

# Single Equality Scheme

Part of our Equality and Diversity Strategy

## 2011-2014

Alternative format copies, such as Easy to Read, Large Print, Braille, Audio tape and Electronic formats can be made available from the Marketing Department of Boston College on request. We have also produced a colour leaflet that captures the main points and values of the Single Equality Scheme, which was designed with help from students of Boston College.

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### **Annex A**

Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) 2010/11

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Constitution: Equality and Diversity Committee

### **Annex C**

Boston College: Equality and Diversity Action plan 2010/11

## **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AT BOSTON COLLEGE**

Boston College is fully committed to actively promoting equality, celebrating diversity and eliminating discrimination. We will work with stakeholders and partners, within the framework of this policy, to achieve these aims. Our Mission and Values Statement clearly express a commitment to learners from all backgrounds and to creating accessible, relevant training and education routes for all applicants, within the constraints of our funding.

Our commitment to equality will inform all areas of our work. We will continue to:

- Comply with the law in promoting equality and, where appropriate, go beyond the legal requirements
- Reach out to potential learners not currently involved in education or training to increase their opportunities and life chances
- Ensure that learners succeed and can progress appropriately
- Show no tolerance of discrimination or harassment
- Take a positive approach to equality and diversity with our staff, learners and stakeholders
- Work with partners in achieving our aims.

The Scheme describes in one document how the College will fulfil its statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination with regard to its responsibilities as an employer and as a provider of education and training. The Scheme is not produced in isolation, being supported by a range of policies, procedures and guidelines. The Scheme in turn also aims to be a key contributor in the delivery of Boston College's annual Strategic Plan.

We will be publishing alongside this document a colour leaflet that captures the main points and values of this scheme. This leaflet was designed with help from students of Boston College ensuring learners' voice is firmly embedded within the Single Equality Scheme.

## **LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT**

The College has chosen to publish a Single Equality Scheme ('the Scheme') which replaces its Race Equality Scheme, its Disability Equality Scheme and its Gender Equality Scheme by using the common ground within them to create a consistent approach whilst ensuring attention is paid to the distinctive requirements of the individual schemes.

The scheme takes into account the Equality Act 2010, which is expected to come into force in phases between October 2010 and 2012. The Act replaces and supplements existing legislation. It extends the characteristics for which people are protected from discrimination, and the grounds for positive action on the basis of people being disadvantaged or having different needs due to those characteristics. The characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation.

The Scheme will also have regard to reducing inequality of outcome resulting from rurality and socio-economic disadvantage, as we recognise these are barriers to students fulfilling their learning potential here at Boston College. We acknowledge the continuing relevance of previous legislation until relevant parts of the Equality Act 2010 come into force. Namely, race, disability and gender under the following legislation:

- Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000
- Disability Discrimination Act 2005; and
- Equality Act 2006.

These laws require all public bodies to promote race, disability and gender equality in everything we do. The legislation is intended to promote equality and celebrate diversity and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

### **Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2002: Race Equality Duty**

This requires public authorities to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity; and
- promote good relations between people of different races.

### **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2006: Disability Equality Duty**

This requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- eliminate harassment on the grounds of disability
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in public life; and
- take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably.

### **Equality Act (2007): Gender Equality Duty**

This requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and harassment unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act, including in relation to gender reassignment;
- Discrimination that is unlawful under the Equal Pay Act; and
- Promote equality of opportunity between men and women.

We also take account of the following existing legislation on:

- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003; and
- The Equality Act 2007 (addressing goods and services).

## **STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

Equality and Diversity is a key priority for us. Equality of opportunity and encouragement and celebration of diversity are woven into the fabric of the College's values and activity and are therefore implicit in all sections of our Strategic Plan. We have a very good record of widening participation to groups not traditionally included in education or training in the area.

