

GENERAL POLICY: GENDER EQUALITY DUTY SCHEME

Applies for both Staff and Students

Boston College

Gender Equality Scheme

Copies of this document may be viewed:

On the Boston College website

On the Boston College Intranet

This document is also available on request in alternative formats including large print and audio. These may be accessed by contacting Student Services – 01205 313218

Boston College Gender Equality Duty and Scheme

Introduction

The Gender Equality Duty (GED) is a new legislative requirement placed on public authorities, including colleges, to promote gender equality. The GED requires us to take action on the most important gender equality issues and recognise that individuals of different genders do not always start from an equal footing and identical treatment will not always be appropriate. The duty is aimed at tackling discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for making sure our duty is met lies with the College's Senior Leadership team. Teaching and support staff, students, and members of the wider community using the College facilities also need to play a part in fulfilling the duty.

The duty comprises a general duty to: -

- promote equality of opportunity between men and women (boys and girls)
- eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment (on grounds of sex and of gender reassignment)

The duty comprises a specific duty to produce a gender equality scheme, and the College's Scheme is set out below.

Our Gender Equality Scheme

Boston College is a Further Education College which provides a substantial number of courses at further education level and some at higher education level. The College also has Key Stage course provision and provides community education through outreach activities and local learning centres. At FE level it recruits locally and internationally. Further education students are mainly drawn from the South Lincolnshire area although some students come from further a field and may live away from home.

The Legal Context

Under Sex Discrimination Act 1975 and the Equal Pay Act 1975 which has been amended by the Equality Act 2006, the College recognises its responsibility to the general duty to give due regard to: -

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination and harassment.
- Promote equality of opportunity for men and women.

In line with the specific duties required under the Equality Act 2006, the College will: -

- Publish a Gender Equality Scheme (GES).
- Consider the need to include objectives to address any identified gender pay gap.
- Ensure that data collection and analysis, informs further action.
- Consult relevant employees, Unions and service users in the development of the Scheme.

- Assess the impact of the policies and practices for its impact on gender equality
- Monitor and publish a summary of steps taken under the action plan contained within the Scheme on an annual basis.

Discrimination on the Grounds of Gender Reassignment

The College recognises the Gender Recognition Act 2004 and will update its policies and procedures to take account of the legal requirements to ensure that people do not face discrimination or harassment on the grounds of gender reassignment.

This Scheme is specifically designed to help Boston College meet effectively and fully our general duty under the legislation. The Scheme is published on our website; reviewed and revised as necessary every three years (first review Spring 2010), and we will report progress on an annual basis.

The Scheme has been produced with the active involvement, help and support of men and women (as detailed later).

There are five parts to our Scheme: -

- a statement of how both men and women (boys and girls) have been involved in developing the Scheme
- arrangements for gathering information on the recruitment, development and retention of employees by gender, and the educational opportunities available to and achievements of students by gender
- details of how information gathered will be used, in particular to review the effectiveness of Action Plans and prepare subsequent Schemes
- a method / methods for assessing the impact of policies and practices on gender equality and where improvements can be made
- an Action Plan detailing the steps that are going to be taken to meet the general duty.

Part 1: Involving Men and Women

The College recognises that those best placed to identify and help resolve barriers are men and women themselves. We wanted to ensure as many students and staff as possible were involved. For the purposes of this Scheme the College ensured that: -

- all recent staff and student surveys allowed for identification by gender and survey results were analysed so that results could easily be compared with the whole survey population. This allowed us to find out differences in opinion on issues such as perceptions of teaching, teaching support, information provision, rooming, staff management etc from a large number staff and students by gender.

Part 2: Gathering Information

The College has extensive data gathering mechanisms and data is routinely collected through our: -

- student records systems (EBS, SpirALS, Learner Support Fund Database)
- financial system

- human resources system
- staff satisfaction surveys
- attendance monitoring system
- SPOC (Student Perception of College) surveys

In addition the College collects data on other activity such as teaching observations, student disciplinary matters, student support and additional learning support. Collectively this provides a comprehensive set of data capable of analysis for equality purposes. In particular it enables us to analyse the effect of our policies and practices on the: -

- recruitment, development and retention of staff
- educational opportunities available to, and achievements of, students
- overall experience provided to staff and students

Part 3: Using Information

The College is committed to action rather than simply analysis. We intend to examine all our policies, procedures and processes over the life of this scheme and develop clear and effective actions that demonstrate our commitment to equality and diversity in practical terms and enrich the College experience of staff and students.

The key way in which information is used is through the impact assessment programme detailed in the next part of this Scheme. They will drive actions that will be included in our annual action plan. However, we recognise the impact assessments focus on actions to address identified shortcomings. In addition we will also analyse data with a view to identifying other ways in which we can promote equality of opportunity; promote positive attitudes, and encourage participation in public and College life.

Given the extensive nature of our data systems the College will seek to evaluate the effectiveness of actions in our action plan using that data.

Part 4: Impact Assessment

The College has identified the following key processes. They are: -

- learner success process
- financial control process
- staff recruitment and development process
- environmental process
- quality improvement process
- planning process

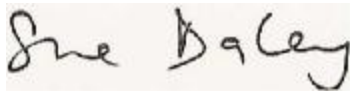
This allows the College to identify key sub-processes which need to be impact assessed. The sub-processes have been assessed for scale and relevance to the duty. The key sub-processes will be assessed annually, others undertaken over a 3 year cycle.

The assessments will be made by relevant senior managers and reported to either the They will usually take the following form: -

- a description of current procedures or actions to achieve our equality objectives
- an analysis of data to identify any potential equality issues
- an assessment of the effectiveness of current action

- where the assessment indicates current action is insufficient, the identification of new action that should be undertaken (following consultation) with clear assignment of responsibility for this

The intention is that assessments will be concise, action-oriented reports. Progress against actions will be summarised in our annual report.

| | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| REVIEWED FOR COMPLIANCE WITH EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY PRINCIPLES | |
|  | SUE DALEY, PRINCIPAL |
| DATE | 4 DECEMBER 2008 |

The impact assessment timetable is as follows: -

| Process | Sub Process | Timing | Responsibility |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------|---|
| Learner Success | Application and Admissions process | 2007 and every year | Director of Client Services and Curriculum Leaders |
| | Attendance | | |
| | Retention | | |
| | Achievement | | |
| | Progression | | |
| | Disciplinary | | |
| | Surveys and access to enrichment, work placement, trips and visits etc | | |
| Financial Control | Procurement | 2008 | Director Corporate Services |
| | Learner Support Fund Payments | 2008 | Director Client Services and Student Services Manager |
| Staff recruitment and development | Recruitment process and recruitment v. local population statistics | 2007 and every year | Director of Human Resources |
| | Training, development and rewards | | |
| | Sickness absence | | |
| | Turnover and redundancy | | |
| | Disciplinary and grievance | | |
| | Surveys | | |
| Environmental | Security, Access, Signage | 2008 | Estates Manager |
| Quality | Teaching and support observations | 2008 | Director of Performance and Standards |
| Planning | Planning data and external data | 2008 | SLT |