

KILMARNOCK COLLEGE
DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

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KILMARNOCK COLLEGE

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME 2006

1. INTRODUCTION

Kilmarnock College's core values are:

- Developing successful learners;
- Working with others and in partnership;
- Developing outstanding professional staff;
- Accountability for our actions.

These values need to be underpinned by putting our beliefs into action.

The college culture is friendly, informal and respectful. All students and staff are encouraged to behave in a respectful way towards each other. The principles of a respectful and friendly college are that the college:

- has positive approaches to supporting staff / student learning
- works to adapt to the needs of learners and staff.
- recognises differences and choice
- works to provide a learning environment which matches learners' needs
- embraces equity
- views equity as an umbrella for a suite of policies and supporting actions which fulfil requirements of legislative duties and allow the promotion and action of equity throughout its provision
- recognises that its schemes and policy will be produced and reviewed in line with and as a result of involvement of and feedback from learners and staff and as a result of legislative change.

Kilmarnock College is committed to providing a service to its students following practices, which are free from unfair or unlawful discrimination and provide equality of opportunity for all students, staff and visitors.

The college will not discriminate on the grounds of disability, sexual orientation, age, gender, gender identity or reassignment, marital status, racial group or religion.

Mick Roebuck
Principal

2. THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

This Disability Equality Scheme has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, the Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 and statutory guidance produced by the Disability Rights Commission.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places on the College a General Duty to promote equality for disabled people.

2.1 General Duty

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 places a duty on the College, when carrying out its functions, to have due regard to the need to:

Promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons;

Eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act;

Eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities;

Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons;

Encourage participation by disabled persons in public life; and

Take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons.

The elements detailed above are referred to as the General Duty. In addition to the General Duty, the College also has a Specific Duty under the legislation.

The General Duty builds upon the duties of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 including the duty to make reasonable adjustments to make sure disabled people can access employment, goods, services, facilities, functions and premises.

2.2 Specific Duties

The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 require the College to produce and publish a Disability Equality Scheme, to implement certain aspects of the Scheme and to report on it.

The College should publish a Disability Equality Scheme demonstrating how it intends to fulfil its general and specific duties;

The College should involve disabled people in the development of the Scheme;

The Scheme should include a statement of:-

- a. the way in which disabled people have been involved in the development of the Scheme;
- b. the College's methods for impact assessment;
- c. the steps which the College will take towards fulfilling its general duty (the action plan);
- d. the College's arrangements for gathering information in relation to employment and its delivery of education and its functions;
- e. the College's arrangements for putting information gathered to use, in particular in reviewing the effectiveness of its action plan and in preparing subsequent Disability Equality Schemes.

The College must within three years of the Scheme being published, take the steps set out in the action plan (unless it is unreasonable or impractical for it to do so) and put into effect the arrangements for gathering and making use of the information.

The College must publish a report containing a summary of the steps taken under the action plan, the results of its information gathering and the use to which it has put the information.

3. THE DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME

This Disability Equality Scheme has been produced in accordance with the terms of The Disability Discrimination (Public Authorities) (Statutory Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 and statutory guidance provided by the Disability Rights Commission.

3.1 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SCHEME

The following levels of responsibility for the Equity Scheme and its related Action Plans are in place: -

Board of Management

As the governing body of the College, the Board of Management is responsible for making sure that the College complies with its statutory obligations in terms of current legislation. The Board has delegated authority and accountability to the Principal.

The Principal and Senior Management

The Principal has the delegated authority and accountability for ensuring that the College's commitment to gender, race and disability equity is communicated both internally and externally. The Principal, together with Senior Management, will oversee and ensure ongoing implementation of the Disability Equity Policy, Gender Equity Policy and Race Equity Policy throughout the institution.

In carrying out these duties, the Principal and the Senior Management will pay heed to the full range of College functions, the need for the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the elements of the above policies, so that the College develops as a institution, sensitive to disability, race and gender in which all teaching and learning is underpinned by the principles set out in the policies.

Managers

Managers will have specific responsibility for ensuring that the policies are put into practice through the agreed action plans and by;

- (i) Ensuring staff are aware of their responsibilities and obligations
- (ii) Supporting the implementation of the policies.
- (iii) Following the relevant procedures and where appropriate, taking action against staff or students who discriminate for reasons of disability, race or gender either direct or indirect.
- (iv) Ensuring a safe environment for staff and students and make specific arrangements for safe access, egress and fire evacuation for all disabled employees, visitors and students where reasonably practicable. Staff and students should be made aware of the current procedure, in line with the Health & Safety Policy.

