

SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

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SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME

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1. Introduction

1.1 Introductory Statement from the Principal

The College's mission is "to be recognised as a centre of excellence for landbased education, training and enterprise.

We believe that equality of opportunity should be at the heart of all we do. There is clear recognition at all levels of the institution of the benefits that diverse client groups bring. The scheme identifies the commitment the College has made to ensure equality of opportunity for learners, staff, stakeholders and visitors to Oatridge College. Our single equality scheme is intended to ensure that we meet our statutory duties by bringing together existing equality schemes and action plans into one cohesive document. The scheme helps to reiterate that equality and diversity are at the heart of what we do.

1.2 About Us

Oatridge College is a purpose-built, residential College of Further Education which offers a comprehensive range of full-time and part-time courses. Our aim is to help individual students reach their full potential and in doing so, contribute to the development of healthy rural business and ultimately a thriving rural economy as well as develop students' own life, employability and citizenship skills. Unlike many other FE colleges in Scotland, the specialist nature of the curriculum means that students are attracted from all over Scotland, the UK and even further afield.

Teaching areas include Agriculture, Countryside Management, Equine Studies & farriery, Horticulture, Greenkeeping, Landbased Engineering, Landscape Construction and Animal Care. Courses include SVQ and Certificate level to Higher National Certificates and Diplomas.

Short courses are run throughout the year and the College also works in conjunction with other organisations, such as Lantra and NPTC, to offer specialist courses for the landbased industries.

The original campus was purpose-built in the 1970s and was built into a hillside with many of the practical facilities situated within the estate, a half mile away from the main campus which made access for people with physical disabilities a major issue.

The College buildings sit within an attractive 283-hectare estate located in Central Scotland and has good access links to the main centres of population. An additional resource for the College is Suntrap, a three-acre mature garden at Gogarbank near Edinburgh, where the vast plant collection and realistic but safe working environment is invaluable for teaching purposes in terms of meeting the needs of the very diverse learners that we serve.

Oatridge plays a national strategic role in serving the needs of the landbased industries across Scotland and is the premier training provider to Scotland's equestrian industry, the College's central location which is home to the Scotlish National Equestrian Centre making it

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highly suited to this niche market. However, the College recognises its role in the local community as well as its national role and has successfully balanced provision to meet the needs of very diverse learners from all walks of life.

The College has a dynamic and forward thinking Board of Management whose members provide a broad range of skills and experience both within the landbased sector and the educational context. The Board of Management fully support the principles of equality of opportunity and embrace positive action to ensure that all those who wish to participate in our business have the opportunity to do so without discrimination.

The College residences accommodate 200 people and include four units, each providing self-catering accommodation for 21 in four self-contained flats. Each of the four units has a single en-suite room on the ground floor, suitable for wheelchair users. College accommodation can and has been set up to accommodate deaf students who wish to stay at the College.

This single equality scheme is informed by the College's strategic development plan and in turn informs the College teams' self evaluation processes as part of our quality enhancement strategy. It embeds the principles of equality which we have including that:

- All stakeholders should benefit from the activity of the College and the College is committed to adopting flexible practices that take into consideration the individual's varying needs and circumstances.
- The College is committed to adopting inclusive practice in all of its activity and in particular in relation to learning and teaching. We aim to meet the learning aspirations of all individuals wherever possible.
- The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to avoid unfair discrimination within all of our HRM practices including recruitment.

1. 3 Our Vision and commitment to Equality

Oatridge College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and aims to serve the whole of the land-based community, to encourage participation by all groups and to provide an environment where individuals can develop to their full potential without discrimination.

Our vision is to meet and exceed the targets that we and other relevant bodies set in relation to specific equality duty and also to embrace a culture of genuine equality for all of our stakeholders

2. Equality vision, values and principles

2.1 Legislative and social context

Racial, Religion and Belief Equality

We are committed to eliminating unlawful racial discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between people of different racial groups, religions and beliefs in accordance to the legislative requirements of The Race Relations Act, 1976, Race

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Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Race Relations (Amendment) Regulations, 2003, Employment Equality (religion and Belief) Regulations, 2003. A full copy of the Oatridge college Race equality Policy and its associated action plan is available on the College Intranet: http://intranet.oatridge.ac.uk/moodle/

Gender Equality

We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination on the basis of gender, marital status, gender reassignment and to opposing discrimination on the basis of pregnancy in accordance with The Sex Discrimination Act, 1975, Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations, 2005, Gender recognition Act, 2004). A full copy of the Oatridge College Gender Equality Scheme and its associated action plan is available on the College Intranet: http://intranet.oatridge.ac.uk/moodle/

Sexual Orientation Equality

We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in accordance with Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations, 2003

Disability Equality

We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability in accordance with The Disability Discrimination Act, 2005 and Special Educational Needs and Disability Act, 2001 (SENDA) A full copy of the Oatridge college Disability Equality Scheme and its associated action plan is available on the College Intranet: http://intranet.oatridge.ac.uk/moodle/

Age Equality

We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination on the basis of age in accordance with the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations, 2006.

Inclusiveness

College strategic aims are in line with the Scottish Government's Life Long Learning Strategy (*Skills for Scotland, September 2005*) and promote an opportunity for people to learn irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances. Efforts continue to be made to provide an appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of a wide variety of potential students. Whenever possible, mainstream programmes of learning are adapted to meet the individual needs of our learners. Steps are also taken to promote programmes where a known equality imbalance exists in order to encourage participation from underrepresented groups

However, we also recognise the importance of differentiated learning packages for specific groups. We are currently running the following successful inclusion programmes which are focussed to meet the needs of individual learners as opposed to taking broad-brushed approaches to inclusion. These programmes have associated progression pathways that we can direct students onto:

- The "Preparation for Racing" project: to meet the gender imbalance in the Horse Racing Industry
- The "Rural Skills Academy": to provide an access route for "hard to reach learners" into the land-based industry sector

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- Special school projects: to provide access routes into the land-based industries for young people with additional support needs in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council (Glencryan School) and West Lothian Council(Cedarbank school)
- Bespoke programmes in partnership with Falkirk, West Lothian and Edinburgh Councils in order to meet the needs of learners that fall into (or could potentially) the More Choices, More Chances categories. In this particular area we have expanded provision substantially over the last 12 months
- The Suntrap projects:
 - Cedarbank School project for young learners with challenging behaviour problems: the pupils are undertaking the RCHS "Plant and Grow" young gardener's certificate
 - Pinewood School project for young learners with physical and learning difficulties: Undertaking the Young Gardener's Certificate and combining this with links to healthy eating ("seed to plate")
 - Day Centres project for adult learners with physical and learning difficulties: undertaking an Individual Achievement Award focusing on organic gardening and healthy eating
 - A short course programme continues to offer the opportunity for learners from all walks of life to participate in lifelong learning
 - Suntrap volunteer scheme: several volunteers work at the garden including eight volunteers with learning/physical difficulties, one with a learning difficulty and one from an ethnic minority group.
- Our short course programme continues to offer the opportunity for learners from all walks of life to participate in lifelong learning

The college continues to strive to promote equality of opportunity among both staff and students with regard to the six main equality strands:-

Race Sexual Orientation

Gender Disability
Faith or belief Age

However, the College is mindful of the importance of being inclusive to all types of people who may potentially be excluded because of other factors, in particular, adverse social circumstances and background of individuals.