Our Equality and Diversity work has been recognised by the SFA who has used us to deliver training to other providers, through the recruitment of the principal to a cross-public sector E&D Strategy Group for the East Midlands, and through the Ofsted Inspection in October 2008. Some of our most notable achievements to date include:

- De Montfort Campus has male and female multi-faith rooms for religious observances
- Membership of the Network of Black Professionals (NBP) and as members we actively support the development of BME staff
- Commercial Training provide pre-course 'jargon busting' sheets for International learners
- Marketing consultation with the Blind Society and the Disability Forum in designing our brochures
- The Teacher Training team ensures that Equality and Diversity is judged in every lesson observation
- The College has achieved the full Matrix award for its services to both external and internal clients; only the second college in the country to do so, and the first to achieve it in one attempt
- Apprenticeships have piloted the use of mobile computers to learners in rural, deprived and coastal locations
- The Estates Department has spent £315k improving access.
- The Foundation Team helps learners with learning disabilities to live and work independently
- The Sports and Leisure Team initiated an exchange (ECVET) with teachers and learners in Europe
- Early Years learners compiled 'myth busting' displays about men working in child care.

## **COMMUNITY CONTEXT**

The College mainly serves the borough of Boston and the districts of South Holland and East Lindsey, though the geographical reach is far wider. The areas we cover are characterised by a low-skills, low-wage economy and, consequently, high levels of deprivation. The driving force behind the College's Single Equality Scheme is its commitment to serving and meeting the needs of all the local communities in which it works. To ensure the College fulfils this commitment, it must be able to demonstrate an understanding of those communities based on intelligence gathering, consultation and partnership working. Key socio-economic issues include:

- The county has a unique combination of low population density, our coastal economy, our market towns and our pockets of disadvantage in urban areas which all combine to create special problems of access to high quality employment opportunities and skills development
- House prices in Lincolnshire are relatively low by national standards but they are not any more affordable for local people in our low-wage economy. In fact, house price: income ratios are high across the county, approaching 4.5 times in East and West Lindsey
- Small/Medium Enterprises make up 70% of all businesses and 90% of businesses have fewer than 20 employees. There has traditionally been a low level of engagement with training
- There is a high proportion of seasonal and casualised work associated with tourism and agricultural sectors, which produce erratic working and therefore learning patterns
- In 2006 the people of Boston were labelled as the most obese in the country, with one in three residents described as clinically obese
- In Lincolnshire there is an outflow of young people (600 young people leave Lincolnshire every year)

- There is a significant Basic Skills/Skills for Life deficit in the communities the College serves with a high proportion of adults of working age (30-40%) having no qualifications at all
- Lincolnshire has a lower than national average of working age population qualified to at least level 2 (60.5% against 65.2%) (2008)
- Lincolnshire has a lower than national average of working age population qualified to at least level 3 (40.8% against 46.5%) (2008)
- Lincolnshire has a lower than national average of working age population qualified to at least level 4 (21.2% against 28.7%) (2008)
- Rural poverty is prevalent; the Boston area itself has high rates of infant mortality, teenage pregnancy, road injury and death, and low life expectancy – all signifiers of an area with high deprivation levels
- On a list of the 149 most deprived areas in England, Lincolnshire ranked at number 89. A total of 15 areas in the county rank amongst the top 10% most deprived areas in the country. Six are in East Lindsey
- Lincolnshire is the fourth largest and fourth most sparsely populated county in England. This brings transport issues with a poor transport infrastructure across the county
- Learners travel from up to 40 miles away. The previous travel subsidy for 16-18 year olds is being eroded annually and a very high percentage of learners travel long distances to College centres. The nearest FE college is 30 miles away and there are no large training providers in the vicinity

- Learners from poor backgrounds who need to have jobs during their period of learning struggle to balance demands of both when learning requires long travel times
- About 80% of our young learners qualify for Educational Maintenance Allowance which is means-tested. 900+ of our learners are in receipt of EMAs, and 300+ benefit from high levels of Additional Support Funding
- A high percentage of learners come from families with a total income below £15,050 and we have increasing numbers of statemented learners and those needing support for emotional / behavioural problems
- Numbers of learners with specific needs have been growing incrementally year on year and outstripping the available support funds
- There is a growing population of migrant workers, mainly from Portugal and Eastern Europe, who have language and acculturation needs. 15% - 20% of them have professional qualifications in their country of origin. Boston Borough Council has the highest proportion of economic migrants from the EU accession countries relative to the indigenous population in the UK. This includes a substantial and growing cohort of children of migrant workers who have settled in the area
- Migrant workers suffer from a variety of disadvantages – working for gangmasters, multiple occupancy housing, and transient work with changing shift patterns - all of which impact on their ability to sustain training. 55% of them leave training courses within the first five weeks; this rises to 62% in SMEs. The College was very successful in 2008-09 in raising the retention and success rates of this group very significantly.

