

**GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME
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1. INTRODUCTION TO NEW COLLEGE

1.1 New College is the largest provider of 16-18 education in the North East Wiltshire and Swindon area with approximately 2,500 full time equivalent learners 16-18. We provide opportunities for 14-16 learners through school/college partnerships. We also serve over 9,000 adult students through adult and community learning, higher education partnerships, business services and work based learning.

1.2 The main college site is a modern building, located centrally in Swindon with good transport links. Other sites throughout Wiltshire are used including employers premises.

2. NEW COLLEGE GENDER EQUALITY OBJECTIVES

2.1 In order to meet the Gender Equality Duty we will:

- eliminate gender related bullying and harassment for all our service users and staff
- increase the female representation in our decision making processes
- enhance the confidence of our transsexual staff and students in our procedures
- promote a culture of respect for gender difference within our college
- promote gender balance in staffing, student occupational/subject choices and access to higher education
- deliver equal pay to our employees

2.2 In order to meet these objectives New College will take the steps outlined in the Gender Equality Scheme Action Plan.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE GENDER EQUALITY DUTY¹

3.1 The gender equality duty is a new legal requirement on all public authorities in Great Britain, when carrying out all their functions, to have due regard to the need:

- **To eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex**
- **To promote equality of opportunity between women and men.**

3.2 'Due regard' means that authorities should give due weight to the need to promote gender equality in proportion to its relevance.

3.3 The promotion of equal opportunities between women and men requires public authorities to recognise that the two groups are not starting from an equal footing and identical treatment will not always be appropriate. Under the duty authorities also have an obligation to eliminate discrimination and harassment towards current and potential transsexual staff. This duty will extend to transsexual service users in December 2007.

4. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC DUTIES

4.1 **The general duty is the overall duty to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality. The general duty came into force in Great Britain on 6th April 2007.**

4.2 The English specific duties require each organisation to:

- Prepare and publish a **gender equality scheme** by 30th April 2007, showing how it will meet its general and specific duties and setting out its gender equality objectives.
- In formulating its overall objectives, consider the need to include objectives to address the causes of any **gender pay gap**.
- **Gather and use information** on how the public authority's policies and practices affect gender equality in the workforce and in the delivery of services.

¹ From the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC)

- To **consult** stakeholders (i.e. employees, service users and others, including trade unions) and take account of relevant information in order to determine its gender equality objectives.
- To **assess the impact** of its current and proposed policies and practices on gender equality.
- To **implement** the actions set out in its scheme within three years, unless it is unreasonable or impracticable to do so.
- **To report** against the scheme every year and **review** the scheme at least every three years.

4.3 The gender equality duty also applies to functions which are carried out by external contractors. Legal liability for meeting the duty remains with the public body, which is expected to take action to ensure contractors meet the requirements of the duty.

4.4 The duty will be actively enforced by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) then by the Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) from October 2007.

5. GENDER IN EMPLOYMENT AT NEW COLLEGE SWINDON

5.1 Our work force profile presented in our Equal Opportunities Monitoring Report 2005/2006):

Staff	2005/2006		External Comparison
	Permanent	Fixed Term	
Number	291	140	
Female	68.4%	59.3%	52.2% ²
Male	31.6%	40.7%	47.8%

We had a more even gender balance and a greater number of men on fixed term contracts than in 2004/2005. The gender balance of our job applicants during 2005/2006 was broadly similar to the workforce profile with a higher appointment rate for females. We do not collect information on transsexual staff.

The comparison for the sector 2004/2005 is 59% female and 41% male.³

² Swindon Borough Council 2001 Census

5.2 We had a larger percentage of males participating in Staff Development activities in 2005/2006, 67% against 60% female, continuing a three year pattern. Our data indicates that female staff predominate in Grievance, Disciplinary and Capability procedures although in small numbers. We will investigate this in our Action Plan.

5.3 We have a formal Job Evaluation scheme in place and a published Remuneration Policy. Our staff are appointed on nationally negotiated pay scales. We do not have a performance related pay scheme. The actions we intend to take to investigate and ensure equal pay are detailed in the Action Plan.