The main methods used to achieve equality of opportunity include:-

- Creating and updating College policies as required
- Ensuring that all introduced or altered policies, procedures and processes of the College undergo equality impact assessment
- Ensuring that policies are communicated to staff, students and relevant parties through active promotion, staff and student development
- Benchmarking processes with other organisations including those representing the landbased sector and the general FE sector
- Staff development
- Monitoring recruitment, achievement, and complaints among students.
- Monitoring recruitment, career development and grievances among staff.
- Evaluation of effectiveness of policies internally through the Equal Opportunities Group, and externally in conjunction with other appropriate organisations (e.g. The Scottish Disability Group, The East of Scotland Equality Forum, West Lothian Council)

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The College has undertaken a number of networking and collaborative activities to promote inclusion, equality and diversity including:

- The activities of the Oatridge Equal Opportunity Group
- Participation in the East of Scotland Equalities Forum
- Participation in the Scottish College's Access and Inclusion Forum
- Participation and consultation with the West Lothian Disability Group
- Collaboration with Donaldson's School for the Deaf
- The running of student Information sessions about diverse groups (including LBGT, Samaritans etc)
- Working in partnership with NHS Scotland to develop a project to improve the mental health of all our learners
- Working in collaboration with the West Lothian Literacy and numeracy partnership
- Working with a dyslexic rap artist to promote awareness of dyslexia with our students
- Designing and creating a media-friendly website and DVD for Polish migrant workers on behalf of West Lothian Council

In the last 12 months we have also extended our resources to support learners with learning difficulties including the purchase of specialist computer equipment and modelling a support model for learners with difficulties within mainstream teaching (CAVS model) to help reduce any stigmatisation associated with seeking support in learning.

The Scottish Government has emphasised the role of Scotland's Colleges in providing appropriate training opportunities for young people who are at risk of falling into the "not in employment, education or training" categories locally and to respond to the Government strategy to improve the positive outcomes for young people (*More Choices, More Chances*) and Oatridge has introduced new programmes of learning specifically to meet the needs of these groups of learners.

Specifically, we are committed to the principles of The Human Rights Act 1998 which incorporates the principles of the European Convention on Human Rights (1953), article 14, prohibition of discrimination (such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status).

We will also comply with legislative requirements in relation to the Data Protection Act 1998 ensuring the required confidentiality of our stakeholders whilst being mindful to comply with the FOI (Scotland) Act 2002.

Social Context of our operation

As Oatridge College is a College which delivers almost exclusively education for the land-based sector, local statistical evaluation therefore needs to be considered in relation to the performance of this sector as a whole, as well as comparing ourselves to community colleges within the College sector.

The statistical summary below relates to Lantra, the sector skills council for landbased industries, findings (*Lantra, Sector Qualifications Strategy, October, 2007*) in relation to age, gender and ethnicity and other groups relevant to the equality agenda.

Age

The age breakdown of the sector's workforce shows that a proprietor of a land based business is likely to be above 45 years of age with just under 80% of being in this age bracket. The most common age for employed staff is 25 to 34 years (about 33% of staff) and only 10% of employed staff are over 55 years of age. Variance is more significant in some

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industries like agricultural crops and livestock compared to the sector average. Some industries, noticeably veterinary nursing and equine, have a much younger profile.

In summary: the land based and environmental sector is an ageing workforce

Gender

The gender split for staff is fairly even with 50.8% of the employed workforce being male compared to 49.2% female. However, males dominate the proprietor workforce accounting for 65.9% of proprietors. The gender profiles vary significantly across the industries within the sector with male pre-domination in farriery, engineering, fencing, agriculture and greenkeeping industries. Equine industries (with the exception of racing) are predominated by a female workforce. More gender-balanced workforces are found within environmental conservation and parts of the horticultural and landscaping industries.

Ethnicity

Ethnic minorities are significantly under-represented across the environmental and land-based workforce in comparison with the national average: the representational figure for the sector is only 0.7% compared to 5% of the national workforce. The distribution varies across the sector's industries with virtually zero within agriculture compared to 3.3% within the environmental conservation area. According to Lantra, it is general belief by ethnic minorities that land-based industries are a low level employment option as this is how the industries are regarded in their countries of origin, hence the relatively low numbers wishing to enter the sector.

Migrant workers do form a significant part of the landbased workforce in some of the industries in the sector (production horticulture, agricultural crops in particular). Research is currently being carried out by Lantra to identify the business needs of employers of migrants and the impact that employing migrants has on the sector. It will be necessary to record and recognise any qualifications that migrant workers bring to the UK. The main impact of migrant workers is one of English as a Second Language (ESOL) and ensuring that migrants fully understand health and safety and other training requirements of the sector.

The sector attracts a large number of migrant workers and volunteers over 24 years of age, but funding priorities often present a barrier to entry into and professional development within the sector for these learners. Funding in Scotland presents a barrier for those wishing to enter the sector over the age of 20. There is currently no recognition of any skills, experience and informal training that these and existing workers may have.

2.2 Equality Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Management

The members of the Board of management are responsible for ensuring that the college complies with equality legislation, meets all its duties and ensures that the Single equality Scheme is approved and that all its procedures are followed.

Principal and Chief Executive

The Principal is responsible for leading on equality issues both within and outside the organization and for making sure that the single equality scheme is appropriate and that its procedures are followed.

The Equal Opportunities Group

The Equal Opportunities Group is responsible for guiding the direction of the college's work on equality and making sure that staff, students and other appropriate stakeholders are

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consulted to ensure that equality remains a mainstream issue for all departments in the College.

Staff

All staff are responsible for promoting equality and being able to recognize and tackle discrimination and stereotyping. All staff are responsible for understanding their legal obligations in relation to equality and for undertaking CPD to enhance their understanding of the commitment to equality and diversity and the elimination of unlawful discrimination.

Students

All students are responsible for promoting equality and good relations generally and avoiding discrimination. They should also be able to recognize discrimination, bullying and harassing behavior in others and be able to challenge it and/or report it through the appropriate channels.

Other contractors and service providers to the College

All contractors and service providers who undertake activity on behalf of the college are responsible for following the principles embedded into the Single equality scheme and for following any equality conditions which are stipulated in service level agreements, contracts or partnership agreements. The College will endeavour to ensure that appropriate conditions are inserted into such documents where appropriate and will take reasonable steps to confirm the acceptance of and compliance with conditions relating to equality of agreements produced by service providers.

2.3 Why we have produced a single equality scheme

A decision supported by the Board of Management to develop a Single Equality Scheme rather than separate schemes for disability, gender and age (as per legislative requirements) was taken by the senior management team in June 2009.

The rationale for developing a common approach included the following factors:

- It was found that a common approach was being adopted to all equality strands in terms of policy, procedures and processes within the organization as equality legislation is often inter-related, requiring actions which were similar for all strands
- A single scheme helped to streamline the review and reporting of activity and analysis of data, which, due to often very small numbers involved, made it difficult to make objective judgments on the basis of any statistical analysis
- The College felt that the little discrimination, labeling, stereotyping that did occur
 within the organisation was often more complex than being related to any of the
 single legislative equality strands that existed and that our strategy needed a more
 holistic approach to inclusion and equality

2.4 How the single equality scheme was developed

Work towards the single equality scheme began in earnest in June 2009 but it also incorporated previous equality research, monitoring activity and our current disability equality scheme, gender equality scheme and race equality policy and associated action plan. The work involved input from the equal opportunities group and was operationally co-ordinated by our equalities officer/learning support tutor and strategically by the Assistant Principal, curriculum and quality.

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2.5 How the single equality scheme and its impact will be monitored and reviewed

The impact of the single equality scheme (SES) and its associated action plan will be reviewed and updated quarterly through the equal opportunities group. In addition, progress towards goals will be raised in our team group meetings. All academic and support teams will incorporate the basic actions of the single equality scheme into their quality improvement plans, placing the broad actions in the context of their activity.

