

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.

Our mission and values

Lakes College Equality and Diversity Strategy demonstrates the commitment of the college to equality of opportunity for staff, learners and wider members of our learning community. Equality of opportunity is an important feature of our college life and we strive to create an environment in which everyone is able to achieve to their full potential. Treating people fairly, and respecting their differences, goes further than lawful requirements. Lakes College will identify and support the needs of the individual, extending beyond statutory requirements for equality of opportunity and embracing the chance for all to succeed. We actively celebrate diversity, enriching the cultural development of our learners.

We are relentless in our approach to establish a college culture that thrives in an environment free from harassment and bullying, promoting respect and tolerance at all times. Lakes College is fully committed to promoting and supporting equality and diversity in all aspects of College life. The College aims to establish an environment, where all individuals have the opportunity to achieve to their full potential and to gain a feeling of self-esteem and respect for, and from, others. Lakes College actively opposes all forms of inequality and discrimination and will challenge constructively any member of our learning community, who does not embrace this ethos.

The College's framework of robust policies and procedures support the delivery of this strategy and are underpinned by our college values of **Ready Respectful Potential**. Embracing and advancing equality and diversity are central to delivering the college's values, ensuring that we meet the needs of our diverse community. This ethos is not just limited to Lakes College campus; we are proud of the leading role we take to promote equality and diversity in our local community and through national partnership activity, and we will continue to fulfil our responsibility with pride.

Lakes College continues with its commitment to supporting skills development for the community of West Cumbria, contributing to economic growth, success and prosperity. An increasing focus on the key priorities of apprenticeships, core employability skills and equipping the disadvantaged to secure employment will drive college priorities over the period of this strategy. We are looking to ensure the widest possible choice is available to all our learners and wider stakeholders to limit barriers and promote opportunity.

By working tirelessly with a wide range of stakeholders, employers and partners to promote equality, celebrate diversity and embed British and College values ensures that we are considered as an inclusive, progressive and modern organisation that is held in high esteem by those seeking to be part of our learning community.

Our approach to equality and diversity is integrated into all activities undertaken within the college, from strategic and operational planning, design and delivery of curriculum, through to the recruitment and employment of staff. By recognising the need for a robust and enriched curriculum that balances the educational needs of young people, adult learners and employers, we can work together to create and sustain an inclusive society that thrives on mutual respect, tolerance and celebration of a diverse yet equal community.

Methodology

There have been a number of significant influencers in the development and updating of Lakes College Equality and Diversity Strategy. These include:

1. Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (September 2016);
2. The public sector duty in the Equality Act 2010, which requires the College to have due regard to eliminate discrimination, directly or indirectly, against employees and potential employees, learners and potential learners and any other stakeholders of the college who have any of the nine protected characteristics defined in The Act, which are;
 - age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage and civil partnerships
 - pregnancy and maternity
 - race
 - religion and religious belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation

and to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;

3. The need to continually extend the involvement of learners in the development of an active Equality and Diversity agenda;
4. The shift in emphasis from 'fairness' to one of promotion, respect and tolerance;
5. The drive to achieve external recognition of Equality and Diversity as "Outstanding";
6. The need to frequently monitor and evaluate our approach to Equality and Diversity.

In view of the above, the existing Equality and Diversity Strategy has been reviewed across a number of areas, particularly with respect to: the inclusion of learners; an annual reporting model; the quality of data review in terms of performance statistics and other indicators; the monitoring of inclusion through recruitment trends; the celebration of the 'cultural diversity of Lakes College'.

The Strategy

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 Teaching, Learning and Assessment
2. Celebration of the Equality and Diversity agenda within and beyond College
3. Robust review of student performance and participation by key Equality and Diversity indicators

Aims

Aim 1

We will promote and embed an Inclusive Culture by:

- Embedding Equality and Diversity within all Teaching, Learning & Assessment practices
- Ensuring that Equality and Diversity is embraced as the responsibility of every member of staff
- Identifying Equality and Diversity as a key feature of strong leadership
- Ensuring all learners, staff and visitors feel safe and free from discrimination
- Properly understanding the different needs of individuals and groups, making any 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 parents, employers and subcontractors
- Building opportunities for the Governing Body to champion Equality and Diversity through training and development
- Ensuring Policies, Procedures and Practices follow the legal guidelines outlined in Equality Acts

Aim 2

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

- Working within our Learner Voice strategy to engage learners to promote and celebrate Equality and Diversity
- Systematically using learner feedback in a collaborative manner to enhance our Equality and Diversity agenda

Aim 3

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

- Ensuring that quality data on learner success and participation is available for leaders and managers to ensure robust and accurate self-assessment reporting
- Refining the Teaching, Learning & Assessment observation process, providing an opportunity for the review of Equality and Diversity
- Working with the Learning Resource Centre team to ensure the quality of materials developed promotes and supports the Equality and Diversity agenda
- Ensuring 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:

- Focusing 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 Lakes College
- Recognising Diversity as being of benefit to all groups not just those that currently experience particular disadvantage
- Promoting the achievements and differences of students and staff who succeed within an Equality and Diversity agenda
- Embracing, promoting and embedding Lakes College and British Values across all areas of the college