



Harper Adams
University College

Single Equality Scheme 2011 – 2013

JULY 2011

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Single Equality Scheme 2011 – 2013

Introduction from the Principal

People are central to the success of any higher education institution and consequently, Harper Adams University College wishes to recruit and retain staff and students of the highest calibre. We are specialist in our subject base, and in the range of research and knowledge transfer work that we undertake. We have excellent and committed staff who are committed to providing a high quality student experience. Only by ensuring equality of opportunity can we be confident that we recruit from the widest available pool of talented individuals.

In order to do this we must maintain and regularly review policies and procedures that serve to perpetuate the friendly and caring environment we provide for both our students and staff.

Dr David Llewellyn
Principal

Summary

This document is the College's 2011 - 2013 Single Equality Scheme and supersedes the separate Disability, Gender and Race Schemes published previously. This Single Scheme reflects the different strands of the Equality Act and the Government's new single approach. Action plans are in place to identify areas to be targeted to achieve greater equality in terms of race, gender and disability. A revised Action Plan for the Single Equality Scheme is at Annex 1.

We will ensure that the University College continues to promote an inclusive institutional culture that recognises the benefits of a diverse learning community for students, staff and the development of the institution.

This scheme is to be read in conjunction with the University Colleges Equality and Diversity Code of Practice.

References

In order to ensure that this document is fully compliant with UK legislation we have sought information and guidance from a variety of sources. These are;

- The Equality Challenge Unit – (ECU)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission – (EHRC)
- The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service – (ACAS)
- The Department for Business Innovation and Skills – (BIS)
- The Universities and Colleges Employers Association – (UCEA)
- The Government Equalities Office – (GEO)
- The Equal Opportunities Commission – (EOC)
- The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development – (CIPD)

Introduction

The Single Equality Act 2010 came into force from October 2010. Its fundamental purpose is to bring together all existing discrimination protection into a single Act, with a view to ensuring consistency and clarity over how employees and job applicants are protected against incidents of discrimination in the workplace. Its secondary purpose is to strengthen discrimination law and to promote equality in the workplace.

The new Act brings together over 116 separate pieces of legislation into one single Act which provides a legal framework to protect the rights of individuals and advance equality of opportunity for

all. This will simplify, strengthen and harmonise current legislation which protects individuals from unfair treatment and promotes a fair and more equal society. This new equality legislation covers employment, facilities, goods and services and education, including the admission and treatment of students.

The Single Public Sector Equality Duty covers eight protected characteristics, which are: (in alphabetical order)

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion and belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

It also applies to marriage and civil partnership, but only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination in employment.

The Aim of the Scheme

Our aim is to embed equality in the culture and systems of the organisation by ensuring that policy making, service delivery and employment practice are all equality orientated. Policies and procedures that appear neutral can have significantly different effects upon certain groups of people or individuals. This often contributes not only to greater inequality but also to overall poor policy outcomes.

We will therefore apply a proactive and systematic approach to both existing and new policies by conducting Equality Impact Assessments to measure their relevance to all protected characteristics.

In addition to the key concept of eight “protected characteristics”, the Act also defines and introduces the concept of Associative Discrimination and Perceptive discrimination and extends the definition of Indirect Discrimination and Harassment.

Key changes

There have been changes made to the definition of direct discrimination which now extends protection based on association and perception. This is already applicable to race, sexual orientation and religion but will now include age, disability, gender re-assignment, sex and pregnancy and maternity. This means that those providing care for someone due to a protected characteristic would be protected because of their association. Perceptive discrimination is discrimination against a person because the discriminator thinks that the person possesses that characteristic, even if they do not.

The definitions of two specific protected characteristics have also changed. The definition of disability is extended to cover people who have had a disability in the past and the definition of gender reassignment has been extended to cover people who have proposed, started or completed a process to change their sex but not under medical supervision. Indirect discrimination has also been extended to cover these characteristics.

There are now limitations on the use of health related questions during recruitment and selection which make it unlawful without objective justification to ask about the health of a job applicant either before offering work to an applicant or before shortlisting an applicant.

What is a Single Equality Scheme?

A Statutory Requirement

The Single Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies, including higher education institutions to lead by example in promoting equality in the workplace. All public sector organisations will be under a single equality duty to demonstrate that they are achieving equality in the workforce across all the protected characteristics.