The SES action plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis in December following the publishing of the equal opportunities report which will update on the performance of the College in relation to the six basic strands of equality and also our performance in relation to inclusiveness. This report will contain disaggregated statistical evidence and its analysis, survey evidence and a commentary on the annual activity in relation to our strategic drive to promote equality and diversity.

2.6 Communication and access to information

This Single Equality Scheme and the equal opportunities report will be published and available for public scrutiny on our website; www.oatridge.ac.uk. The scheme and report will also be available in print on request by contacting Oatridge College on 01506 864800.

Should anyone using the services of Oatridge College wish to complain in relation to an issue relating to this scheme or to any discriminatory act relating to our business, they should do so using the College's complaints procedure which can be gained by contacting the College and requesting it.

Should an individual find printed or electronic forms of the aforementioned documents inappropriate to their needs, we would request that they contact the College and we will endeavour to relay the information to them in the most appropriate form for them.

3. How the college will progress equality

3.1 Consultation and Involvement

Consultation with all service users has taken place in the following manner:

The Equalities Group Forum

The equalities group Forum of the college meets 3 times per year to discuss issues relating to all 6 equalities issues. This forum is chaired by the Principal of the College and its membership will vary yearly according to the student body but will include:

- The Principal (chair)
- The equal opps reps of the Oatridge Student Association and any other interested students
- The assistant principal, curriculum and quality
- The residential managerManager
- The Learning Support advisor
- At least 2 other members of staff with an interest in Equalities issues

The forum will be left open to discuss issues of equality: led by the members rather than dictated by the management.

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Whilst other, larger Colleges are seen to have forums addressing individual aspects of the equalities agenda, it is seen by Oatridge presently to be more important to get attendance and input at these meetings than to be left with a situation where nobody attends the meetings because of other commitments.

In addition to this forum, all staff are committed to consulting people from minority equality strands from when they make first contact with the College through to leaving. This will be by e-mail, telephone and face-to-face conversations. This may involve tutors consulting the parents of learners (e.g. at our annual open evening) or discussing with learners themselves how things are affecting them within the organisation. Although this seems like an informal process, it works quite well because of the small size of the organisation and its associated demands. Tutors will normally record issues raised in the student's individual learning plans and will raise the issues again through their regular team meetings.

Examples of our consultative activity includes:

- A sub group of the equality group who met and consulted with disabled learners on completion of their Oatridge learning programme.
- In the development phase of the Scottish National Equestrian Centre (SNEC), our director of SNEC undertook extensive consultation with Disabled groups such as the Riding for the Disabled to ensure that seating for viewing and accessing equestrian competitions and arrangements for setting up their disabled riding equipment within the new arenas are as good as they can be for disabled people.
- Staff met with a sub-group from the West Lothian Disability group in order to take wheelchair users around the campus to get their feedback on its accessibility
- Staff consulted with prospective deaf students on our arrangements for providing appropriate equipment for hearing impaired clients

Survey data disaggregation

The College currently undertakes surveys of staff and students regarding their College experience where the information cannot be disaggregated relating to the equality strands of disability, ethnicity, age and gender.

In addition an equality consultation took place in October-November 2009.

Networking Activity

Staff members network with various pertinent groups to help us to share practice in relation to equality issues.

The College actively participates in the following networking groups:

- The East of Scotland Equalities Forum
- The Scottish College's Access and Inclusion Forum
- The West Lothian Disability Group
- Donaldson's School for the Deaf
- NHS Scotland Mental Health
- West Lothian Literacy and numeracy partnership

We also communicate and involve the services of:

- The Samaritans
- Stonewall
- LBGT
- Charlie Waller trust
- The College's Student Councillor
- West Lothian Council Mental Health

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- Dyslexia Scotland
- Stonewall
- The Community Police
- West Lothian educational psychology services

Suntrap Activity

The learning Manager at Suntrap regularly consults with his partner organisations that are directed to Suntrap through social work Council departments: Bonnington resource centre in Edinburgh; Blackburn resource centre; Sighthill Inclusion project; Cherry road (Midlothian); The Education Department of East Lothian Council; "The Shed" Inclusion project managers; Careers Scotland (Pinewood and Cedarwood special schools). This is done through formal and informal meetings, telephone conversations and e-mails.

3.2 Gathering and monitoring information

We gather information in relation to the equality strands and report this in our annual equal opportunities report. The report for AY08-09 is attached as appendix 1 to this Single equality scheme.

One of the main purposes of this report is to highlight action that has been taken in the past year in order to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- prevent discrimination and
- promote good relations between staff and students from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds.

This report also aims to provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of our performance in relation to the equality strands for which we have a legal and moral obligation to monitor and report on and identify the action that is required to continue to improve all policies and practices within the college to promote equality of opportunity for all stakeholders.

Whilst the report utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data in relation to the key equality strands, we also make an effort to expand its remit to encompass and evaluate our overall inclusion work.

The main areas that we report on:

- 1. Student data is categorized and disaggregated in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender and age. The report analysis focuses on levels of satisfaction with their entire college experience and learner achievement in relation to these categories.
- 2. Staff data is categorized and disaggregated in relation to disability, ethnicity, gender and age. The report analysis focuses on levels of job satisfaction, level of post and recruitment profiles in relation to these categories

Currently, as a small organization, it is difficult to gain any meaningful quantitative data from other stakeholders of the College and this is something which will be examined in our action plan. However, qualitative data and feedback from staff and learners is regularly monitored to look for any arising issues.

Should anyone wish to comment on the value of the report or suggest how it could be improved, please contact us at info@oatridge.ac.uk or telephone 01506 864800 and ask to speak to the Assistant Principal, Curriculum and Quality. Links to requested disaggregated survey reports can also be made available on request.

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4 Identification and self-evaluation of key functions relevant to equality

4.1 Student administration and support

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
How do we make sure that we are attracting applicants from all groups from all over Scotland	Our marketing strategy has both a local and national community focus and we attempt within limited resources to encourage people from all walks of life	Implement a positive action marketing strategy to encourage more learners of BME origin
What do we do to ensure that the admissions process is applied consistently and fairly to all applicants from all groups?	We have a student admissions policy and procedure and all staff involved in recruitment receive training in its application to ensure fairness. Admission criteria are clearly set for each course	Encourage application from opposite sex students on school access courses where gender bias exists
What do we do to ensure that those interviewing and selecting students know about our single equality scheme and other equality policy and are putting the principles into practice?	All staff receive basic training in relation to the fundamentals of equality and diversity (Cylix training package which is tailored to incorporate our equality policies etc)	
How do we use data on student admissions to inform planning and decision making?	Application and enrolment data is examined in relation to the 6 equality strands and reported through the equal opportunity report	
How do we monitor and assess student achievement, their progress, withdrawals etc by ethnic group, age, disability and gender?	Relevant data is examined in relation to the 6 equality strands and reported through the equal opportunity report	
How do we make sure that students from all groups know about the different kinds of support available?	All students receive an individual tutorial at the beginning of their course and are advised on support available. Students who are likely to require learning support are referred for an early appointment with our learning support tutor. All students receive a student handbook which has information. Student services is open daily Monday to	

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	Friday to help students and	
	direct them appropriately	
How do our services identify and meet all students' needs, including cultural, religious needs they may have?	We utilize feedback from students gained through the student association, staff meetings, class rep system, tutorial feedback and informal feedback	Need to make a positive attempt to gain BME learner feedback as it appears to be less positive than the student population as a whole
How do we ensure that placement providers work within an acceptable equalities framework for our students?	We have a system of checking work placement locations to ensure that they are providing the standard of service we require	
How do we make sure that our students know the procedures for dealing with incidents of discrimination and harassment?	Our procedures and other relevant policies are posted on the student Intranet. An outline of what to do in the event of such incidences is also included in the student handbook and tutors go through this at induction. However, in the equality survey students did say they had limited knowledge of Oatridge equality and diversity policies shortly after the induction period and so needs to be actioned	Staff to carry out more explicit training of new students on equality and diversity policies at induction