## **IMPLEMENTING THE SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME:**

### **Equality and Diversity Action Plan**

Our strategies and vision for Equality and Diversity is implemented and monitored through our Equality and Diversity Committee. Key members of the College from all parts of the organisation are members of the group. The group sets an annual action plan and our key priorities for 2010/11 are to:

- Identify and prioritise policies & procedures for Equality Impact Assessment
- Review of support & provision for students with learning disabilities & difficulties
- Promote socio-economic cohesion
- Embed equality and diversity across the College
- Manage Relationships.

The actions in the E & D Action Plan are based on:

- The College's mission, values and priorities
- The equality and diversity principles the College has committed itself to
- Data available to us
- Consultation and involvement of stakeholders.

We review the Action Plan at our committee meetings and sign it off at the end of the academic year (July). The Committee receives data and status reports throughout the year:

HR Strategy Group	October (autumn term)
Learner starts data	Oct (autumn term)
LSAs and LS Fund	Nov (autumn term)
Learner success data	Dec (autumn term)
Partner success data	Dec (autumn term)
Learning Centre starts by postcode	Dec (autumn term)
Partner starts	Feb (spring term)

Marketing update	Feb (spring term)
Flexible Work Requests	March (spring term)
Complaints	March (spring term)
Grievances	March (spring term)
Staff Disciplinarys	March (spring term)
HR data	March (spring term)
KS4 success rates by Postcode	March (spring term)
T&L	May (summer term)
GAGIT	May (summer term)
Learner Disciplinarys	June (summer term)
LIS	June (summer term)

### **Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs)**

The College has identified and published a range of Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs), against which we assess ourselves annually. Some EDIMs are standard and are reported on every year; others are identified for short-term focus as a priority for a particular period of time. There is not necessarily an EDIM for every point on the action plan.

The Equality and Diversity Committee monitors the impact assessments at specific times of the year and, at local level, the impact of actions taken in response to the EDIMs is reflected in the Monthly Management Reporting cycle. EDIM's will be reviewed annually to ensure they fully reflect the contextual conditions of the College and will be included as an appendix to this document.

## **Equality Impact Assessments**

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a tool that helps public authorities make sure their policies, and the ways they carry out their functions, do what they are intended to do for everybody. EIAs help us to meet the requirements of the equality duties and identify active steps that we can take to promote equality.

Carrying out an EIA involves systematically assessing the likely (or actual) effects of policies, plans, procedures and practices on colleagues and learners in respect of the characteristics of disability, gender, gender identity, racial equality, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, rurality and socio-economic deprivation. But more importantly, it is an effective way of improving policy development and service delivery, making sure that we consider the needs of our communities, identify potential steps to promote equality and do not discriminate.

Our Equality Impact Assessment Implementation Plan will ensure that all new and existing policies and plans are impact-assessed. An EIA template form, together with guidance notes, has been produced to help managers complete their EIA's. This requires managers to identify what actions are to be taken as a result of the EIA, which will be published on the College's website.

## **APPLICATION OF THE SCHEME**

The Scheme applies to the College's staff, learners, governors, partners and contractors and applies across every aspect of its work.

### **Learners:**

All aspects of learners' experience are guided by the principles of equality. Statistics relating to learners' success at the College, recruitment and support are gathered and used to monitor and plan.

### **Staff:**

The College monitors recruitment and selection activities in relation to equality of opportunity and reports the outcomes through the Equality and Diversity Committee to the College's Board of Governors. It also monitors workforce composition in relation to race, gender, disability and age. Human Resources policies are family-friendly and all are available on the College's Intranet. All staff are alerted to policies during induction.

### **Governors:**

The Corporation monitors the Single Equality Scheme through formal reports and is itself subject to equality and diversity monitoring in terms of its composition.

### **Employers:**

In the case of work placement providers and employers with Apprentices, we set standards and requirements within our work-place contracts.