Involving Other People in the Development of the Scheme

The initial Gender Equality Scheme, Race Equality Scheme and Disability Equality Scheme were developed in consultation with the University College's Staff Consultative Group and the new Single Equality Scheme has also been developed through this group in a similar way to the original schemes. A member of the one recognised trade union also forms part of the group. Members of the student community were also involved in a discussion group.

Responsibilities for Implementing and Monitoring the Scheme

The ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the general duty is met lies with the University College's Board of Governors. The Board will also be responsible for ensuring that adequate resources are provided to enable the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation for gender, race and disability and the remaining protected characteristics. A revised action plan for the period 2011-2013 is at Annex 1. The Board will receive an annual report in the form of an impact assessment of progress of the scheme, presented by the University College Secretary. The Head of Personnel will co-ordinate input from the Personnel Officer with particular responsibility for Equality and Diversity, Student Services Manager, Academic Registrar and President of the Students' Union as appropriate.

The Staffing Committee will continue to monitor, on behalf of the Board, the implementation of the Scheme as it relates to College staff. It will receive annual reports including any of issues of concern raised with regard to any of the protected characteristics and the way in which they have been managed and resolved.

Consultation on the Scheme and its development and issues relating to the use or interpretation and progress of this policy will be considered by the Staff Consultative Group and the University College/UCE Joint Negotiating Committee (for staff) and meetings held by the Principal with the Students Union Executive, which occur at regular intervals throughout the academic year (for students). External consultation will be undertaken with relevant local groups as these are identified and relationships with them are developed.

Evidence Required for Monitoring the Scheme

Our annual reports are expected to include (but not be limited to) the following:

- A progress report on mainstreaming equality in strategy and policy development by way of a report on continuing progress against key outcome measures in the Action Plan that forms part of this Scheme.
- Developments in governance and management of the Scheme
- A general section on 'Improving Equality' which will cover aspects of:
 - Students/Staff
 - Admissions (based on recruitment)/ Recruitment and selection
 - Progression and level of achievement/ Promotion
 - Curriculum development/ Training and development
 - Use and access to student support systems/ Use and access to staff support systems
 - Disciplinary matters
 - Student complaints and their resolution/ Grievances and their resolution

Monitoring is not intended to be an end in itself, but to produce information to be used in planning and decision-making in support of the implementation of this Scheme, and to assess the impact of the scheme on the recruitment, development and retention of students and staff. Quantitative data will be supplemented by qualitative information gathered, where possible, from student and staff surveys. Feedback on the continued development of the scheme will be provided to staff and students.

Publication of the Scheme and Awareness Raising

The Scheme will be incorporated in:

- Staff handbooks - for all University College staff
- Student handbooks - for all University College students
- The University College's web site - for enquiries made to the University College
- The University College intranet site - for reference by staff and students

The University College will continue to arrange for Equality and Diversity to be included in Freshers' talks given to students at the start of the academic year. The University College will also continue its training programme to support staff and students in general awareness-raising about Equality and Diversity and its implications for the work of the University College including in particular the integration of the Marshall-ACM software into a mandatory training programme taken by all staff and first year students.

The outcomes and assessment of progress against the objectives of the Scheme, associated monitoring reports and any alterations to the legislation or EOC Code that might lead to a substantial change to the University College's Scheme, will be published annually in internal documents for circulation to, and access by University College staff and students, and on the University College's web site for external audiences. The Single Equality Scheme will be updated after three years of operation.

Impact Assessments

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a systematic way of assessing how our policies affect employees or service users. This includes written policies, procedures, codes of practice, strategies, plans, and guidelines. It is a process to identify any negative or adverse effects, discriminatory practices or unmet needs or requirements. It also assess if the University College is meeting legislative requirements. An EIA is particularly effective in identifying any unintentional impacts, barriers or omissions that detrimentally affect individuals. It also helps to identify positive ways to promote equality.

A mapping exercise will be undertaken to identify all the University College's policies. Each policy will be assessed for relevance to the various equality strands and where relevant, arrangement made to undertake an EIA.

