

Lowestoft College Equality Impact Assessment Annual Report 2010

1. Terms of Reference

The College is required under the Public Sector Equality Duty to undertake Equality Impact Assessments in respect of policies, procedures and associated activities that the College undertakes. The purpose of this report is to publicise the work that the College has undertaken in this important area.

2. The College's approach to Equality Impact Assessments

In order to ensure that the College consults as widely as possible to undertake impact assessments an equality panel has been set up. The panel is open to anyone who would like to join the panel. The panel consists of staff representing various different groups of the College community, the College Chaplain, a student, representatives from SAVO, Waveney District Council and the local NHS. The College is constantly seeking to broaden the panel membership and has recently developed links with the Traveller Community.

The panel members have had annual training to enable them to understand how equality impact assessments should be carried out. The training programme for this year's training is attached at Appendix A.

The panel meets every month, usually the first Thursday on the month. The panel is well established and has been meeting for over 2 years.

A programme of work has been established with an exercise to prioritise policies / activities undertaken at the start of the impact assessment process. This year's schedule can be found at Appendix B.

Managers at the College who introduce new policies have been issued with guidance to enable them to carry out an initial equality impact assessment which will ensure that the policy or activity meets the equality assessment criteria. The guidance document can be found at Appendix C. The form used to record equality impact assessment information can be found at Appendix D.

Once the panel has undertaken the monthly assessments the information from the panel is fed back to the owner of the policy in order that the necessary changes are reviewed and changed.

3. Results and impact of the previous 12 months panel assessments

The following policies/activities have been assessed over the previous 12 months;

Plagiarism Policy
Staff Development Policy
Equal opportunities checklists
Special Leave of Absence Policy
Recruitment & Selection Policy and procedures
Equality & Diversity Policy
Safeguarding Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults Policy
Learner Disciplinary Policy
Teaching for Learning Policy
Student induction Policy
Complaints Procedure
Attendance & Punctuality Policy
Health & Safety Policy
First Aid Procedures
Progression Policy
Volunteer Policy
Lowestoft College & Company FE Fee and Refund Policy for the Academic Year 2010 – 11
Learner Support Fund Policy 2010 – 11 For Learners Aged 16-18

The work of the panel has already made a positive impact in terms of ensuring policies and activities assessed, are not discriminatory. Documents have been updated following panel recommendations, resulting in a better awareness of equality and diversity across the College. The College's document control system has been updated to ensure necessary documents are reviewed by the EDIMs panel and updated in a timely manner.

The College is constantly looking to improve the quality of information available to the panel so that a more thorough assessment can be undertaken. One area that the panel has recognised is the need for data associated with the policy or activity being assessed. The EDIMS group has recommended improved data collection in respect of relevant policies such as the complaints policy.

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