 3 years in the form of an Equality Action Plan and reviewed regularly.

Aims

The purpose of this scheme is to set out the ways in which the college will meet our legal requirements under the following legislation:

- Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Employment Act 2002
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Race Discrimination Act 1976 & Amendment Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) & Amendment Act 2005
- Equality Act 2006 and 2010 and Equality Act (specific duties) Regulations 2011
- Special needs and Disability Act 2001
- Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

The aim of the SES is:

1. To develop measures and actions that pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality across all protected characteristics
2. To ensure that this approach exceeds compliance with legislation and becomes the culture and ethos of the College

Vision

Weston College is a college that through its leadership, recruitment, teaching and learning, is free from discrimination and secure and confident in its diversity. The college is committed to ensuring that every individual who belongs to or accesses the college is valued, supported and respected. The college welcomes and celebrates the unique talent and experience of each individual learner and employee.

Effective teaching and learning requires a safe environment, free from prejudice and discrimination, where the values and ethos of equality and diversity inform all College activity. Weston College, therefore, has zero tolerance in relation to discrimination against people who share the following protected characteristics: race, gender, gender reassignment, age, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity.

Our Single Equality Scheme and associated policies outline how the college seeks to ensure that the College is free from unlawful discrimination, as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and strives constantly to move beyond legal compliance towards excellence and best practice in promoting and celebrating equality and diversity.

Targets and Objectives

Weston College was praised for its commitment and approach to Equality and Diversity in the 2008 Inspection by OFSTED. The College has continued to build on these strong foundations.

The key areas of progress made in 2011-12 include:

- Student achievement gaps have narrowed for gender groups from 3% to 1%
- Student feedback shows that students felt safe and there were no significant differences between groups of learners
- The updating of the Single Equality Scheme addressing all protected groups
- The review of Equality Objectives to increase the drive on equality and diversity
- The College is nationally recognised for its commitment to equality of opportunity for all its students and is clearly articulated through its commitment, support and care provided to students with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Special Needs Academy - specialising in support for learners on the autistic spectrum. This is a well-resourced specialist centre complemented by residential accommodation at Weston Bay Hotel.
- Strong processes are in place to identify student needs with a significant proportion of students (92%) receiving support within the first four weeks of their programme
- Good promotion and celebration of diversity through tutorial and theme weeks

Objectives

The Equality Objectives (Annex A) are cross college objectives which have been set to drive forward equality and diversity and to meet public sector duties. The Equality objectives are focussed on ensuring outstanding learning opportunities for all.

These are the key areas for development in 2013-16 and onwards:

- Robustly review and monitor progress of the Equality Objectives and associated milestones
- Enhance the use of achievement gap data to further improve outcomes for different groups of students
- Ensure that equality and diversity is robustly embedded consistently throughout the curriculum
- Provide high quality training and learning opportunities for students
- Reinforce the learning culture of 'Respect'
- Provide high quality training and learning opportunities for all
- High quality equality and diversity training for staff that develops their understanding of roles and responsibilities relevant to their role and function within the college

Engagement, Consultation and Involvement

The Equality and Diversity Committee provides the focus for Weston's whole college approach to equality and diversity. The committee meets regularly and members include governors, corporate and senior managers and students.

The comprehensive collegiate student involvement strategy provides opportunities for contributions from all areas of the college to be heard and responded to. Opportunities include student representatives, student forums, Learner Voice Reviews, Principal's lunches, student surveys or the complaints system. These approaches create a safe environment where everyone can be heard and discriminations, harassment or bullying of any kind is minimised.

The college actively addresses inequality and takes positive action where it is appropriate to do so to provide equality of opportunity for all. Plans are published and progress against targets and objectives are available, including the Equality and Diversity Annual report. The key documents to drive Equality and Diversity improvements are:

- Strategic Plan
- Single Equality Scheme
- Equality and Diversity Objectives
- Quality Improvement Plans for curriculum and support teams

The college's curriculum and support teams will take due regard of the needs of different groups and will adapt systems and processes to enable these needs to be met and to give every student opportunity to succeed. Alongside this the college will, where appropriate, take legitimate positive action to encourage participation and to equalise success rates, and will use specialist advice from external organisations where the college's expertise in supporting different groups needs to be enhanced.

Implementation and Review

'Our Culture' sets out the college's respect ethos and supports students to come forward with any concerns and to be supported the colleges zero tolerance approach. Our Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Procedure continue to challenge inappropriate behaviour and supports students to take responsibility for their actions.

The review date for the Single Equality Scheme is April 2016 however as a living document, it is subject to amendment in the light of any legislative changes or to take account of new equality information or developments within the college, to drive forward equality of opportunity for staff, students and the wider community.

Equality objectives are reviewed regularly at each committee meeting with a formal review and update in December of each year.

The training plan (Annex B) is reviewed and updated at each committee meeting.

Equality Analysis (Impact Assessments)

Equality Analysis is a practical way of assessing new and existing policies and practices to determine what effect they may have on equality for those affected by the outcomes. The college will use its Equality Analysis process to review plans, policies, procedures and practices at the College to see whether they have the potential to impact on people differently.

The College has developed an Equality Analysis process and template for use across the college and has staged programme of equality analysis of all its existing policies and procedures. All new policies, procedures, plans and practices will be reviewed according to this equality analysis process.

The Single Equality Scheme has been equality analysed in line with College procedures.

Review	This scheme will be reviewed July 2016 or when there are legislative changes or to take account of new equality information or developments within the college.
Approval	11 July 2013
Approval Dates	The next review will be undertaken July 2014
Owner	Claire Bushell, Executive Lead Quality and Learning