

# Yeovil College Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report December 2010

## Context

As part of the Disability Discrimination Act (2005) the College produced its first Disability Equality Scheme (DES) in December 2006. This document included an action plan that clearly demonstrates our commitment to the Disability Equality Duty and its purpose to create positive, non-discriminatory ethos and practice across the whole College.

This Annual Report (2010) reviews our progress so far and identifies the steps we have taken to fulfil our Disability Equality Duty, (i.e. the action plan), in order to meet our initial targets, eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

It is the responsibility of Yeovil College Equality and Diversity Group to monitor and review the DES and corresponding Action Plan. The overall action plan comprises of eight sub sections, with individual points for action and identified responsibilities across the whole of the organisation. The following salient points offer an overview of progress against the outstanding actions for each area for the year ended December 2010

## Policy Review

A new Disability Equality Policy was produced in November 2009 and approved by the Corporation. It is available on the college website and intranet.

## Action Plan Review 2010

(Progress on outstanding actions since last report)

## Annual Report

To publish a Disability Equality Scheme Annual Report

This is produced on an annual basis in December each year. The Action Plan is reviewed and up-dated as part of the report.

## Staff Awareness

To ensure that staff are aware of the College's policy and procedures and of their responsibilities

- Equality and Diversity training for staff has been developed on-line via Moodle. Fifty four members of staff and the student representative, on the Equality and Diversity group, achieved the NCFE Level 2 qualification in Equality and Diversity.
- Equality and Diversity training is now an integral part of new staff induction.
- A process is in place for recording and certificating staff achievement.
- Up-date training is being developed for roll-out on Development Days
- Policies and procedures relating to disability equality are up to date and are accessible to all staff through the intranet and are also available on the college web-site.

## **Governor Awareness**

To ensure that Governors are aware of the College's policy and procedures and of their responsibilities

- Limited progress has been made so far in the recruitment of disabled people to elected posts, although actions have been put in place to actively address the situation.
- All staff recruitment advertisements welcome diverse applicants.
- New Governors, including Student Governors, receive appropriate training in order to understand their responsibilities in respect of the college carrying out its legal duties.

## **Learner Awareness**

To raise awareness of disability equality amongst learners

- Disability equality was included in the cross-college Diversity Day held June 2010.
- The Student Union held a fund-raising event for Help for Heroes which raised awareness of disability.
- Improvements being made to observation paper-work and assessment criteria which ensure E and D is a high priority. Assessments are made as to whether opportunities are taken to consider and promote disability equality issues through the normal curriculum. e.g. assignments, discussion, learning materials.
- A consultant from LSIS has been advising on embedding E and D in curriculum.
- A twice-yearly Equality and Diversity news letter continues to be produced.

## **Staff and Learner Experience**

To improve the monitoring of learner and staff experience relating to disability equality and to take action as appropriate

- Students with disabilities are invited to be part of the working group to review annually the prospectus/ enrolment, paperwork etc.
- Staff recruitment, development and promotion is monitored by disability. Data is provided to E and D Group on a regular basis and any trends identified.
- Data collection on retention, achievement and progression for students with disabilities, or in receipt of additional support, is now in place and information is discussed at appropriate College meetings. Trend data is reviewed on an on-going basis.

## **Conclusion**

The College feels that, during 2010 good progress has been made in achieving the actions set in the Disability Equality Scheme Action Plan. A new plan will be devised for 2011 and we shall continue to work towards the small number of outstanding actions from the previous plan. New actions will be instigated in order to further improve our understanding and practice across the College.

We feel that significant progress has been made, during the last four

years under the Disability Equality Duty and the Disability Equality Action Plan. Governor, staff and learner awareness has been raised and improvements have been made to the way in which we monitor the learner and staff experience and thus work together to respond to our general duty in regards to disability.

The College was delighted to have been asked, by Lifelong Learning UK, to take part in a pilot national initiative to develop an Equality Framework. This will provide a structure for working with staff, learners, local communities and partners in the public and third sector. A meeting has taken place with the project consultant and we have completed the self-assessment documentation. This has produced a number of clear actions which are being taken forward. The project will also involve working with other colleges in the country to take forward this important aspect of work. The aim is to improve the services we provide so that they are more representative, relevant and efficient whilst, at the same time, improving satisfaction and trust. It will enable the College to respond to challenges, tackle prejudice and improve the life chances and opportunities of those who face discrimination and disadvantage.