

# Equality and Diversity Strategy: 2011 –2016

October 2011



**Jim Busher**  
Head of Student Support Services, October 2011

The Lakes College Equality and Diversity Strategy provides details of the key aims and objectives that underpin the Equality and Diversity Agenda at Lakes College.

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# Introduction

This Equality and Diversity Strategy places the learner firmly at the centre of the Lakes College learning culture, which is set in the context of the following:

1. Ofsted Common Inspection Framework
2. The nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act (2010) which include; age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnerships; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and religious belief; sex; sexual orientation.
3. The Strategic Golden Thread of 'Equality and Diversity'

Lakes College serves the largely rural communities of Allerdale and Copeland in West Cumbria. The community includes areas of high deprivation and the local economy is heavily reliant on the nuclear sector. Economic regeneration is based around the development of Britain's Energy Coast. It is an area where traditional roles are perpetuated with many students being encouraged by parents to go onto traditional courses.

As the only community college within a 35 mile radius, the college provides wide range of vocational provision. In recent years the profile of college students has shifted to approximately half entry and level 1. At that same time the development of Foundation Degrees has ensured growth of higher education provision to almost 400 students.

Within the college 12% students have declared a learning disability or difficulty. In 2010-2011 the achievement rates of these students was higher than the rest of our college cohort.

The new coalition government is committed to increasing skills to secure economic growth and success. An increasing focus on the key priorities of apprenticeships, skills for life and equipping the low skilled to secure employment will drive college priorities over the period of this plan. We are looking to ensure the widest possible choice is available to all our students.

We are aware that racial minorities make up only 1% of the population of Cumbria and 2% of the college population. However we are committed to ensuring that they have an excellent learning experience and that the rest of our students learn what it is to live in a multi racial country.

We are also committed to ensuring that other minorities within the college are free from discrimination and valued as members of the community.

## Methodology

There have been a number of significant influencers in the development of this new Lakes College Equality and Diversity Strategy:

1. The recent OFSTED Inspection which highlighted a number of areas for development to enhance a whole College approach to Equality and Diversity
2. The need to further involve students in the development of an Equality and Diversity agenda
3. The shift in emphasis from 'fairness' to one of promotion
4. The drive to achieve external recognition of Equality and Diversity as "Outstanding".
5. The need to review the approach to Equality and Diversity which acknowledges both the differences found in staff and students but also acknowledges their similarity.

In view of the above, the existing Equality and Diversity Strategy was found to be deficient in a number of areas, particularly with respect to: the inclusion of learners; an annual reporting model; the quality of data review in terms of success rates and other key performance indicators; the monitoring of inclusion; the celebration of the 'cultures of the college'.

This new Equality and Diversity has adopted an approach to promote an Equality and Diversity Culture across the organization.

## The Strategy

### Principles

This Equality and Diversity Strategy provides the key principles for ensuring that an Inclusive Culture underpins all curricular and support activities within Lakes College.

This Equality and Diversity Strategy has been developed with the following principles serving as its core:

1. Embedding the promotion of Equality and Diversity in Learning and Teaching
2. Celebration of an Equality and Diversity agenda in College life
3. Robust review of student performance and participation by key Equality and Diversity indicators.

### Aims

#### Aim 1

**We will promote a Inclusive Culture by:**

- Focusing upon the delivery of embedded Equality and Diversity in Learning and Teaching
- Ensuring that Equality and Diversity are recognised as the responsibility of every member of staff
- Ensuring that Equality is recognised as part of good leadership
- Ensuring all learners, staff and visitors feel safe and free from discrimination
- We will properly understand the different needs of individuals and groups and make the reasonable adjustments necessary to ensure they are not disadvantaged currently or in the future
- Obtaining, responding and using feedback from staff, learners, and other key stakeholders to inform Equality and Diversity agenda
- Promoting and sharing best practice within Lakes College and with external stakeholders – including employers, subcontractors
- Building opportunities for the Governing Body to champion Equality and Diversity through training and development.
- Ensure Policies, Procedures and Practices follow the legal guidelines outlined in Equality Acts

#### Aim 2

**We will ensure that the Learner Voice contributes to a Equality and Diversity agenda by:**

- Working with the Student Council and Student services team to engage learners in the celebration of a Equality and Diversity agenda
- Systematic use of learner feedback that is reflected and responded to in light of the Equality and Diversity agenda

### Aim 3

We will ensure the engagement of the whole student cohort by:

