

EQUALITY

Update.....

Issue 1

Human Resource Department



north west
regional college
Derry/Londonderry • Limavady • Strabane

Introduction

The Equality Update was developed as a mechanism to inform staff of the progress made throughout the year in relation to Equality and Good Relations. It is also an important reminder to all staff members of their obligation to promote Equality and Good Relations in their job roles.

In accordance with the College's Equality Scheme, under Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 we are all required to have due regard to the need to promote **equality of opportunity** between what is known as the 9 categories, which are indicated below.

- Religious Belief
- Political Opinion
- Racial Group
- Age
- Marital Status
- Sexual Orientation
- Men and Women generally
- Persons with a Disability and those without
- Persons with Dependants and those without

Staff should also have regard to the desirability of promoting **Good Relations** between the below 3 categories.

- Religious Belief
- Political Opinion
- Racial Group

Programme of Events

A number of events have taken place throughout the year to help promote equality and raise awareness in the categories of Age, Disability and Racial Group.

The programme of events commenced in October 2007 with the College contributing to Age Awareness Week.

Age Awareness

To help raise awareness of the new Age Legislation a Staff Guidance Booklet on the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations was produced and disseminated to all staff during Age Awareness week in October 2007. The booklet provides staff with practical information that will help ensure compliance with the legislation that makes it unlawful to discriminate against employees and trainees because of their age. A copy of this booklet is provided to all new staff at induction and is also available from the Human Resource Department on request.

World Mental Health Day

In keeping with the objectives of the College's Mental Health Policy, World Mental Health Day was commemorated in October 2007 to help raise awareness of mental health issues.



Photo includes representatives from STEER, College Management and the Student body

The College invited representatives from STEER Mental Health to set-up an exhibition and provide staff and students with consultancy and information relating to mental health. Sources of assistance and support are available to staff with mental health issues. If you wish to access this support you should contact your Head of School or the Human Resource Department. The Mental Health Policy is available for access on the College Intranet.



Disability Action Plan Submitted

On 31 January 2008 the College submitted its first Disability Action Plan to the Equality Commission. The Action Plan was developed in accordance with the requirements of the new statutory duties in respect of disability which are to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and to encourage the participation by disabled people in public life.

The College consulted widely on the Disability Action Plan and in addition worked with a representative group facilitated by Disability Action. The Action Plan depicts how the College intends to fulfil these duties in relation to its functions. Disability Awareness training was provided to a number of staff throughout the year and will continue to be rolled out until all staff are trained. The Disability Action Plan is available to access in the Equality Section of the College Website.

BRITE TRAINING

Three staff members from the College participated in a Training Course which was a first of its kind in Northern Ireland. The Brite Training Programme was developed in partnership with The Brite Initiative, DEL and the College Learning Support Co-ordinators' Forum.



Brite NI Class of 2007

The programme enabled participants to develop the skills and knowledge required to undertake effective assessments of learners' additional support needs, to devise strategies to support the learner and to assist in the design, delivery and review of individual learning

environments. It also enabled participants to develop the skills and knowledge required to take action to challenge prejudice and discrimination and promote inclusion and diversity through the effective use of enabling and assistive technologies and non-technological approaches.

Polish Community Social Evening

To promote the College and the provision of programmes, particularly ESOL, in November 2007 the College held a Polish Social Evening for members of the Polish Community.



Members of the Polish Community enjoy the Social Evening

Over 100 people attended the social evening that provided Polish Food, Music by a multi-cultural band, and information on College provision, The Samaritans and the PSNI Community Safety Unit. An Emergency Contact Card Scheme was also launched in collaboration with the Polish Welfare Association.



Photo includes representatives from the PSNI, College Management and the Polish Welfare Association at the launch of the Emergency Contact Card

The evening proved to be a great success with a significant number of people indicating an interest in



College ESOL courses and availing of the Emergency Contact Card.

Cultural Diversity Code of Practice

The College developed a Cultural Diversity Code of Practice for Staff and Students which indicates the College's commitment to meeting the needs of a diverse population within a multicultural society. The Code provides Senior Managers, Lecturing Staff, Non-teaching staff and Students with their specific responsibilities for ensuring the promotion of equality within different cultural groups.

The Code of Practice is available for access in the Equality Section of the College Website or copies are available on request from the Human Resource Department. To facilitate students from different cultures the Code of Practice was translated into Chinese and Polish, available from the Student Services Department.

Traveller Focus Week

As part of Traveller Focus Week in December 2007, the College, in partnership with Derry Travellers' Support Group, organised a series of events to help increase Traveller Community participation in local further education.

The events included Flower Arranging classes and outdoor activity events.



Members of the Travelling Community with a College Lecturer participating in flower arranging activities

Outdoor activity events were the favourite for the male members of the Travelling Community. They, along with

a number of College Sports' students, participated in a High Ropes course which included stunt free falling and trapeze work on ropes that reached as high as 50 feet off the ground.



A staff representative, a representative from Derry Travellers' Support Group and a collection of College Students with members from the Travelling Community

The events resulted in requests from the Travelling Community for further College programmes.

Limavady Campus Celebrates World Food Day



Staff and Students in Limavady Campus celebrated World Food Day by organising an event that celebrated food from across the globe. All the food was prepared by College students studying for an NVQ qualification in Catering. The College Restaurant was decorated with international flags and greetings and more than 60 staff and students availed of the lunchtime treats.



College Students host Cultural Diversity Food Fest at Strand Road Campus

Students from the Hospitality, Travel and Tourism Foundation Degree courses hosted a Cultural Diversity Food Fest.



This unique event, organised in association with SEEDS (*the multicultural support group based at the One World Centre on Foyle Street, Derry*) included entertainment, ethnic dishes, advice and information from a number of groups represented in the Foyle Multi-Cultural Forum. Dr Singh from the Forum officially opened the event.

The Cultural Diversity Food Fest celebrated the different cultures within the College and was primarily aimed at promoting inclusiveness. The event was also a catalyst for students, in accepting responsibility and contributing to the life of the College and to their community.

Welcome Statements produced and displayed at Main Entrances

As part of the College's commitment to embracing staff, students and visitors from different cultures, a Welcome Statement was produced in Polish and Chinese and placed at all College main entrances. The statement states that the College is committed to promoting equality and valuing diversity in its role as fair employer and educational provider.

College continue as a major sponsor for 2008 diversity Calendar

The College is delighted to remain as a major sponsor for the 2008 Diversity Calendar. The Calendar, which is produced by Diversiton, compliments the College's work on Section 75, Good Relations, Diversity and inclusion. Each month of the Calendar is themed and provides information on the various groups represented within our community. The Calendar also identifies main religious and secular dates throughout.

College consults with representative equality groups to drive diversity agenda

The College has met with a number of organisations that represent different ethnic groups throughout our society. The aim is to help promote the College as a culturally diverse organisation and to consider ways in which the College can encourage people from ethnic minorities to apply for positions and courses within the College.

The College also met with Age Concern to consider strategies that would help encourage applications from the higher age groups of the community.