5.4 We invite staff comment in our biennial Staff Satisfaction Survey. Our June 2006 survey elicited a 48% response rate with the gender balance in proportion to staff numbers. This survey does not investigate specific equality issues and the data is not analysed by gender. An all staff email requesting opinion on gender related issues in the workplace elicited a couple of positive responses and no negative views.

5.5 We frequently enable staff to vary or reduce working hours yet 24% of our respondents replying to questions about work life balance indicated that their home or social life might be or was affected detrimentally by the events that happened at work. Further investigation will be conducted. We have recently provided the opportunity for all staff to take a one year unpaid sabbatical leave with three staff taking this up and returning.

6. GENDER IN LEARNING AT NEW COLLEGE

6.1 Our student record system, proAchieve, enables all our staff to gather gender related information on enrolment, completion, achievement and success down to class level with national benchmarks. We do not collect information on transsexual students.

³ Further Education Workforce Data for England: An Analysis of the Staff Individualised Record (SIR) Data 2004/2005

6.2 Our learner profile presented in our Equal Opportunities Monitoring Report 2005/2006):

Student Profile	2005/2006		External Comparison	
16-18				
Enrolments by gender	Male	Female	Male	Female
	45	55	51.4	48.6 ⁴
Success rates by gender	Male	Female		
	71	71	66	70 ⁵
19+				
Enrolments by gender	Male	Female	Male	Female
	40.3	59.7	47.8	52.2 ⁶
Success rates by gender	Male	Female		
	83	79	76	76 ⁵

Our success rates for all ages and both genders exceed national bench marks.

6.3 The pattern of choice of study at New College reflects national trends with for example more female students enrolling for Child Care, Psychology, Textiles and Access provision and more males enrolling for IT, Maths and Physics.

6.4 Aim Higher initiatives, assistance with applications to higher education and careers guidance within New College all include activities designed to encourage students traditionally under represented in higher education to aspire to this level. Our students are directed to resources which give information on pay rates within different occupations at all levels. We do not currently have access to data on entry to higher education by gender.

6.5 We issue student satisfaction surveys to 16-18 year olds, benchmarked against external data from the sector, which include the statement "My teacher treats us all fairly and equally". 93% of our female and 94% of our male respondents agreed with this statement to some extent with **females appearing to be significantly less satisfied than males in comparison with the national benchmarks.**

6.6 We operate quality circles within courses. We advertise mechanisms for students and the public to make complaints and give feedback.

⁴ Swindon Borough Council 2001 Census

⁵ National success rates for all courses as proxy benchmark – proAchieve January 2007

⁶ Swindon Borough Council 2001 Census

7. LEADERSHIP

7.1 We have three female governors and three vacancies within a total of seventeen and one female member of our six person Senior Management Team.

8. NEW COLLEGE GENDER EQUALITY CURRENT SITUATION

8.1 New College promotes equality of opportunity, celebrates diversity and works to eliminate discrimination and harassment in the college experience for applicants, learners, staff, partners, contractors, service users and visitors.

8.2 Our current policies which promote Gender Equality:

- Flexible Working Patterns
- Parental Leave
- Paternity Leave
- Maternity Leave
- Family and Dependants Leave
- Recruitment and Selection of Employees
- Remuneration
- Relationships between Staff and Students
- Staff Code of Conduct towards Students Procedure
- Harassment
- Equalising Opportunities – Celebrating Diversity (given to all new staff)
- Bullying and Harassment for students with guidance for staff and learners
- Student Complaints Procedure

8.3 Our current practices which promote Gender Equality

- Annual Equal Opportunities Report including an analysis of staff and student data prepared for the Senior Management Team, subsequently issued to Governors and published internally. Within that report achievements are noted and trends, issues and events are identified for further action.

- Equal Opportunities statements feature on the college website, marketing materials, at recruitment events and within induction material for students and job applicants
- Equal Opportunities awareness features in Tutorial material for full time 16-18 learners
- Equal Opportunities sections feature on the Self Assessment Reports for each curriculum area and a monitoring form has been issued which aids this process.
- Poster displays within public areas of the college
- Staff and learner satisfaction surveys
- Personal confidential help for students includes counselling, peer mentoring and a health clinic
- On-site health promotions for staff and students including Osteoporosis Check (for staff at a fee) and Smoking Cessation
- Child care vouchers are available to staff
- Advice on and administration of financial and child care support schemes for students

8.4 Consultation

Our staff policies are based upon those nationally agreed between the Association of Colleges and the Trades Unions and locally implemented in consultation with the college Joint Consultative Committee.