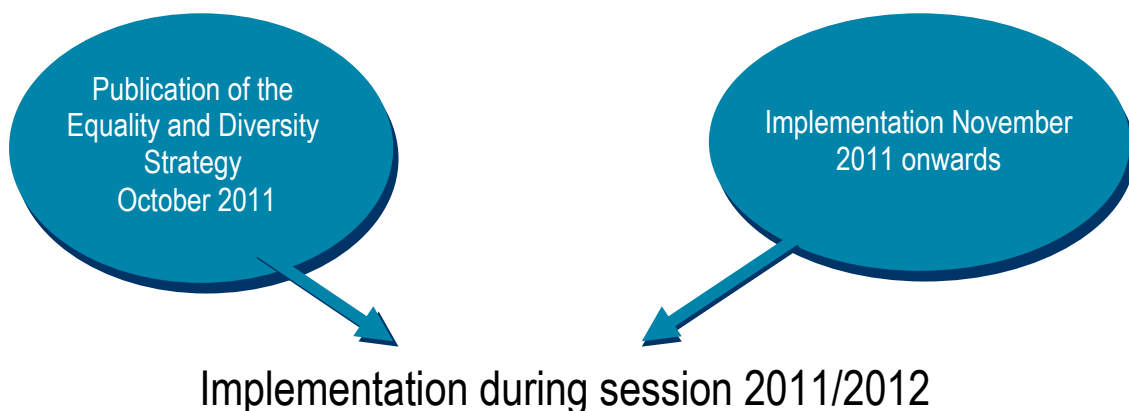
- Ensuring that quality data on student success and participation is available for Programme Area Managers, Course Leaders and Business Support Managers in the drafting of Self Assessment Reports
- Refining the Learning and Teaching observations to provide opportunity for the review of Equality and Diversity
- Working with the Learning Resource Centre team to ensure the quality of materials developed to support Equality and Diversity from a whole College approach
- Ensuring an engagement with those protected characteristics which are not profiled by the Learner Agreement and often described as hard to reach. This would include faith, sexuality and gender reassignment.
- Developing and implementing a data set to allow for the analysis of success, participation and use of core services from an Equality and Diversity perspective

### Aim 4

We will develop a culture which celebrates our differences by :

- Focus on the promotion of a positive future not simply the elimination of an historical inequality
- Working with colleagues to develop a suite of events and exhibitions which highlight the diversity of the College
- Recognise Diversity as being of benefit to all groups not just those that currently experience particular disadvantage
- Promote the achievements and differences of students and staff who succeed within an Equality and Diversity agenda
- Provide a simple electronic dashboard for presenting and analysing KPIs
- Exploring other models to ensure we are operating systems that provide a “best fit” for the organisation.

## Targets and Timescales



Aim	Objective	Action	Responsibility	When	Achieved
1	Focusing upon the delivery of embedded Equality and Diversity in Learning and Teaching	<p>Develop and implement a teaching and learning observation model which provides appropriate focus to Equality and Diversity</p> <p>Report through the College's Quality Improvement Committee areas for improvement highlighted in teaching and learning observation</p> <p>Identify areas of good practise which can be shared through Learning and Teaching mentor and whole College Development</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning Leader</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Leader</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Leader, Lead Learning Mentor, HR Manager</p>	<p>April 2012</p> <p>June 2012</p> <p>June 2012</p>	
	Ensuring that Equality and Diversity are recognised as the responsibility of every member of staff	<p>Ensure Equality and Diversity is part of new staff induction</p> <p>Implement refresher training for all staff on a tri-annual cycle</p>	<p>HR Manager</p> <p>HR Manager</p>	<p>November 2011</p> <p>September 2012</p>	
	Ensuring that Equality is recognised as part of good leadership	Develop and implement a College set of values which reflects a commitment to Equality and Diversity which is signed by the College's management team.	Head of Student Support Services	June 2012	
	Ensuring all learners, staff and visitors feel safe and free from discrimination	<p>Ensure that responses to evaluations of 'safety' questions are analysed through the prism of the protected characteristics. Highlight to the Executive Management any variance that may be a cause for concern.</p> <p>Review disclosures of bullying to review if any students with protected characteristics are being targeted. Highlight to the Strategic Team any variance that may be a cause for concern.</p>	<p>Equality and Diversity Group</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Group</p>	<p>Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year</p> <p>Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year</p>	