4.2 learning and teaching

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
How do we encourage	We host "information	
students to understand	sessions" on the campus	
and value cultural and	and invite diverse groups	
religious diversity?	to attend. We use poster	
	campaigns. We integrate	
	cultural issues into debate	
	as part of the delivery	
	process in some classes	
How do we ensure that	Through equality training	
teaching staff create an	of all staff who interface	
environment free of	with our student body.	
prejudice, discrimination	Staff are also asked to	
and harassment?	undertake external	
	learning and teaching	
	evaluations which are	
	used to support staff in	
	their delivery method	
How does our teaching	Tutors aim to differentiate	
take account of students'	where possible by	

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cultural backgrounds,	integrating a number of	
language needs and	different approaches into	
different learning styles?	their teaching this is	
	learned through basic	
	teacher training. Special	
	requirements are met for	
	those who have support	
	needs	
How does the curriculum	The majority of our	
deal with questions of	curriculum is land based	
equality and diversity?	and very vocational.	
equality and diversity:	However, we do integrate	
	matters of equality and	
	diversity into core skill	
	areas and through practice	
	(team working). Many of	
	our students undertake	
	citizenship type projects	
	which encourage them to	
	consider the diverse	
	needs of others (e.g.	
	volunteer projects, working	
	with learners with	
	profound and complex	
	needs at Suntrap)	
How do we ensure that	This is done through self	
teams monitor and assess	evaluation and quality	
their curriculums to ensure	improvement planning into	
it meets the needs of	which equality is	
student expectations?	embedded	
How do extra-curricular	Extra curricular events are	
activities and events cater	normally arranged through	
for the interests of all	engagement of the	
students and take into	Oatridge Student	
account access needs and	Association who have an	
concerns re religion or	equal opportunity rep. All	
culture?	student reps undertake	
	training in understanding	
	the diverse needs of the	
	whole student group	
How do we ensure that	This is done through our	
criteria for assessment are	internal verification	
explicit and fair to all?	procedures into which	
	access and equality is	
	embedded. Staff receive	
	training in equality issues	
	in relation to assessment	
Have day we shad 199	design.	
How do we deal with	All complaints are dealt	

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complaints of discrimination in relation to assessment?	with through the College's complaints procedure which is clear and has been equality impact assessed.	
How do we get students to comment on or performance in promoting and achieving equality?	Students may feedback their views on equality issues through surveys (on course, induction and equality consultation), through their class representative, through their members on the equal opportunity group and through other informal feedback mechanisms	
How do we ensure that resources are available to meet any specific needs that students from particular groups may have?	We gain knowledge through feedback: this may be pre-entry, on course or exit issues. We then evaluate as to what reasonable adjustments we can make within our budget. Oatridge College is a small college and in extreme cases it may be necessary for us to refer to other agents.	

4.3 Information services

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
Are we providing a suitable range of methods to allow students of different needs to access information?	We have standard ways of providing information and make adjustments as required. Hearing loops are installed for learners and others with hearing impairments. Access to appropriate ICT technology has been made available to those who need it	Review how we provide information and provide a wider range where possible within the budget constraint

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4.4 Physical resources

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
How do we ensure that premises and facilities are fully accessible to, and can be used by, everyone including those premises open to the general public and local community?	Our premises have undergone an access audit and we are working on our estate strategy to improve access within the action plan of the strategy	

4.5 Human resources

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
How do we advertise posts, including posts for support staff? Are all posts open to the widest pool of applicants?	Posts are generally advertised in either the general press, online, the Scotlands Colleges website and vocational publications (where appropriate)	Implement a positive action strategy to encourage recruitment of under-represented groups (see equality action plan)
How do we ensure that everyone involved in recruitment and selection is effectively trained and knows what to do to avoid discriminating, intentionally or otherwise?	Those involved in recruitment receive brief training on utilizing standardized questions and utilizing the scorecard approach against the person spec of any job description	Do short internal CPD session to ensure that this practice is embedded by all those involved in recruitment
How do we ensure that recruitment procedures follow best equality practice?	People are selected upon their matching of their standard application to the person spec. relating to the job. Those involved in the "leet" process do not see the equality monitoring forms	
How do we monitor applications for employment by equality groups and how do we use this information to inform planning and decision making?	We have equality monitoring paperwork for all applicants which is analysed and evaluated through the annual equal opportunity monitoring report	
What steps do we take to tackle differences in patterns of employment between staff from different equality groups in relation to grade, type of contract or other terms	We have a fair recruitment process. All staff are appointed on standard terms and conditions which do not vary.	

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and conditions?		
How do we ensure that	Team leaders receive	Develop the breadth of
that teams give their staff	training in line	support for team leaders
the support that they	management	
need?	responsibilities	
How do we monitor staff in	Information on staff in	Examine the relative
post and applications for	relation to gender, race	discrepancy between male
training and promotion by	and disability is	and females in relation
equality groups and use	disaggregated from	promoted posts and take
this information to inform	general staff information	positive action
planning and decision	and analysed through the	
making?	equal opportunity report	
How do we train staff to	All staff receive basic	
deal with incidents of	training on internal policy.	
discrimination, bullying	Staff have also been	
and harassment?	offered to undertake the	
	"respect Me" training	
	courses and we have one	
	member of staff who is	
	trained to train in this area.	

4.6 Health and Safety

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
How do we ensure that	Our health and safety	
our policies, procedures	policies are equality	
and practices in relation to	impact assessed. It does	
ensuring the health, safety	however need to be clear	
and well-being of all of our	that, whilst we endeavour	
stakeholders are not	to make reasonable	
creating any negative	adjustment for every	
impact upon any group of	group, some individuals	
users?	with physical disabilities	
	may be precluded from	
	some of our programmes	
	by the very physical nature	
	of the area of land-based	
	study. However, we hope	
	that we have alternative	
	programmes which will	
	meet the needs of most	

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4.7 Procurement and Partnerships

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
How do we ensure that we	By using APUC and other	
are meeting our equality	buying consortium who	
duties in relation to	have clear policies on	
functions that we carry out	Equality and Diversity we	
under contract or other	hope to minimize the risks	
service agreements?	to the organisation	
How do we encourage	We will utilize the buying	
suppliers from under-	and procurement	
represented groups to	consortium who are	
tender for goods and	establishing procedures to	
services?	ensure that diverse	
	communities have equal	
	opportunities in	
	collaborative procurement	
What sanctions do we	Suppliers are encouraged	
take against contractors or	to participate and if they	
providers of service who	do not are removed from	
do not follow our equality scheme or policies?	our procurement contracts	

4.8 External and community relations

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
Do we work with different sections of the community to help them tackle discrimination and inequality?	Through various citizenship projects and volunteering projects, we engage both the local and land based communities and encourage them to work with us within the equality principles we have	
Do we publicly promote good personal and community relations including those between different groups and to oppose all forms of inequality and discrimination?	Yes- through our marketing strategy	
Do we make sure that public information and material is written clearly and is available, where	We are unable to offer other languages because of the size of our institution. However, we	

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necessary, in other formats and in other	would facilitate anybody to find interpretation services
languages?	and pay for these where
	reasonable

4.9 Staff training and development on equality

Self evaluation question	Answer	Further action
Are we providing our staff	Yes	
with appropriate training in		
equality matters?		

