

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

2018 – 2021

Owner:	Vice Principal Learner Experience	Approved by:	E&D Monitoring Group
Review interval:	Annual	Approved on:	22 March 2018
Date of next review:	March 2019	Post to website:	Yes

1. INTRODUCTION

Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College is proud of its diverse community of staff, students and visitors, and is committed to ensuring there is equality of opportunity for all, fostered in an environment of mutual respect and dignity.

The promotion of Equality and Diversity concerns all of us and is the responsibility of all members of the College's community. As members of this community, it is expected that we will contribute to ensuring that Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College continues to be a safe, welcoming and productive environment.

The College's written Commitment to Equality and Diversity is set out in the College's Equality and Diversity Policy, distributed to all staff and students which states:

Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College (RHACC) is committed to providing a positive and supportive working and learning environment for all staff and students, consistent with an ethos of respect and tolerance. The College aims to promote best practice in the advancement of equal opportunities and carry out its functions in such a way as to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality, embrace diversity and tackle any persistent and long-standing issues of disadvantage.

The College is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation (the protected characteristics as laid down by the Equality Act 2010) and to foster good relations between different groups.

This Scheme is designed to further articulate the College's commitment to equality and diversity in a coherent and structured manner, and is accompanied by a set of objectives and priorities detailed in the related Action/Development Plan (*see Appendix 2*). The ambition is to promote equality and diversity in every area of College life.

2. CONTEXT

The College's community is already diverse. The College's recruitment policies continue to have a positive impact on the black and minority ethnic (BME) profile of the College with 41.5% of students (2016/17) coming from black or minority ethnic groups compared with 43% of staff (sector average 16%). The College has increased student participation from local BME residents as well as attracting students from across the Greater London region due to good transport links and residential provision.

18% of students (2016/17) declared a disability whilst 5% of staff declared a disability (sector average 6%). The College's gender profile is predominantly female for both staff and students. Female staff make up 74% against a sector average of 60% FTE staff (Given that women are more likely to work part-time this measure will underestimate the proportion of the total number of women working in FE as a share of the overall number). This mirrors the 75% of female learners (2016/17).

3. VISION, MISSION AND CORE VALUES

RHACC Mission Statement:

‘Empowering adults and communities through education, skills and enterprise’

Vision Statement (Key Strategic Objectives)

By 2021 Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College will:

- Enable adult learners of all ages, backgrounds and abilities to achieve excellence through learning for life, work and wellbeing.
- Be the outstanding adult learning provider of choice for adults across South West London local communities, across London and nationally for communities of practice.
- Provide accessible learning opportunities and progression routes from local community learning to higher education that are highly responsive to the communities of location and practice that we serve
- Provide focused residential and day provision for women, people with disabilities and adults at risk of not achieving their potential due to social disadvantage
- Achieve long-term financial sustainability, with over 20,000 enrolments and £9m revenue, through reduced operating costs and increased capacity for income generation.

College Values

1. Social justice. Adult learning changes lives and life chances of individuals, families, communities.
2. All adults can benefit from learning if they are ready to learn. Adults of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can improve their career, wellbeing, independence.
3. Inclusion is achieved through understanding learner needs, agreeing starting points, support and goals and by giving and receiving feedback
4. The adult ethos enables the development of empowered, self-directed learners
5. High Standards and Ambition improve self-worth, the rate and quality of learning
6. Embracing Diversity and feedback enriches and improves learning, makes it relevant
7. Dignity, Courtesy and Respect, extended to all, build confidence and self-worth
8. Enabling and Guiding Progression- Learners are on journeys to new careers, further study and wellbeing that require skilled guidance and direction
9. The effective Curriculum is informed by learner, community, employer needs
10. Learners can evaluate the value of their learning – jobs, skills, friends, wellbeing

4. EQUALITY OBJECTIVES:

Central to our strategic plan for 2018- 2021 is our continuing commitment to Equality and Diversity. In order to better ensure we are furthering the aims of the Equality Duty, our Equality Objectives are:

Equality Aim (from the Act)	RHACC's Equality Objectives*
<p>1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act.</p>	<p>1.1 To ensure good practice is maintained by continuing to monitor learner and staff Equality & Diversity data and feedback</p> <p>1.2 To improve learner achievement on qualification provision for all groups of learners and close any achievement gaps</p>
<p>2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</p>	<p>2.1 To improve the accessibility of the college buildings by 2021, particularly the provision of study bedrooms and teaching and learning facilities at the Hillcroft site</p> <p>2.2 To continue to widen participation, promoting accessibility and inclusion for all learner groups, through a range of approaches</p>
<p>3. Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.</p>	<p>3.1 To develop a regular programme of college events to celebrate and promote diversity within the college community</p> <p>3.2 To further encourage learner involvement as outlined in the learner involvement strategy</p>

*Please refer to the Equality and Diversity Action plan (*Appendix 2*) which details how we intend to achieve these objectives.

5. PURPOSE OF THE SCHEME

In identifying how best to progress, this Scheme has been developed to give further momentum to the equality and diversity agenda by identifying an overarching action plan which will address all equality strands and take us forward for the period of the Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

The Equality and Diversity Action Plan (*Appendix 2*) has taken into account progress on the existing Quality Improvement Plans and the College's strategy and vision. The plan has been drawn up to promote an holistic approach to equality and diversity at the College.

The scheme aims to:

- highlight and keep staff, students, contractors and visitors updated on current legislation and requirements under the Equality Act 2010.
- ensure that all members of the College community are aware of equality of opportunity and as such consideration of equality issues are part of standard practice.
- ensure that all members of the College community are aware of discrimination and their duties and responsibilities to treat everyone with dignity and respect.

6. ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

The College will seek to continue consulting and involving staff, students and any other interested parties on this Scheme, the Single Equality Action Plan and any other equality and diversity initiatives as appropriate. In addition, it will continue general awareness training on equality and diversity, with specific training initiatives included in the Single Equality Action Plan.

The College has a number of methods for consulting with, and involving, Governors and staff:

- reporting to and meetings with the Governing Body
- Equality and Diversity Monitoring Group, which reports to the Principal
- Weekly all staff emails
- Termly all staff meetings with the Principal
- Staff Intranet
- Staff Consultative Forum

The College also has a number of methods for consulting with, and involving learners, including:

- Membership of Student Governors on the Governing Body
- Focus groups for learners with particular needs/protected characteristics
- Learner Representatives/Liaison Officers
- Student intranet

- Termly TUWYT (Tell Us What You Think) sessions with Managers and Governors
- Feedback Cards
- Course Review and Evaluation Surveys

The College is also an active member and partner of a number of local stakeholder groups which offer assistance with Equality & Diversity issues.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the College are expected to comply with this Scheme, with the Single Equality Action Plan and with any of the College's equality and diversity initiatives.

Please refer to The College's Equality and Diversity Policy (Appendix 1) for information on specific roles and responsibilities under the scheme.

8. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Equality Act 2010 replaces previous anti-discrimination legislation with a single Act. It covers employment, facilities, goods and services, and education.

The Act prohibits unlawful discrimination based on nine defined protected characteristics:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

The Act also strengthens the law in a number of areas:

- It places a new duty on certain public bodies to consider socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions about how to exercise their functions;
- It extends the circumstances in which a person is protected against discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of a protected characteristic;
- It extends the circumstances in which a person is protected against discrimination by allowing people to make a claim if they are discriminated against either directly or indirectly because of a combination of two relevant protected characteristics, associated and perceived discrimination.

9. PUBLIC DUTIES

The Equality Act creates a duty on listed public bodies when carrying out their functions and on other persons to have due regard when carrying out their public functions to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The practical effect is that listed public bodies have to consider how their policies, programmes and service delivery will affect people with the protected characteristics.

The Act also allows an employer or service provider or other organisation to take positive action so as to enable existing or potential employees or customers to overcome or minimise a disadvantage arising from a protected characteristic.

10. OUR SPECIFIC DUTIES

Additionally there are **Specific Duties** which require the College to:

- Publish relevant information which demonstrates our compliance with our public duties.
- Identify and publish specific and measurable equality objectives to meet the general equality duty.

We will meet our duties by:

- Ensuring that our College community (all learners, staff, contractors and visitors) are aware of their roles and responsibilities under our Equality and Diversity policy and Single Equality Scheme and the consequences of breaching them.
- Ensuring that staff are equipped with appropriate information to assist them in carrying out, implementing, monitoring and achieving their actions under the scheme.
- Ensuring College publications present appropriate and positive messages regarding protected characteristics.
- Ensuring teaching resources and materials demonstrate consideration and sensitivity and promote positive images regarding protected characteristics.
- Ensuring all learners and staff have access to support and facilities.
- Ensuring all recruitment and progression procedures are designed and implemented to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

11. MONITORING AND ONGOING REVIEW

A number of activities will continue to be undertaken, as a matter of good practice:

- monitoring (staff) – applications for vacancies, the staff profile, promotions, training and development activities, grievances and disciplinary procedures, resignations, dismissals and redundancies, incidents of harassment, and participation in training and development.
- monitoring (student) – applications for admissions, the student profile (to include socio-economic factors and destination data), retention, success rates, attendance rates, travel to study patterns, complaints and disciplinary procedures, and incidents of harassment.
- consultation will take place regularly with staff and students through the variety of methods outlined above. As and when required, consultations on specific topics will be undertaken.
- Data Cleansing Exercise - will take place regularly to ensure that staff data is as up to date as possible.
- benchmarking against other institutions - Human Resources will continue to benchmark the College's activities in terms of equality and diversity issues to ensure we identify and, where appropriate, learn from best practice.
- Curriculum - will continue to ensure that equality and diversity is incorporated throughout its programme and will continue to develop specific programmes either to embed the College's vision for equality and diversity or to meet the needs of specific groups.
- Widening Participation – the College will continue to engage schools, colleges and learners locally and in the surrounding areas through a range of publicly- and privately-funded programmes and activities aimed at widening participation for learners regardless of background.
- Volunteer Programme - to continue to offer volunteer opportunities for unemployed adults from a variety of backgrounds to access work experience.
- Local community links - maintaining links with local community organisations to publicise the College and opportunities available.
- Maintain membership of local, regional and national partnerships/networks to share best practice and engage in project work.

12 REPORTING ON PROGRESS

Each year the Equality and Diversity Monitoring Group will report to the board on progress against the action plan objectives as well as update on workforce and service user profiles.

13. CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, or if you require this publication in hard copy or in an alternative format, please contact PALearnerExperience@rhacc.ac.uk

14. FEEDBACK

Any member of staff, student or visitor who wishes to offer feedback on this Scheme and/or the Action Plan, or who believes that the College is not fulfilling its obligations should contact the Vice Principal Learner Experience.

15. REVIEW

The Equality and Diversity Monitoring Group will review this Scheme on an annual basis.

16. BREACHES OF THE SCHEME

The College will not tolerate behaviour which is in breach of its single equality scheme. Any member of staff or student acting in an offensive or discriminatory manner, or otherwise breaching this policy, will be dealt with using our staff or student disciplinary or bullying and harassment procedures as appropriate.