### **Partners:**

The College works with a range of partners: schools, other colleges, third sector organisations, training providers, employers, local authorities, funding organisations, Connexions, etc. The Scheme will be shared with them all and they are expected to support and implement the College's objectives.

## **INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS**

We are committed to listening to learners and employers to ensure that we can be as responsive as possible to individual need, and comply with the law and the spirit of the law. We intend to make legal requirements meaningful and effective in the context of the College's work. Our Learner Involvement Strategy has been developed through a cross-college team approach and approved by the College Management Team and Board of Governors and its primary purpose is to ensure that all individuals' potential can be fulfilled through the provision of a high quality experience. Outcomes of consultations are taken seriously and, wherever possible, inform changes in the College.

### **Our strategies for employers and businesses are to support business development and improvement through:**

- Enhancing the skills of their workforce
- Providing consultancy and management training
- Identifying and providing relevant and high quality training for the workforce at all levels
- Providing networks for the development of enterprise.

### **Our strategies for the range of community groups are:**

- To work directly with the Third Sector to identify learning and training needs and provide support
- Providing support for language needs
- Making training and learning available in a range of locations, at a range of times and in a range of ways.

### **Our strategies for the community as a whole are:**

- To make a significant and recognised contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of the area
- To contribute fully to the regeneration of the area through developing skills and working within the enterprise culture.

**The College is already in partnership, formally or informally, with:**

- Schools
- HEIs
- Other colleges and training providers
- Local County, Borough and District Councils
- The Third Sector.

We also work (at strategic, executive and operational levels) on local and regional planning and delivery bodies – 3 Local Strategic Partnerships, Lifelong Learning Partnerships, Lincolnshire Local Area Agreement, Boston Sports Partnership and the Schools Food Trust. Our aims are to contribute to and influence local strategies for community cohesion and development.

We have strong links and partnerships with other organisations which enhance and support our work:

- Schools, inc special needs
- Lincs County Council Children's Services
- Other colleges, inc Linkage College for LLDD
- Lincs County Council Libraries and Learning Services
- Higher Education Institutions
- Employers
- Faith Groups
- Local Learning Partnerships
- Third Sector organisations
- The PCT, social services and other welfare organisations
- Job Centre Plus
- Local groups and businesses via LSPs
- Black Leadership Initiative
- Network for Black Professionals
- Network for Women in Leadership.

The College presently delivers training and education to learners from up to 50 miles away in our own centres, and to employers and their workforces in

both the East Midlands and Eastern regions, and as far away as Newcastle and the Isle of Wight, through the Train to Gain programmes. We have a presence in several market towns which we have started to reinforce with more formalised provision than previous and we will continue to grow those markets.

We plan to:

- Ensure that relationships deliver a high degree of access for learners and good quality provision
- Ensure that we create and nurture relationships which deliver high quality
- Provide support for learners and staff
- Manage Adult Development Funds and PCDL income to create opportunities.

## **PUBLICATION OF THE SCHEME**

The Scheme will be made available in both printed and electronic form to governors, staff, learners and key stakeholders and on the website. It will also be available on CD and in large print and in languages other than English on request.

We will be publishing alongside this document a colour leaflet that captures the main points and values of this scheme. This leaflet will be designed by students of Boston College, ensuring learners' voice is firmly embedded within the Single Equality Scheme.

## **MONITORING, REVIEWING AND REPORTING**

We will review and update the Scheme every three years or more frequently if appropriate – e.g. to take account of changes in the law, government priorities or outcomes of impact assessments. Learners and staff will be involved in review through structured feedback mechanisms. The College will practise full transparency in its application and monitoring of the Scheme. All data, reports, minutes of meetings are available on the College Intranet for internal stakeholders to access and available for others on request.

Progress and compliance will be monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee which devises and monitors the E & D Action Plan. College managers and teams monitor their own areas of work and responsibility and report into the Committee regularly, according to an annual timetable. The Principal chairs the committee and reports annually to the Board of Governors.

The E & D Action Plan forms a full section of the College's overall Strategic Plan, which is reviewed annually as part of the College's business cycle. Equality & diversity objectives and targets are reflected in the operating plans and Monthly Management Reports of all teams. These are monitored through routine meetings.