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Appendix 1: Annual Equal Opportunity Report (AY08-09)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES REPORT DECEMBER 2009



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1. Introduction and Context within the land based sector

Oatridge College supports the principle of equal opportunities and strives to provide a non-discriminatory environment for all sections of the community.

The College community comprises:

- students
- teaching and support staff
- College managers
- members of the Board of Management
- employers and visitors to the College
- the community at large

One of the main purposes of this report is to highlight action that has been taken in the past year in order to:

- promote equality of opportunity
- prevent discrimination and
- promote good relations between staff and students from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds.

This report also aims to provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of our performance in relation to the equality strands for which we have a legal and moral obligation to monitor and report on and identify the action that is required to continue to improve all policies and practices within the college to promote equality of opportunity for all stakeholders.

Oatridge College is a College which delivers almost exclusively education for the land-based sector. Local statistical evaluation therefore needs to be considered in relation to the performance of this sector as a whole, as well as comparing ourselves to community colleges within the College sector.

The statistical summary below relates to Lantra, the sector skills council for landbased industries, findings (*Lantra, Sector Qualifications Strategy, October, 2007*) in relation to age, gender and ethnicity and other groups relevant to the equality agenda.

Age

The age breakdown of the sector's workforce shows that a proprietor of a land based business is likely to be above 45 years of age with just under 80% of being in this age bracket. The most common age for employed staff is 25 to 34 years (about 33% of staff) and only 10% of employed staff are over 55 years of age. Variance is more significant in some industries like agricultural crops and livestock compared to the sector average. Some industries, noticeably veterinary nursing and equine, have a much younger profile.

In summary: the land based and environmental sector is an ageing workforce

Gender

The gender split for staff is fairly even with 50.8% of the employed workforce being male compared to 49.2% female. However, males dominate the proprietor workforce accounting for 65.9% of proprietors. The gender profiles vary significantly across the industries within the sector with male pre-domination in farriery, engineering, fencing,

agriculture and greenkeeping industries. Equine industries (with the exception of racing) are predominated by a female workforce. More gender-balanced workforces are found within environmental conservation and parts of the horticultural and landscaping industries.

Ethnicity

Ethnic minorities are significantly under-represented across the environmental and land-based workforce in comparison with the national average: the representational figure for the sector is only 0.7% compared to 5% of the national workforce. The distribution varies across the sector's industries with virtually zero within agriculture compared to 3.3% within the environmental conservation area. According to Lantra, it is general belief by ethnic minorities that land-based industries are a low level employment option as this is how the industries are regarded in their countries of origin, hence the relatively low numbers wishing to enter the sector.

Migrant workers do form a significant part of the landbased workforce in some of the industries in the sector (production horticulture, agricultural crops in particular). Research is currently being carried out by Lantra to identify the business needs of employers of migrants and the impact that employing migrants has on the sector. It will

be necessary to record and recognise any qualifications that migrant workers bring to the

UK. The main impact of migrant workers is one of English as a Second Language (ESOL)

and ensuring that migrants fully understand health and safety and other training requirements of the sector.

The sector attracts a large number of migrant workers and volunteers over 24 years of

age, but funding priorities often present a barrier to entry into and professional development within the sector for these learners. Funding in Scotland presents a barrier

for those wishing to enter the sector over the age of 20. There is currently no recognition

of any skills, experience and informal training that these and existing workers may have.

2. Overview of strategy to address issues of equality and inclusion

The drive to improve equality of opportunity within the College originates from legislative requirements, directives from the Scottish Government and the College mission:

"To be recognised as a centre of excellence for land-based education, training and enterprise".

College strategic aims are in line with the Scottish Government's Life Long Learning Strategy (*Skills for Scotland, September 2005*) and promote an opportunity for people to learn irrespective of their background or current personal circumstances. Efforts continue to be made to provide an appropriate curriculum to meet the needs

of a wide variety of potential students. Whenever possible, mainstream programmes of learning are adapted to meet the individual needs of our learners. Steps are also taken to promote programmes where a known equality imbalance exists in order to encourage participation from under-represented groups

However, we also recognise the importance of differentiated learning packages for specific groups. We are currently running the following successful inclusion programmes which are focussed to meet the needs of individual learners as opposed to taking broad-brushed approaches to inclusion. These programmes have associated progression pathways that we can direct students onto:

- The "Preparation for Racing" project: to meet the gender imbalance in the Horse Racing Industry
- The "Rural Skills Academy": to provide an access route for "hard to reach learners" into the land-based industry sector
- Special school projects: to provide access routes into the land-based industries for young people with additional support needs in partnership with North Lanarkshire Council (Glencryan School) and West Lothian Council(Cedarbank school)
- Bespoke programmes in partnership with Falkirk, West Lothian and Edinburgh Councils in order to meet the needs of learners that fall into (or could potentially) the *More Choices, More Chances* categories. In this particular area we have expanded provision substantially over the last 12 months
- The Suntrap projects:
 - Cedarbank School project for young learners with challenging behaviour problems: the pupils are undertaking the RCHS "Plant and Grow" young gardener's certificate
 - Pinewood School project for young learners with physical and learning difficulties: Undertaking the Young Gardener's Certificate and combining this with links to healthy eating ("seed to plate")
 - Day Centres project for adult learners with physical and learning difficulties: undertaking an Individual Achievement Award focussing on organic gardening and healthy eating
 - A short course programme continues to offer the opportunity for learners from all walks of life to participate in lifelong learning
 - Suntrap volunteer scheme: several volunteers work at the garden including eight volunteers with a learning/physical difficulties, one with a learning difficulty and one from an ethnic minority group.
- Our short course programme continues to offer the opportunity for learners from all walks of life to participate in lifelong learning

The college continues to strive to promote equality of opportunity among both staff and students with regard to the six main equality strands:-

Race Sexual Orientation

Gender Disability
Faith or belief Age

However, the College is mindful of the importance of being inclusive to all types of people who may potentially be excluded because of other factors, in particular, adverse social circumstances and background of individuals.

The main methods used to achieve equality of opportunity include:-

- Creating and updating College policies as required
- Ensuring that all introduced or altered policies, procedures and processes of the College undergo equality impact assessment
- Ensuring that policies are communicated to staff, students and relevant parties through active promotion, staff and student development
- Benchmarking processes with other organisations including those representing the landbased sector and the general FE sector
- Staff development
- Monitoring recruitment, achievement, and complaints among students.
- Monitoring recruitment, career development and grievances among staff.
- Evaluation of effectiveness of policies internally through the Equal Opportunities Group, and externally in conjunction with other appropriate organisations (e.g. The Scottish Disability Group, The East of Scotland Equality Forum, West Lothian Council)

The College has undertaken a number of networking and collaborative activities to promote inclusion, equality and diversity including:

- The activities of the Oatridge Equal Opportunity Group
- Participation in the East of Scotland Equalities Forum
- Participation in the Scottish College's Access and Inclusion Forum
- Participation and consultation with the West Lothian Disability Group
- Collaboration with Donaldson's School for the Deaf
- The running of student Information sessions about diverse groups (including LBGT, Samaritans etc)
- Working in partnership with NHS Scotland to develop a project to improve the mental health of all our learners
- Working in collaboration with the West Lothian Literacy and numeracy partnership
- Working with a dyslexic rap artist to promote awareness of dyslexia with our students
- Designing and creating a media-friendly website and DVD for Polish migrant workers on behalf of West Lothian Council which is to be launched at West Lothian Diversity week (29th November)

In the last 12 months we have also extended our resources to support learners with learning difficulties including the purchase of specialist computer equipment and modelling a support model for learners with difficulties within mainstream teaching (CAVS model) to help reduce any stigmatisation associated with seeking support in learning.