1	<p>We will properly understand the different needs of individuals and groups and make the adjustments necessary to ensure they are not disadvantaged currently or in the future</p>	<p>Review the means by which staff can make a declaration of additional support at interview. Put into place recommendations highlighted a part of review.</p> <p>Analyse staff progression through the application to interview and appointment stages for applicants with protected characteristics. Highlight to the Strategic Team any variance that may be a cause for concern.</p> <p>Review the College staff profile in comparison to the profile of the local community and college. Identify appropriate recruitment targets as agreed by the Strategic Team</p> <p>Review the means by which students can make a declaration of additional support from application to enrolment and ensure the learner is at the centre of the procedure and practices.</p> <p>Reconfigure support mechanisms to support declarations made earlier in the Admissions cycle</p> <p>Review how declarations by students with protected characteristics are made and supported at the earliest stage possible i.e. Application or Enrolment form</p>	<p>Head of Student Support Services and ALS Manager</p> <p>HR Manager</p> <p>HR Manager</p> <p>Head of Student Support Services and ALS Manager</p> <p>Head of Student Support Services and ALS Manager</p> <p>Student Support Manager</p>	<p>October 2011</p> <p>Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year</p> <p>Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year</p> <p>October 2011</p> <p>April 2012</p> <p>April 2012</p>	
	<p>Obtaining and using feedback from staff, learners, and other key stakeholders, employers and subcontractors to inform Equality and Diversity agenda</p>	<p>Engage with local and national initiatives focused on the promotion of an Equality and Diversity agenda.</p> <p>Develop surveys and focus groups</p> <p>The Equality and Diversity Group will review teaching and learning, performance and cross college activities and report to the Strategic Team</p>	<p>Head of Student Support Services</p> <p>Head of Student Support Services and Partnership and ER Manager</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Group</p>	<p>On going from 2011-2012 Academic Year</p> <p>October 2012</p> <p>Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year</p>	

1	Promoting and sharing best practice within Lakes College and with external stakeholders	Use engagement with local and national initiatives to share good practise.  Use various media to promote and celebrate diversity throughout the College i.e. college prospectus, other printed materials, website	Head of Student Support Services  Marketing and PR Manager	On going from 2011-2012 Academic Year  From promotion in 2012-2013 Academic Year	
	Building opportunities for the Governing Body to champion Equality and Diversity through training and development.	Extend Equality and Diversity Training to all Governors.  Continue to have a lead Governor to support the Equality and Diversity agenda.  Report on an annual basis on Equality and Diversity to the Governing Body	Clerk to Governors  DP Curriculum  Head of Student Support Services	Immediate  Immediate  Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year	
	Ensure Policies, Procedures and Practices follow the legal guidelines outlined in Equality Acts	Review in line with Equality Impact Assessments or 'Fairness' Assessments all college policies and procedures.  Ensure compliance forms part of the audit cycle	Quality Improvement Manager  Quality Improvement Manager	Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year  Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year	
2	Working with the Student Council and Student services team to engage learners in the celebration of a Equality and Diversity agenda	Ensure that Learner Voice engagements include an Equality and Diversity agenda	Student Liaison Officer	On going from 2011-2012 Academic Year	
	Systematic use of learner feedback that is reflected and responded to in light of the Equality and Diversity agenda	Review participation with Learner Voice by students within the scope of the protected characteristics to ensure participation reflects the community profile. Highlight to the Strategic Team any variance that may be a cause for concern.	Student Liaison Officer	Annually from 2012-2013 Academic Year	

3	Ensuring that quality data on student success and participation is available for Programme Area Managers, Course Leaders and Business Support Managers in the drafting of Self Assessment Reports	<p>Review and enhance EBS reports to allow for the quick and easy analysis of student success by protected characteristics at a course, programme and faculty level.</p> <p>Develop such reports in line with the college approach to disclosure of protected characteristics currently not recorded.</p>	<p>CIS Manager</p> <p>CIS Manager</p>	<p>September 2012 (Faculty), September 2013 (Course)</p> <p>September 2012 (Faculty), September 2013 (Course)</p>	
	Refining the Learning and Teaching observations to provide opportunity for the review of Equality and Diversity	<p>Review and develop Learning and Teaching observations to provide a focus and reporting methodology to support the Equality and Diversity agenda</p> <p>Ensure Equality and Diversity is reflected in a Balanced Scorecard approach with appropriate weighting</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning Leader</p> <p>Quality Improvement Manager</p>	<p>April 2012</p> <p>September 2012</p>	
	Working with the Learning Resource Centre team to ensure the quality of materials developed to support Equality and Diversity from a whole College approach	<p>Develop the Learning Zone to provide tutors with materials to support the delivery of both embedded and specific Equality and Diversity issues.</p> <p>Develop the Learning Zone to provide students with the resources to express their differences and find peer support where appropriate.</p>	<p>Teaching and Learning Leader and Student Support Manager</p> <p>Teaching and Learning Leader and Student Support Manager</p>	<p>September 2012</p> <p>September 2012</p>	
	Ensuring an engagement with those protected characteristics which are not profiled by the Learner Agreement and often described as hard to reach. This would include faith, sexuality and gender reassignment.	<p>Initiate a comprehensive review of the Learner Agreement to profile which protected characteristics can reasonably be captured at Enrolment.</p> <p>Undertake consultation with students about the inclusion of questions relating to protected characteristics currently not recorded on the Learner Agreement</p> <p>Develop avenues for the declaration or identification with a protected characteristics group where this information is not captured at Enrolment.</p>	<p>CIS Manager</p> <p>Head of Student Support Services</p> <p>Student Liaison Officer</p>	<p>April 2012</p> <p>February 2012</p> <p>September 2012</p>	