All Staff

All staff has general responsibility for;

- (i) Promoting disability, race and gender equality, dealing with and recognising racial, gender or disability discrimination, either direct or indirect and dealing with such incidents in line with quality procedures.
- (ii) Being familiar with the College's Disability, Race and Gender Equity Policies, undertaking appropriate training and supporting awareness raising initiatives organised by the College.
- (iii) Where appropriate engaging in promotion of good relations with disability groups, ethnic groups, and gender groups within the wider community.

Students

Students shall be responsible for promoting disability, race and gender equality and avoiding discrimination acts either direct or indirect. Students should be confident in identifying and challenging racial bias, stereotyping, and disability discriminations. They should have the confidence that the College's procedures will support them in such challenges against victimisation and be aware of the College's policies and procedures regarding racism, disability, or gender discrimination, harassment and the reporting of such incidents.

Visitors

Visitors shall be responsible for promoting disability, race and gender equality and avoiding discriminatory acts, either direct or indirect. Visitors should be confident in identifying and challenging racial bias, stereotyping, and disability discriminations and have confidence that the College's procedures will support them in such challenges against victimisation.

Equality & Diversity Team

Key individuals have been co-ordinated by the Senior Management Team into Equalities and Diversity Team. The Team will include staff from different areas of college work and the Student President. The Team will ensure that students and the wider community are included in the development, monitoring and revision of policies.

3.2 INVOLVEMENT OF DISABLED PEOPLE

The Disability Equality Scheme has been developed with the involvement of disabled people. The College has a Disability Group consisting of staff, students and representatives from local groups representing disabled people and these groups were involved in the preparation of the Scheme through meetings and informal discussions.

The principal groups who contributed to the development of the Scheme were:

-

Disability Forum

Student Association

College Disability Group

Disability Impact Assessment Group

Although disabled groups and people were involved in the preparation of the Scheme it is acknowledged that existing engagement arrangements used by the College require to be strengthened. The strengthening and enhancement of engagement arrangements is identified as a key action within the Equity Scheme's Action Plan.

3.3 DISABILITY EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The College have implemented an Impact Assessment Group consisting of a Director of Corporate Services, HR Manager, and 2 disabled members of staff for carrying out Disability Equality Impact Assessments. The system will allow all policies, procedures and proposed changes to functions to be assessed to ensure that the college's decisions and activities do not disadvantage disabled people. It will allow the College to identify where it might better promote equality of opportunity for disabled people and where different parts of the disability equality duty might be built into these policies and practices.

Monitor the effect of its policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to and the achievement of disabled, ethnic minority and under-represented pupils and students

This will be done through existing management systems that the College have in place and the Equalities & Diversity Team. Statistical information looking at a 3 year trend has been produced looking at the early retention and retention of disabled students and ethnic minority students against mainstream students. An evaluation of this data will now be undertaken.

3.4 ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan, which is, contained in Appendix 1 to the Scheme details the steps, which the College will take to ensure that it meets the General Duty.

The Action Plan reflects: -

The priorities of disabled people identified through their involvement;

The strategic priorities of the College including business milestones and major projects to be implemented over the timescale of the Scheme;

Evidence of where problems and priorities lie;

Specific outcomes, which the College wishes to achieve to promote disability equality, set against a realistic timetable;

Measurable indicators of progress towards those outcomes; and

Lines of accountability.

3.5 GATHERING INFORMATION

In order to assess the effectiveness of this Scheme and its related Action Plan the College will gather a range of information to allow it to: -

Monitor the effect of its policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to and the achievement of disabled, ethnic minority and under-represented pupils and students

This will be done through existing management systems that the College have in place and the Equalities & Diversity Team. Statistical information looking at a 3 year trend has been produced looking at the early retention and retention of disabled students and ethnic minority students against mainstream students. This will be monitored on an ongoing basis and appropriate actions identified as described in Section 3.6 below.

Monitor the extent to which the services it provides and those other functions it performs; take account of the needs of disabled, ethnic minority and under-represented persons.

