

Equality & Diversity Objectives 2013-14

1. Under-representation in the workforce diversity profile

The College has worked to increase the profile of its workforce from ethnic minority backgrounds and has made some progress since 2012-13. In January 2014, BME employees comprised 4.4% of the workforce compared to 4.1% in the previous year. There has also been a 0.5% reduction in the number of employees who prefer not to declare their ethnicity since 2013.

However this percentage does not currently reflect the diverse local community in terms of ethnicity. We therefore aim to increase the number of recruits from ethnic minority backgrounds to mirror the representation of the local population that the College serves to help advance equality of opportunity between groups that share this protected characteristic and those that do not. To help deliver this objective, targets will be set and reviewed on an annual basis over the next 4 years to assess progress.

Our actions to address this objective include:

- impact assess our recruitment policy and practices to help identify and eliminate any potential discrimination that may currently exist
- introduce training initiatives to help raise diversity awareness for staff involved in recruitment and selection to help promote understanding of BME groups and their needs
- review recruitment advertising methods and publications to ensure job adverts are effectively targeted at a diverse range of communities to advance equality of opportunity between different groups
- review and refresh the College online material with advice from the Lead Governor for E&D and ensure that the College website and VLE takes into consideration student feedback and remains user-friendly
- consult with existing employees from ethnic minority backgrounds to help identify any barriers which may be currently preventing people from applying to work at the College and identify any other measures the College could adopt to engage with groups in the community
- ensure that exit interviews undertaken with employees who have resigned include questions designed to identify whether any diversity and ethnicity issues were involved and a termly report on exit interviews to be fed back to the Governors
- carry out specific training for staff on issues that arise to address matters related to the protected group, e.g. understanding the needs of that group
- engage with relevant community groups to explore the needs of people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Utilise the information gained to inform the organisation of recruitment fairs designed to encourage applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds to advance equality of opportunity between different groups.

2. To improve the success of 16-18 year olds with EBD on FE programmes

The College Self-Assessment Review for 2012-13 identified that the outcomes for students with EBD (Emotional Behavioral Disabilities) were below national averages, especially for those aged between 16 and 18.

Our actions to address this objective include:

- review curriculum offer to ensure it meets the needs of learners and also ensure timely access to mental health services for learners and families who need this service
- increase training initiatives to help staff adapt quickly to the needs of this group of learners
- provide additional support for those young people most at risk of dropping out – for example late enrollers
- monitor attendance to identify any student who may be at risk and refer to Pastoral Learning Mentor to address
- further involve parents/carers/social workers in plans to address those young people who are falling behind with their work.

3. To improve the success of 19+ apprenticeship programmes

The College Self-Assessment Review for 2012-13 identified that the outcomes for apprentices aged 19+ were within 1% of those for 16-18, demonstrating no significant differential.

However partner providers were unable to reverse the difference and there is a 17% underachievement for 19+ compared with 16-18. This will be a main focus for the College in 2013-14.

Our actions to address this objective include:

- work with relevant partners to identify factors leading to lower success – for example redundancy or key skills completion
- carry out regular at risk monitoring with both Apprenticeship Team and partners
- work with the employers to identify actions which could be taken to improve timeliness of success.

4. To improve the outcomes for HE learners from BME backgrounds and/or who are disabled

We aim to further analyse this data to identify whether this is a trend that is experienced elsewhere in the sector and to identify some actions the College can take to address the situation.

Our actions to address this objective include:

- analyse where current HE BME/disabled students are within the College and carry out focus groups in these areas
- raise tutor awareness that these students are potentially at risk
- ensure DSA is in place before learners arrive in College
- conduct exit interviews with this category of learner to identify if any equality and diversity issue was involved in their decision to leave
- review data from other HE providers against our own for this category of learner
- plan activities for this group engaging a BME learner and/or learner with a disability within HE.