	Developing and implementing a data set to allow for the analysis of success, participation and use of core services from an Equality and Diversity perspective	<p>Review student participation with Student Services and ECM linked to their self disclosure of a protected characteristics</p> <p>Extend the review of participation with other support services where appropriate and in consultation with Business Support managers</p>	<p>Head of Student Support Services</p> <p>DP Finance</p>	<p>On going from 2011-2012 Academic Year</p> <p>Annually from 2013-2014 Academic Year</p>	
4	Focus on the promotion of a positive future not simply the elimination of an historical inequality	<p>Conduct a comprehensive review of the local populace with a view on numbers under each of the protected characteristics.</p> <p>Reconfigure any KPI and benchmarking in line with current intelligence of the local populace and college cohort.</p> <p>Reflect through marketing strategy and materials</p>	<p>Marketing Information Officer</p> <p>Head of Student Support Services</p> <p>Marketing and PR Manager</p>	<p>April 2012</p> <p>June 2012</p> <p>From promotion in 2012-2013 Academic Year</p>	
	Working with colleagues to develop a suite of events and exhibitions which highlight the diversity of the College	<p>Launch a 'Celebrating the Cultures of the College' week</p> <p>Review the profile of students who disclose Additional Support Needs with the aim of development 'celebration' days focusing on specific disabilities</p>	<p>Marketing and PR Manager and Student Liaison Officer</p> <p>ALS Manager and Student Services</p>	<p>April 2012</p> <p>On going from 2012-2013 Academic Year</p>	
	Recognise Diversity as being of benefit to all groups not just those that currently experience particular disadvantage	<p>Identify staff and students who can provide testimonials and case studies that can be effectively marketed to support an inclusive approach to Equality and Diversity</p> <p>Develop a group of student ambassadors or champions whose protected characteristics are highlighted as part of their inclusion in the College with particular focus on underrepresented groups e.g. female in Business</p> <p>Engage student ambassadors or champions with External Marketing (Schools Liaison) and Internal Events such as Open Events, social media</p>	<p>Course Leaders, Lead Learning Mentor, ALS Manager, Assessors, Marketing</p> <p>Marketing and PR Manager</p> <p>Marketing and PR Manager</p>	<p>April 2012</p> <p>April 2013</p> <p>April 2013</p>	

	Promote the achievements and differences of students who succeed within an Equality and Diversity agenda	Use of effective PR to promote the achievements of staff and students with protected characteristics	Marketing and PR Manager	April 2013	
4	Provide a simple electronic dashboard for presenting and analysing KPIs	Develop the link to EBS reports to allow for the visual presentation and analysis of student success by protected characteristics at a course, programme and faculty level.	CIS Manager, CSS Manager , Marketing and PR Manager	September 2012 (Faculty), September 2013 (Course)	
		Ensure that the development of the college dashboard and KPIs reflect the Equality and Diversity agenda	CSS Manager	September 2013	
	Develop a collaborative internet site	Marketing and PR Manager and Web Development Officer	September 2012		
	Exploring other models to ensure we are operating systems that provide a “best fit” for the organisation.	Develop a peer support relationship with other General FE providers who share the same diversity and geographic characteristics as West Cumbria	Head of Student Support Services	Immediate	
		Develop this relationship to provide benchmarking for KPI and to share good practise	Head of Student Support Services	On going from 2012-2013 Academic Year	



# Revisions

- 4<sup>th</sup> October 2011 First draft produced.
- 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011 Second draft produced  
Produced in consultation with Equality and Diversity Committee  
Distributed to all managers 10<sup>th</sup> October 2011
- 26<sup>th</sup> October 2011 Third Draft  
Produced in reponse to consultation