### **COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS**

We want to capture feedback from our learners and users of our service wherever possible, whether negative or positive in order to share good practise and continually improve our services. To this end we have formal, published procedures for dealing with compliments and complaints by internal and external stakeholders. The procedures ensure a fair, proper and constructive response to complaints and an annual review is published to the Corporation Board, Senior Leadership Team and Equality and Diversity Committee. We also have a process for capturing and sharing compliments. Complaints and compliments are monitored by the Equality and Diversity Committee.

### **STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Equality and Diversity training and development already forms part of the College's standard training portfolio for new and existing staff. Training needs are identified through individual performance review, organisational review (self-assessment), client and stakeholder feedback and analysis of external imperatives. The requirements arising from these sources and from monitoring of the E & D action plan are fed into the Self-assessment Report Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to ensure they are addressed as part of training needs analysis.

Times in the year are dedicated to staff development: 7 days at the end of the summer term, 2 days in autumn, spring and summer half terms and 1 day at the end of the autumn term. These days are mandatory for staff to attend and blanked out of their leave cards – E&D events take place at all of these times.

## **CURRICULUM**

We are committed to providing breadth and depth in our curriculum. We provide a curriculum that offers opportunities for both young people and adults from entry level to level 4 and across the geographic area we serve. We provide pre-employment training across the area we serve to promote social cohesion. The College provides an extremely broad Foundation Learning curriculum offer, with detailed progression routes into the full-time curriculum at level 2 and above.

We undertake Curriculum Review in the spring term during which we review all of our curriculum and consider:

- That the College mission is met
- The range of funding sources
- Maintaining geographic cover
- Provision for learners with learning disabilities
- Provision for learners in a wide range of locations and in areas of need
- Provision for learners seeking work
- Provision for learners at risk of exclusion
- Feedback from employers
- Feedback from learners
- Relationships with partners, employers and statutory bodies
- Changes in policy, society or community.

And to ensure that the following year's curriculum:

- Is responsive to learner demand
- Is up-to-date with employment sector requirements
- Is of a high quality
- Is meeting LSC and other stakeholders' priorities

- Is capable of meeting the College's targets
- Is offering appropriate progression routes
- Is ensuring value for money and meeting efficiency criteria
- Is not producing internal competition
- Is innovative and creative.

Our strategies in our curriculum are to:

- Ensure availability of access to hard-to-reach learners as far as possible
- Continue to meet the needs of Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities
- Review the use of Learning Centres as tools for Widening Participation
- Continue the increasing individualisation of teaching and learning
- Formalise and implement the involvement of learners in lesson observations.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT**

We are committed to providing effective support to all learners of the College that is intended to maximise their opportunity to succeed in their course and where possible, remove any barriers to success whether personal, educational or circumstantial. We understand that some people experience more barriers to learning because of socio-economic circumstances or background, gender, gender identity, race, nationality, age, disability, mental health problems, religion or belief or sexual orientation.

To this end we commit substantial resources to our Student Services:

- Administration of and help to access Educational Maintenance Allowance
- Administration of and help to access Adult Learning Grant
- Counselling
- Debt Counselling
- Career Guidance
- Student Nurse and healthcare advice
- Signposting to agencies and organisations with specialist facilities

- Specialist counselling
- Inclusive Learning Manager who offers specialist support and help
- 50 Learner Support Assistants.

In particular, we ensure that learners at all locations and both full time and part time have access to the same services by:

- Full training for all Learning Centre staff
- Monitoring of partner Student Support
- Training for partners in Student Support
- Seeking, achieving and maintaining the Matrix Excellence Award.

Services for learners are subject to quality standards and each business support area has its own service standards. The College has achieved the full Matrix award for its services to both external and internal clients, only the second college in the country to do so, and the first to achieve it in one attempt. We have successfully been re-accredited with the Matrix Award in March 2010.

**Our strategies are to:**

- Provide a learning environment which meets the current and future needs of learners and the wider community
- Continue to develop the technological infrastructure and expertise to meet new learning possibilities and demands
- Review the use of the VLE to support learners
- Provide safe, secure, healthy and attractive accommodation
- Aim for each curriculum area to have one 'state-of-the-art' area
- Demonstrate environmental responsibility.