The College Equal Opportunities policy includes the following new legislation and duties:-

Disability Discrimination Act 2005 and its associated duty Gender Equality Duty 2007 Employment Equality(Sexual Discrimination) Regulations 2005 Gender Recognition Act, 2004 Employment Equality(Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Employment Equality(Religion/belief) Regulations 2003 Employment Equality(Age) Regulations 2006

The College has undertaken its duty to produce a Gender Equality, a Disability Equality Scheme and the Race Equality Policy and associated action plan was updated in September 2009. These have been published on the College website along with their associated 3 year action plans. The Disability equality scheme will be updated in December 2009.

The College is currently examining the feasibility of moving to the development of a single equality scheme which may be more sensible for such a small organisation. In the meantime, the College finds it more practical for such a small organisation to produce one inclusive annual equality action plan which will reflect the needs of the disability, gender and race schemes in a more cohesive manner for use by our stakeholders.

Equal Opportunities data monitoring is carried out on an annual basis and submitted to the Scottish Funding Council.

3. Staff Equality Monitoring

The following provides a simplified analysis of equality data relating to age, gender and disability in relation to the staff at Oatridge College.

Age monitoring of Staff

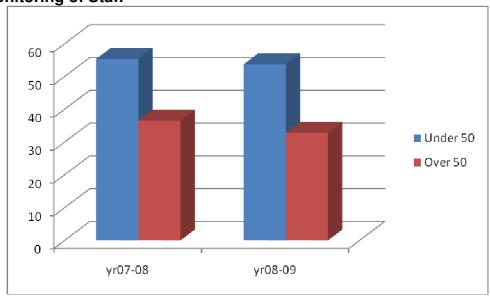


Table 1: age profile of all staff at Oatridge college comparing under 50 and over 50 comparing the last 2 years (y axis: =FTE)

Although there has been a relative increase in staff over 50 years of age since 05-06, this has stabilised in the last 3 academic years and it would appear to be a stable and balanced age range of staff.

In the year 08-09, 47% of promoted posts were filled by staff members over the age of 50 years compared to 45% in 07-08.

On examination of application to post equal opportunity monitoring data, 90% of applicants were below the age of 50.

Gender Monitoring of Staff

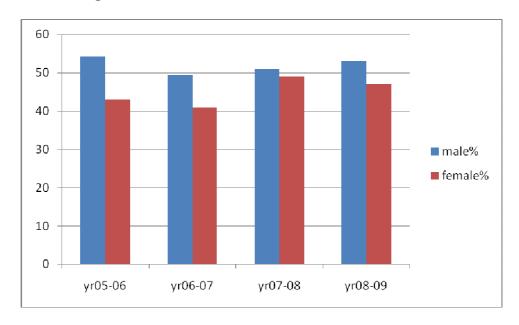


Table 2: ratio of male to female staff comparing the last 4 years

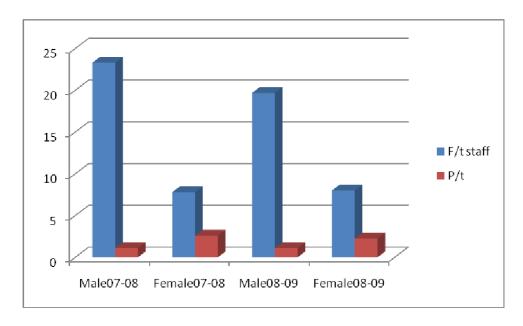


Table 3: a comparison of male and female academic staff in terms of full-time and part-time posts for the years 07-08

It is clear from the above two charts that Oatridge College continues to maintain a good gender balance amongst its staff as compared to the FE College sector as a whole where 43% of staff are male and 57% are female although the relative balance of male employees at Oatridge has crept up slightly and this requires to be monitored.

The gender imbalance of males: females comparing full to part-time positions and academic posts has improved slightly in AY 08-09 compared to AY 07-08: in AY 08-09, 67% of part-time staff were female compared to 78% in AY 07-08. This is a significant improvement in balance but is something we will continue to monitor.

In AY 08-09 67% of academic staff were male compared to 70% in AY 07-08: this is a small improvement. Students have suggested that we should consider opposite sex role models in our gender biased sub-sectors to try and address these issues and this is important consideration for positive action in terms of future recruitment of academic staff.

In AY 08-09 37% of promoted posts were held by females compared to 33% in AY 07-08. This is still disappointingly low in terms of gender balance and should be considered for positive action in terms of recruitment for promoted posts within the organisation.

Race Monitoring of Staff

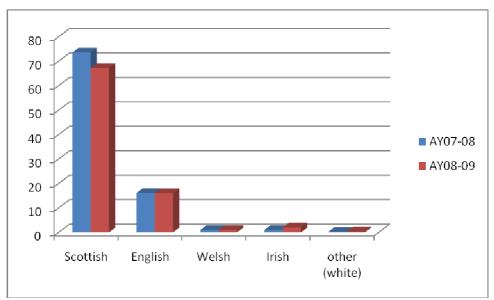


Table 4: Staff ethnicity comparing AY07-08 and AY08-09

As can be seen from the above table, Oatridge has had a 100% white staff cohort for the last 2 academic years. This compares with 98.4% for the FE sector as a whole (AY07-08 figures).

All staff recruited during the last 12 months have recorded their ethnicity as white. This compares with the previous year.

On examination of application to post equal opportunity monitoring data 6 applicants to the 15 posts advertised were BME but only one of these BME applicants met the minimum criteria for interview and this individual was not successful in their application. Although it is encouraging compared to the previous year that we have an increased rate of application from BME individuals, it remains disappointing that our staff body is still 100% white and we need to examine further positive actions in relation to this.

Disability Monitoring of Staff

Three members of staff have a declared disability compared to 1 in the previous year: this represents 4.3% of the workforce. There are no SFC figures from their staffing return to compare this with but it is encouraging that we are showing more evidence that we are positive about disability in relation to our staff body. On examination of application to post for the last 12 months, equal opportunity monitoring data approximately 27% of applicants had a declared disability.

Staff survey data

An electronic survey of staff was carried out in March 09 and the average staff satisfaction with their work was 81% which is comparable to the previous year. Forty six responses: 21 male, 25 female) were received (out of a total of possible approximately 110 head of staff). The results of this survey were disaggregated to examine for any issues of inequality in relation to gender, disability and ethnicity. The results indicated that there was little significant difference between the opinions of male compared to female staff in relation to career progression opportunities, ability to influence decision making processes and their satisfaction with the way they were managed. However, it did indicate that 87.5% of female respondents felt that they had received appropriate access to equality training whilst only 76.5% of male respondents felt that they had. This needs to be examined further and appropriate actions taken.

Monitoring of Staff Grievances and disciplinary matters relating to equality matters

There have been no staff grievances in the year 08-09 relating to equality matters nor any issues relating to discrimination under the College's bullying and harassment policy

Action planning relating to this equality monitoring data and analysis is below the monitoring data in relation to the student population within this document and also reflected within the Disability Equality Scheme, The Race Equality Scheme and The Gender Equality Scheme.

4. Student Equalities Data

Equality monitoring data has been disaggregated in relation to age, gender, race and disability in relation to students. The data has been examined and compared from the point of student application through to achievement levels and appropriate analyses have been made for evaluation and action planning.

Age Monitoring of Learners

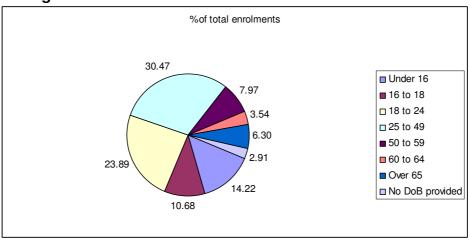


Figure 1: Breakdown of age of learners at Oatridge College year 07-08

The above breakdown of the age of learners identifies that the majority of learners were between the ages of 18 and 49 but there is a good balance across the spectrum of ages which is comparable to general FE colleges.