Our Equal Opportunities Monitoring Group is constituted to include representation from across the college. It is a standing committee of the Academic Board meeting three times a year to maintain an overview of Equal Opportunities issues and act as a focus group and will perform the role of steering group for gender equality.

The draft Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan were sent to external groups, (Swindon Women's Coalition, Pride Youth and Swindon Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Coalition) and published electronically for staff, student, trade unions and governor comment.

8.5 Leadership

Leadership on Equality and Diversity is provided by the college Principal. Development work on Equal Opportunities is placed within the Quality Improvement Team led by the Director of Quality. The authors of this Scheme and Action Plan belong to this team and are line managed by the Director of Human Resources and the Student Services Manager.

9. REVIEWING AND REPORTING

9.1 We will report on progress towards the Gender Equality Objectives and the Action Plan on an annual basis incorporating this into the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Report. Our Action Plan will also be reviewed as a standing item on the agenda for the cross college Equal Opportunities Group.

Any comments on this scheme to be addressed to the

**Equal Opportunities Adviser and Disability Officer
New College
New College Drive
Swindon
SN3 1 AH**

Tel 01793 611470

Gender Equality Scheme – Action Plan April 2007

Areas for Action	Action	Time Scale	Who is Responsible for Action	Outcome
1. Gender Equality Policy	Introduce a New College Gender Equality Policy based upon the Association of Colleges joint agreement (2007).	April 2007	HR Coordinator	
2. Bullying and Harassment	Review the current staff and student harassment policies to ensure that all equality strands are explicitly addressed.	July 2008	HR Coordinator Equal Opportunities Adviser	
3. Staff Gender Audit	<p>Improve the quality of data in the audit to record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of male/female staff • Grade of male/female staff • Salary scale of male/female staff • Part/full time of male/female staff <p>Category of work (including permanent/temporary contracts) of male/female staff</p> <p>Benchmark against national and regional trends and monitor if there are any clear variations in relation to types of roles and/or work areas. Take positive action to address gender imbalance.</p>	July 2007	HR Coordinator	
4. Staff Equality Audit	Audit the gender of employees by ethnicity, disability, age and race. Note any trends and consider if and what action could be taken.	July 2007	HR Coordinator	

Areas for Action	Action	Time Scale	Who is Responsible for Action	Outcome
5. Staff Recruitment and Selection	<p>Improve the data available for the annual report on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of male/female applicants • Conversion rates by gender from application stage to appointment stage • Job roles gender breakdown • Type of contract <p>Benchmark against national and regional trends. If action required, consider targeting appropriate community groups during recruitment process.</p> <p>If imbalance is apparent, take positive action, e.g., to increase numbers of women teaching staff in male-dominated areas and vice-versa. (Thereby providing role models for students.)</p> <p>Update Recruitment and Selection of Employees Policy to ensure processes are equality compliant. Consider advertising vacancies as being open to job share applications.</p>	December 2007	HR Coordinator	
6. Training for Staff Recruitment and Selection	<p>Train all staff involved in selection and recruitment on the importance of conducting equality interviews.</p> <p>Monitor for any sex discrimination.</p>	<p>July 2007</p> <p>July 2007</p>	<p>HR Coordinator</p> <p>HR Coordinator</p>	

Areas for Action	Action	Time Scale	Who is Responsible for Action	Outcome
9. Promotion	Report on pattern of staff promotions against gender mix. Address imbalance, if identified, through positive action, e.g., training, coaching/mentoring, enabling staff to taking on additional responsibilities.	July 2008	HR Professional Development Officer	
10. Staff Grievance, Harassment and Discipline	<p>Monitor staff grievances, harassment complaints and disciplinary actions. Record the number raised by male and female.</p> <p>The College 2006 Equal Opportunities Report showed that grievances were predominately female – investigate and if this relates to equality issues explore preventative measures which may lessen incidences.</p>	December 2007	HR Coordinator	
11. Dismissal	Monitor and record dismissals, including redundancies, with a view to gender type. Determine whether gender is a factor.	December 2007	HR Coordinator	
12. Maternity, Parental Rights and Provision for those with Dependants	<p>Monitor number of staff returning from maternity leave and the roles they return to and ensure equality of access is applied.</p> <p>Monitor and record number of requests for flexible working to ensure rights are met.</p>	December 2007	HR Coordinator	