This will be done through the Student Association and the Student Representatives set up in the College where staff, students and representatives from the different groups can feed any issues and grievances into the Forum get together and discuss ways in which the College can improved and take account of the needs of disabled, ethnic minority and under-represented people.

3.6 USING INFORMATION GATHERED

The information gathered, as described in Section 3.5 above, will be used to assess the effectiveness of the actions set out in the Action Plan.

The information gathered will be used by Managers, Heads of Faculty, and staff and regular reports will be submitted to Senior Management, Performance Review Group and Management Review Groups.

In addition the information gathered will be used in identifying priorities and actions within the Strategic Plan and will be monitored by the Principal and Senior Management.

3.7 IMPLEMENTING THE SCHEME

The Disability Equality Scheme will be approved by Senior Management and then cascaded down to Managers and Heads of Faculties.

Each Department either Support or Teaching will contribute to the achievement of the objectives contained in the Action Plan.

3.8 ANNUAL REPORTING

Annually a Report will be submitted to Senior Management Team and Board of Management.

3.9 THE NEXT VERSION OF THE SCHEME

The next version of the Disability Equality Scheme will take account of: -

- Experience gained during the operation of the first Scheme.
- The analysis of information gathered
- The ongoing involvement of disabled people through the mechanisms established under the Action Plan

3.10 PREPARATION OF THE SCHEME

The Disability Equality Scheme has been prepared having regard to the advice contained in the Statutory Code of Practice: The Duty to Promote Disability Equality.

3.11 PUBLISHING THE SCHEME

The College has a responsibility to publish details of the Disability Equality Scheme and demonstrate its ability to meet the demands of the Act.

The College will make publicly available:

The Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan

The Annual Report on how the College has met targets outlined in the Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan

In all instances the College will endeavor to publish comprehensive information, however, where publication of information would identify a private individual the College reserves the right to withhold such information on grounds of data protection and possible infringement on human rights.

The College will make available important information in a variety of accessible formats.

3.11.1 WHERE WE WILL PUBLISH

Where mechanisms for publishing and reporting upon performance currently exist the College will continue to utilise these resources. This includes:

- Staff Intranet
- Annual Report
- Departmental Meetings
- Kilmarnock Edition

The College will also make use of:

The Scheme will be published on the College website www.kilmarnock.ac.uk

4. THE ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan which will support the College in meeting the General and Specific duties is attached as Appendix 1.

The Action Plan will be monitored in accordance with the arrangements detailed in Section 3.6 above.

5 March 2007

APPENDIX 1

KILMARNOCK COLLEGE

DISABILITY EQUALITY SCHEME 2007-2010

ACTION PLAN TO MEET GENERAL AND SPECIFIC DUTIES

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITY	ACTIONS	TIMESCALE	RESPONSIBILITY
1.	Engagement and involvement with disabled people	Review current arrangements to ensure representative forums throughout the College	June 2007	Director of Enterprise
2.	Accessibility to College premises	Review current targets and establish action plan for improvements	June 2007	Director Corporate Services
3.	Information gathering, collation and analysis	Review current arrangements and ensure that information gathered is taken account of in policy and programme delivery	March 2007	Director of Enterprise
4.	Impact Assessments	Implement impact assessment process	April 2007	Director of Enterprise / Corporate Services
5.	Assessments, consultation and monitoring	Ensure that relevant publications contain information relating to all aspects of the Disability Equality Scheme and actions arising from it.	December 2007	Director of Enterprise

6	Publicising information relating to the Disability Equality Scheme	Review existing publicity and information arrangements.	May 2007	Director Corporate Services
7.	Participation in public life	Review current arrangements to ensure that all groups supported by the College are open to membership by disabled people.	May 2007	Director Enterprise
8.	Staff / Student Survey	Review of Student/Staff Surveys to include specific questions on disability equality	April 2008	Director Enterprise / Corporate Services
9.	Transport costs and travel expenses	Review arrangements for meeting travel or transport costs for individuals attending college	April 2008	Director Corporate Services
10.	Ensure that information about services is provided effectively	Review current arrangements for publicising college information	April 2008	Director Corporate Services
11.	Ensure that employees receive appropriate training and development in relation to equality issues	Continue to provide CPD programmes for equalities, reviewing these programmes annually to ensure staff are aware of all equality legislation requirements.	April 2007	Director Corporate Services