Gender monitoring of learners

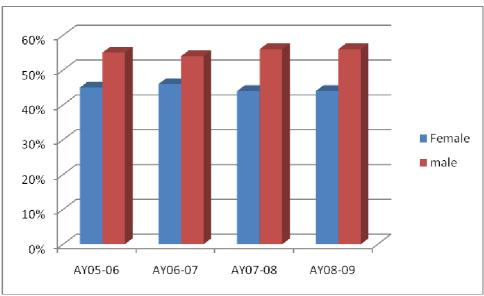


Figure 2: Gender trends of learners comparing the last 4 academic years

Females consistently have represented between 44 and 46% of all learners over the last 4 years. However, there still remains imbalance in some areas of provision as can be seen from the graph below: some curriculum areas have particular gender bias which teams are making efforts to address through their annual QIP.

Gender Breakdown of learners by curriculum area comparing AY07-08 with AY08-09

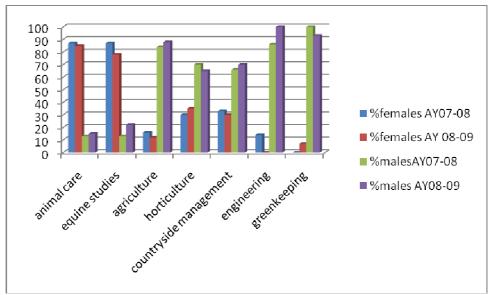


Figure 3: Graph to show ratio of male: female learners comparing the last 2 academic years

Overall achievement of learners in relation to gender

Of the 1071 learners who achieved a FES 08 outcome (completed and attained an award) in the AY08-09, 19% were female and 81% were male

Ethnic Monitoring of Learners

Description of ethnicity	%	%	%	%
	enrolments 2008-2009	enrolments 2007-2008	enrolments 2006 – 2007*	enrolments 2005 – 2006*
White-Scottish	71.04	68.77	85.07	90.81
White - English	6.59	7.87	8.70	6.45
White - Welsh	0.25	0.18	0.43	0.34
White- Irish	1.11	0.76	0.59	0.27
White - Other	6.69	5.77	3.80	1.71
Any mixed background	0.20	0.28	0.20	0.07
Pakistani –Asian or Asian Scottish/British			0.03	0.00
Chinese – Asian or Asian Scottish/British	0.07	0.1	0.12	0.07
Other – Asian or Asian Scottish/British	0.12	0.13	0.15	0
Caribbean	0.02	0.03	0	0.00
African – Black or Black Scottish/British	0.05	0.13	0.10	0.07
Any other background – other Ethnic background	0.07	0.13	0.02	0
Information unknown / undisclosed	13.58	15.75	0.74	0
% BME student enrolments	0.65	0.93	0.65	0.41

Figure 4: Ethnic origin of students at Oatridge over the last 4 years

Whilst the number of White - Scottish students has remained fairly constant during the past 4 years, it has been a little disappointing that there has been no further incremental increase in the number of BME learners in the last year and we need to take more positive action to address this. The high figure for "information unknown" relates in the main to our English language summer school programmes (accounting for 55.8% of this figure and also from a group of international students hosted by the agriculture team). We have come across a resistance from many of our international learners to complete this part of our enrolment form as they culturally often find it offensive. This is one area that we are looking into to overcome this problem as it is almost certainly resulting in an underrepresentation when it comes to ethnicity

Overall achievement of learners in relation to ethnicity

Ethnic minority learners represented 0.5% of total learners in relation to assessed programmes. 100% of ethnic minority learners achieved their programme (FES 08 student outcome) in comparison to 83% achievement overall for the College in the year 08-09.

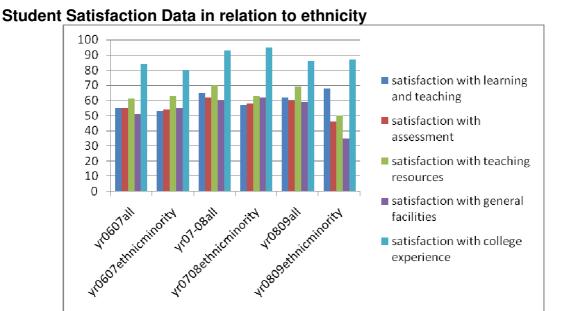


Figure 5: Comparison of student satisfaction of years 06-07 to 08-09 comparing all students to those from an ethnic minority

The above satisfaction data graphic comparison was undertaken by numerically analysing disaggregated satisfaction data in relation to the online student on-course survey. It shows that there is a small but significant reduced comparative satisfaction of ethnic minority learners in relation to satisfaction with assessment processes and the general facilities compared to the overall population although the satisfaction with learning and teaching has improved from the year 07-08. This matter requires further investigation and will be part of our race equality action plan.

Disability Monitoring of Learners

Description of disability	% enrolments 2008-2009	% enrolments 2007-2008	% enrolments 2006 – 2007*	% enrolments 2005 – 2006*
No known disability	80.62	80.89	86.39	90.09
Dyslexia	2.99	1.82	5.64	4.8
Blind/partially sighted	0.22	0.13	0.19	0.27
Deaf/hearing impairment	0.42	0.28	0.46	0.20
Wheelchair user/mobility difficulties	0.15	0.15	0.14	0.13
Personal Care Support	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.00
Mental health difficulties	0.69	0.56	0.70	1.33
Any unseen disability e.g. diabetes, epilepsy	1.33	0.99	3.33	0.80
Multiple disabilities	0.47	0.86	0.77	2.74
Disability not listed above	1.33	1.39	0.40	0.80
% students with disability (excluding dyslexia)	4.66	4.41	7.96	5.08
% students with disability (including dyslexia)	7.65	6.23	13.61	11.07

Figure 6: Disability status of Oatridge students over the last 4 years-

* note that monitoring data for years before 07-08 may not reflect officially published figures as they relate to the figures at the time of report writing which was before all enrolments had been finally submitted to SFC due to the timing of report generation in previous years)

The numbers of disabled learners appears to have increased slightly since AY07-08 and, although this looks like a large decline from the previous year, this may be reflected by the timing of this report in previous years and is probably a more accurate reflection.

Overall achievement of learners in relation to disability

Disabled learners represented 6.23% of total learners in relation to assessed programmes. 84.55% of disabled learners achieved their programme (student outcome) in comparison to 93% achievement overall for the College in the year 07-08.

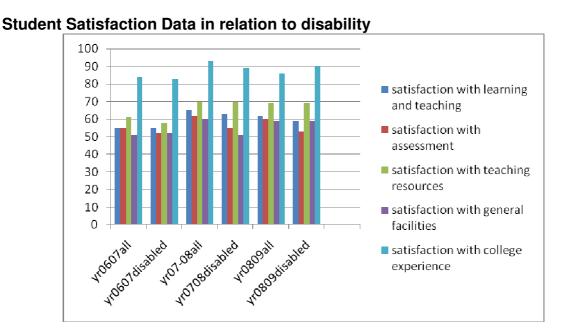


Figure 7: Comparison of student satisfaction of years 06-07 through to 08-09 comparing all students to those with a declared disability

The above satisfaction data graphic comparison was undertaken by numerically analysing disaggregated satisfaction data in relation to the online student on-course survey. It shows that, in general student satisfaction is generally on a par with the whole learner population. Since AY07-08 there has been an improvement in satisfaction of disabled learners with the general college facilities. However, there remains a problem with reduced satisfaction with assessment processes. This is something we took some approaches to address in 08-09 but it appears that the measures were not effective (including staff training in designing more flexible assessment approaches). This will be addressed again in AY09-10

Monitoring of Student complaints

In AY 08-09 Oatridge College received two complaints from ethnic learners regarding the fact that they had not passed their programmes of learning. In both cases, the matter was fully investigated and not upheld. The students were responded to by letter and the matter was closed. There have been no complaints

from disabled learners and there was a balance between those from male and female learners. Only one of the aforementioned complaints related to issues of discrimination in relation to the equality strands.