**MARKETING**

We are committed to promoting equality and diversity within all aspects of the Marketing mix. Through promotional activities and events we promote awareness of equality and diversity issues targeting both internal and external customers. Annually we celebrate: Adult Learners Week, One World Week,

Teaching Awards evening and the Working Communities project to support people back into work.

We aim to produce effective promotional material which supports equality and diversity issues with images of mixed groups, correct text size, multi-colour graphics, where possible removing references to age, large print versions available, brail version available on request, etc. Audio versions of our marketing are available on website and available upon request. Large print options are installed on our website. We have a language option for International students. We aim to increase the visual elements of materials and reduce text using easy to understand language and not educational jargon.

## **LEARNING RESOURCES**

Our strategy for learners and learning resources is:

- To give them the best possible opportunities to succeed, progress and fulfill their potential
- To provide professional, stimulating, high quality learning and training
- To equip them with the means to progress in employment and/or further training or education
- To instill a culture of self-improvement and learning for the future.

Our learners include:

- 14-16 year olds
- Learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities
- 16 year olds on the NEET register
- Disaffected school learners/school refusers
- Migrant workers
- EU domiciled students, from new arrival families
- Learners from over 80 countries: international students from 15 countries
- Higher Education students who want to remain in the area

- Adults with basic skills needs, particularly in rural areas and coastal fringes
- Learners from low income families
- Learners in Learning Centres/Libraries/mobile satellite units
- Employers and owner-managers of SMEs.

## **LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

As part of the Property Strategy, research and consultations with stakeholders last year informed the future learning environment and we are responding to learners' feedback through the Learner Involvement Strategy, to try to improve facilities for current learners. We are developing the College's technological capabilities, through the Virtual Learning Environment, the Molenet Project and the e-portfolio pilots. We will be extending access through creating greater e-learning opportunities. Sports students continue to make use of the Princess Royal Sports Arena until some of these facilities become available on-site, though it will never be the case that we will be able to provide the full range which is available at PRSA.

## **SAFEGUARDING LEARNERS**

We are committed to providing a safe and secure environment for all learners. The Children Act 1989 and DfES Guidance "Safeguarding Children in Education" 2004 place a legal obligation upon all College employees to seek to protect young people from harm or risk. The Children Act 2004 established the Every Child Matters agenda and the duty of all public services to work together to promote five outcomes for children and young people, of which Staying safe is one.

The outcomes from the Every Child matters Outcomes Framework are:

- Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation
- Safe from accidental injury and death
- Safe from bullying and discrimination
- Safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school.

Therefore our responsibility is not just confined to Child Protection but also Health and Safety, security and discrimination. Though the legal framework protecting adults is far less stringent, the Department of Health document “No Secrets: - Guidance on developing and implementing multiagency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse” (2000) established an expectation that people working with vulnerable adults will take reasonable steps to protect them from harm. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which came into force in June 2004, requires the governing bodies of further education institutions to make arrangements to ensure that their functions are carried out with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people.

We are committed to:

- providing a safe environment for young people to learn in
- identifying young people and vulnerable adults who are suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm
- taking appropriate action to see that such young people / vulnerable adults are kept safe both at home and at the College.

## **FUNDING STREAMS AND PROJECTS**

We are committed to seeking funding to support training and education for those at risk of social or educational exclusion. We currently have the following projects running:

- Response to Redundancy – pre-employment training for adults
- Working Communities Project - pre-employment training for adults who are long-term unemployed in vulnerable communities
- The Young Person’s Guarantee – supporting young people into work
- 6 Month Offer – vocational pre-employment training for adults who are long-term unemployed or incapacitated
- Care Academy – supporting those in the Care industry
- Raising Aspirations among Young Learners from Disadvantaged Social backgrounds– learning interventions and social class

- Employer Responsiveness programme - E&D programme to be delivered to 15 training providers.

We usually work in partnership with Third Sector, social enterprise and community learning providers to deliver projects as this allows us to offer provision to the community we serve in the most direct way. External funding opportunities arise throughout the year and we primarily seek to fund opportunities for the most vulnerable communities and groups in tendering.