Areas for Action	Action	Time Scale	Who is Responsible for Action	Outcome
13. Pay Differentials	<p>Carry out an annual pay audit and produce a report showing differential earnings between male and females along with category of job role comparisons and if full/part time, temporary/permanent contract.</p> <p>Use this information to produce an action plan.</p>	July 2007	HR/Payroll Officer	
14. Staff Satisfaction Surveys and Exit Interviews	<p>Ensure that satisfaction surveys are carried out biennially and monitor to ensure that there is equality compliance throughout the college.</p> <p>Consider most effective method to carry out survey. Review the items in the questionnaire and the system of analysis in order to use this tool to gather data on equality issues.</p> <p>Monitor Exit Interviews for any equality issues.</p> <p>Consider most effective method of gathering appropriate information from leavers.</p>	July 2008	HR Coordinator	

Areas for Action	Action	Time Scale	Who is Responsible for Action	Outcome
15. Staff and Student Transsexual/ Transgender Issues	Review all existing policies and Equal Opportunities statements and refer to transsexual/transgender issues where appropriate. Establish and publish guidance and procedures giving consideration to the Association of Colleges joint agreement on Transgender Equality (2006). Provide guidance for all staff on responding to transsexual/transgender issues within the staff or student groups.	Sept 2007	HR Coordinator Equal Opportunities Adviser	
16. Awareness Raising	Publish a glossary of gender related terms on the college intranet and make these available for tutorial material.	Sept 2008	Equal Opportunities Adviser	
17. Equality Impact Assessment	Impact Assess all policies, procedures and practices for Gender Equality. Ongoing from May 2007	April 2010	All Managers	
18. Surveys	Review all staff and student opinion surveys with a view to inclusion of additional Equal Opportunities statements.	July 2008	Quality Improvement Team	
19. Student Experience at New College	Collect information on student participation in the full range of college activities, e.g., enrichment, participation in the NUS, use of student support services.	July 2008	Equal Opportunities Adviser Student Services Manager	

Areas for Action	Action	Time Scale	Who is Responsible for Action	Outcome
20. Student Subject Choice/Occupational Segregation/ Equal Pay	<p>Review student recruitment activities to identify more opportunities to challenge traditional gender bias.</p> <p>Produce additional Career Choice material to make available to students and tutors illustrating patterns of occupational segregation and potential financial consequences.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>July 2008</p>	<p>Course Managers</p> <p>Careers/Aim Higher Coordinator</p>	
21. Widening Student Participation in Higher Education	<p>Arrange student attendance at awareness raising events, including groups such as Health and Social Care which are predominantly female.</p>	Ongoing	Careers/Aim Higher Coordinator	
22. Student Entry to Higher Education	<p>Collect data through UCAS records on entry to higher education disaggregated by gender and other diversity themes and plan positive action as required.</p>	July 2008	Careers/Aim Higher Coordinator	
23. Support for Student Carers	<p>Investigate the impact of caring responsibilities upon students and potential for providing or sourcing additional support.</p>	July 2007	Equal Opportunities Adviser Youth Worker	
24. Student Health and Wellbeing	<p>Review the work of the CONFIDE clinic. Provide additional gender specific services on topics related to sexual and mental health.</p>	December 2007	Student Services Manager	

Areas for Action	Action	Time Scale	Who is Responsible for Action	Outcome
25. Governing Body	Plan governor recruitment to achieve gender balance.	July 2010	Equal Opportunities Adviser Principal Chairman and Clerk to Governors	
26. Procurement and Partnership	Review current contracting arrangements and amend to ensure compliance with current legislation.	July 2008	Senior Management Team Partnership Managers	