Suntrap

Suntrap continued to provide a quality learning experience and a safe learning environment for learners with global disabilities. The Centre continues to cater for individuals who suffer from conditions such as epilepsy, blindness, Down's Syndrome and mental illness as well as for individuals with very complex conditions such as neurofibromatosis and also those with multiple disabilities. Many of the individuals who attend Suntrap could not have been accommodated on the main campus because of both the topography and the safety risks. The simple evaluations carried out by the students (based on smiley faces) and the many written testimonials received from support workers who attend the Centre show the overwhelming benefits of the programmes run at Suntrap.

5. Evaluation of Equality Consultation

In October –November 2009 Oatridge College ran an electronic survey consultation (see appendix 1 for questions used) in relation to its stakeholders using the database of current students, ex-students, staff, employers and other users of the College. A slightly disappointing response of 42 was received: 7 students and 35 members of staff. The following data and evaluation relates to this survey. An emphasis has been placed upon reporting issues that require to be actioned and these points will be considered as solutions for our equality action plan.

Staff Feedback

- All respondent staff felt they were fully aware of the College's equality and diversity policies through the training they had undertaken
- Only 35 of a total of 120(approximate) had of staff responded to the survey
- 8.7% of respondent staff were not willing to disclose information about disability
- Staff suggested that a good way to promote equality and diversity would be to utilise more posters/training and events
- Several staff members felt that we needed to give a little more thought to access arrangements around the college for disabled users although some mentioned the difficulties in relation to the topography of the campus.
- 14% of staff respondents (all female) felt that women were treated less favourably than men in relation to pay
- Several staff respondents said that we need to emphasise a zero tolerance policy in relation to racism, bullying and other equality issues

Student feedback

- All 7 of the student respondents said they had little or no knowledge of the College's equality and diversity policies
- All student respondents felt that the college did not discriminate against ethnic minority groups

- Some students suggested that we should consider how to improve wheelchair access around the campus
- Some students suggested that more interaction with schools would help to address gender bias in some courses
- Some students suggested that where gender bias existed, we should try to recruit the opposite gender as a lecturer/role model

6. Staff Development

Disability Awareness raising and Inclusion

"Equality and diversity" basic training has successfully been implemented as an online training package, supporting those who have no computer for their job by carrying it out in the IT lab. This training is certificated and to date 76 staff members have successfully completed the end "test" and two have tried but not finished. This is seen as a good way to ensure compliance and the test ensures appropriate rather than cursory interaction with the training.

Other relevant staff training events which have been hosted internally in the AY08-09 include:

- "Safe Talk" (suicide awareness raising training)
- "Respect me": training relating to the tackling of bullying in young people
- "Assist" training
- "Deaf awareness raising" training
- "Understanding autism"
- "Child protection and protection of vulnerable adults"

Staff have also participated in networking events and sector-wide CPD relating to equality issues.

Equalities issues are being actively promoted in the learning and teaching of the College and embedded into some classes, in particular communications: this is an active component of the college's new learning and teaching strategy which will be monitored through AY09-10 from an external perspective.

7. Equal Opportunities Group

The operational issues of the College's equality duty are undertaken by our learning support tutor, Janet Lingard, who is in regular contact with our various partner organisations and co-ordinates the active Equal Opportunities Group which meets three times per year. The current student president is dynamically interested in issues of equality and at least 4 student representatives for AY 08-09 attended the meetings. In June 2009, the group ran a special meeting to learn from the experiences of various disabled learners through the year. Information given by the students in this meeting was considered an invaluable contribution to the College's next Disability equality Scheme.

The minutes of the equal opportunities group can be found on the staff Intranet (Moodle) under the equalities section. External interested parties may receive a copy of these minutes through the FOI Act by contacting the Principal's secretary.

8. Disability, Gender, Race Equality Schemes and associated action plans

These documents are 3 year plans where the College's specific commitment to these issues is outlined. These schemes are published on the College's website (www.oatridge.ac.uk). The small and specialist nature of the College make the

administration of several documents of this nature difficult to work with¹ and are currently piloting the production of a single equality duty action plan. The action plan will be updated on a regular basis and can be found on the College website and Staff Intranet (Moodle).

Consideration of the analysis of the above data, internal and external environmental drivers has led to specific action targets in relation to equality which can be found as appendix 2 to this equal opportunity monitoring report.

9. Conclusion

Distinct progress in terms of quality enhancement has taken place at Oatridge to develop equality of opportunity over the past 12 months with developments being made in the generation of relevant disaggregated data and its effective use, improved awareness of equality issues and a distinct cultural shift towards embracing inclusion and diversity across the whole organisation. The drive to continually enhance equality of opportunity will be taken forward by all stakeholders. The disadvantage created by the lack of dedicated staff to the equalities agenda is perhaps counterbalanced by the contribution and involvement of everybody in the promotion and implementation of equality of opportunity.

Oatridge College Page 38 of 40 Equal Opps

Most large community colleges will have at least one full-time member of staff dedicated to equalities issues if not more.

Appendix 2: Equality Action Plan AY09-10

Action	Ву	Ву	Comments/	Completed/ Progress
	whom	when	Performance measure	
Monitor data relating to gender balance in staff and take appropriate action as necessary	Personn el/ AP C&Q	Dec 10	A more even gender balance of staff	
Implement a positive action strategy to encourage recruitment of opposite sex role model tutors where gender bias exists in a skills field	Personn el/ SMT	Strategy in place Feb 10	Improved gender balance on courses where a bias exists	
Implement a positive action strategy (succession planning/recruitment drive) to reduce gender bias in promoted posts	Personn el/SMT	Strategy in place Feb 10	Increase promoted female posts by 1FTE	
Implement a positive action strategy to encourage recruitment of BME learners	Marketin g/curricu lum teams	June 10	Achieve target of 1% BME learners	
Investigate reasons behind low male uptake on equality training and address	Quality team	March1 0	Improved male uptake of equality training events	
Examine how enrolment paperwork could be adjusted to reduce numbers claiming "info refused or "unknown" in relation to equality issues	MIS team	Jan 10	Reduced stats from enrolments with aforementioned category	
Gain BME feedback on their college experience in order to develop appropriate strategy to reduce their	Equal opps group	April 10	Improved satisfaction of BME learners with college experience	

apparent reduced satisfaction of all learners				
Evaluate previous and design further staff development and/or other strategies to address apparent reduced satisfaction levels of disabled learners with assessment processes	Quality team	June 10	Improved satisfaction of disabled learners with assessment processes	
Promote equality and diversity agenda through posters/events/trainin g for staff and students	All- co- ordinate thro equal opps group	June 10	1 event, 3 staff development events/ 3-4 posters	
Ensure that the zero tolerance of bullying and harassment is understood by all through short internal CPD session for staff and students	Quality team	June 10	1 student event/1 staff event	
Promote college Equality and diversity policies to students at induction and through student Intranet/student association	AP C&Q	Sept 10	Better awareness of E&D policies by students as seen through survey data	
Encourage application from opposite sex students on school access courses where gender bias exists	School co- ordinator ?	June 10	More female pupils on school access programmes	