## **PROCUREMENT**

We are committed to seeking value for money and effective and accessible opportunities to learn through procurement. We want to play an active role as good corporate citizens in our local and regional economies.

We understand that procurement matters in colleges – a lot of money is spent on goods, services and capital expenditure every year. Procurement can also act as a force of change for suppliers seeking to develop markets and create local employment opportunities. The economic downturn is forcing learning and skills providers to ensure better value for money.

Procurement is a major driver in how we provide effective and accessible educational opportunities in our communities. We serve a large geographic area of Lincolnshire (we are the second most rural college in the country) which is characterised by pockets of urban and rural deprivation.

Procurement of services from partner organisations is a key part of our strategy to provide access to learning. We procure services from partner organisations with the following considerations:

- That we provide access to learning across the area we serve - Boston, the east coast and South Holland
- That we provide access to learning in both urban and rural areas
- That we provide learning opportunities for both young people and adults

- That we provide learning opportunities for people with disabilities and learning difficulties
- That we provide opportunities in vulnerable communities for individuals to learn and have support to find employment.

As far as we have knowledge, we procure goods from organisations that provide value for money and ethical employment and trading standards. Our aim is to ensure that the values associated with Equality and Diversity inform spending decisions.

## **LEARNER INVOLVEMENT**

We are committed to collecting and acting on the views of our learners to continually improve their learning experience and maximise their chances of success in their course.

### *Our context*

We provide a range of services to the learners of the East Midlands and East of England. These services include training and education for around 8,000 part-time adult learners, 300 apprentices and 1,500 full-time 16-19 year olds. The mission of the College is to be “a learning organisation raising aspirations and meeting the skills needs of individuals, communities and employers through high quality education and training” and we receive funding from a number of different bodies to do this, as well as direct fees from learners and employers.

The College take the views of its learners very seriously and considers them to be customers without whom the College has no purpose or future. We conduct SPOC (Student Perception Of Course) interviews across our customer base three times a year but recognise that this tool (whilst useful) has its limitations. Learners also elect two student governors who can attend meetings of the Corporation. The College employs a Learning Involvement Co-ordinator who works directly with the learners to provide direct feedback on issues that they identify. The College has also introduced welcome

briefings delivered by members of the CMT and it is envisioned that these will be developed into regular focus group style sessions.

### *Our intended impact*

The Learner Involvement Strategy seeks to allow the free-flow of views and information to ensure the learner voice receives the prominence and volume it deserves. It is accepted that at this point (whilst based on best-practice and informed judgement) the strategy has been very much a top-down creation and that as learners become more involved in the planning and development of the College the strategy will evolve and improve.

We analyse SPOC termly along gender, age, disability and ethnicity divisions.

We have an annual Learner Conference where the Action Plan is initiated.

The Learner Involvement Group (LIG) is responsible for developing and implementing the practical actions. The Head of Quality Improvement is a member of the LIG as well as the Equality and Diversity Working Group and ensures that the findings of that group are fed into the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP).

## **HUMAN RESOURCES**

We are committed to:

- Providing a learning and working environment which promotes access and creates opportunities
- Ensuring that the workforce development strategy delivers E&D objectives
- Continuing to promote a culture of equality and celebration of diversity throughout the College
- Committed to maintaining a healthy workplace for all staff.

## **ESTATES**

We want to:

- Ensure that student relaxation facilities are prioritised
- Ensure Value for Money of Learning Centres
- Manage the building and equipping of the FEAST Centre
- Ensure that curriculum offer and delivery models are right

- Ensure that College facilities are geographically, physically and/or virtually accessible.

In order to try to mitigate transport issues and to provide training and learning as close to the learners as possible, we have invested in a major centre in Skegness in partnership with GIFHE and are working with SHDC to build a new, shared property in Spalding. Other learning centres remain in Boston, Spalding, Ingoldmells and, Sleaford. We also take learning out to community learning centres/libraries and to employer's premises. We have developed the School FEAST centre for Lincolnshire at a local primary school. As the international market changes, we need to explore alternative uses for the Halls of Residence. The new Spalding centre is developing well and will accommodate Catering, some Business and Leisure and Tourism provision, as well as IT and Skills for Life. With the disappointment of the failure to achieve a new build, we will plan and start implementing a new property development strategy during the year.