Particular areas where the College will monitor its practices and, where necessary, make proportionate adjustments, will include:

- Partnership arrangements, where the University College will make clear to partner organisations its duties under the Single Equality Act 2010.
- Procurement, where the University College will be expected to ensure that the procurement process takes account of the requirements of this Scheme, and that contractors/suppliers understand and comply with the duties required of the University College.
- Communications, including the way that the University College communicates to students and staff (in all forms including electronic media) in such a way that complies with the spirit of this scheme;
- Managers and Supervisors will be expected to be familiar with the provisions of the Scheme and its implications for the areas that they manage or supervise.

Making this Scheme Accessible

Information about our Single Equality Scheme can be made available in other languages and formats upon request, such as large print, Braille, audio cassette and computer disk. If you would like to receive information in a different language or another format then please contact us on telephone number 01952 820280 or by e-mail (for staff) to ngh@harper-adams.ac.uk or (for students) to nmorrison@harper-adams.ac.uk

Further Information

Further information for staff or prospective staff about the College's approach to equality can be obtained from the University College's Personnel Office, the contact details for which are provided in the above paragraph.

Further information about the specific provisions for students, can be obtained from the University College Registry provided in the above paragraph also.

Single Equality Scheme (SES) Action Plan 2011 – 2013

Progress as at May 2011 (Incorporating actions from previously published plans)

Area	Action	Target Date	Action by	Progress
Training & development	Continue equality and diversity training programme with updated events for all staff.	Ongoing	Staff Development Officer	Continuing Training events held throughout the year.
	Introduce new version of Marshall –ACM software to all students and staff	April 2011	Staff Development Officer	Completed and continuing Launched for staff Feb 2011. 79% completed as at April 2011. Specific sessions to be held throughout May for those yet to complete course.
	Ensure all newly recruited staff are informed of the importance of Equality and Diversity and make the completion of the Marshall-ACM training a mandatory action to be completed within 3 months of their start date.	Ongoing	Personnel Officer with responsibility for induction of new staff Staff Development Officer	Continuing Since Feb 2011 new starters are emailed link to website and encouraged to complete prior to start at HAUC. Monitored at induction meeting with Personnel Officer.
	Communicate to all existing staff the importance of equality and diversity and request that the Marshall ACM training is completed as soon as possible with a deadline date of the end of the academic year.	End of the academic year 2010/2011	Staff Development Officer/Personnel Officer	Continuing Regular updates and further information sent to all staff through emails and the weekly newsletter. E&D Working Group established May 2011
	Include Equality and Diversity training and development as a standing agenda item at the quarterly Staff Consultative Group meeting.	2010 at all meetings then ongoing	Personnel Officer	Complete Has been an agenda item since the middle of 2010.
	Invite all new and current staff who have declared a disability to meet with the Personnel Officer to discuss any specific needs. As part of this meeting establish whether the staff member wishes his/her manager to be informed of such needs, whether they would wish to have a nominated supporter, and agree in writing the	2009/10	Personnel Officer	Continuing Some meetings with current staff to be held in 2011. The induction meeting for new starters is opportunity for Personnel Officers to discuss any

Area	Action	Target Date	Action by	Progress
	details of how and when the agreed information is to be provided			additional support required.
Policy Development	Ensure that all College policies and procedures are reviewed on a timely basis to ensure they continue to comply with any changes in employee legislation.	Ongoing	Head of Personnel	Ongoing Policies reviewed and developed in line with legislative changes and consideration given to all equality strands through Equality Impact Assessments. Annual review reported to Staffing Committee.
Procurement	Review at least annually procurement systems to ensure they meet the requirements of the SES.	Ongoing	Office Services Manager, Estates and Facilities Manager	All procurement systems ensure that the College follows best practice in the sector including the use of NWUPC and other purchasing consortia which embed equality and diversity in their approach.
Communications	Review college communications and web sites to ensure that they meet the requirements of the SES for current students and staff and applicants for student places and employment.	Ongoing	Director of Communications Head of Personnel	The college is committed to producing both written documents and web content that is accessible to all regardless of learning or ability differences. The web pages include a clear link from the home page to accessibility guidance http://www.harper-adams.ac.uk/accessibility/ . The web site is designed to comply with W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) standards. All other communications are available in other formats as may be required
	Consult with staff as part of Talkback 2010 regarding communication methods and their effectiveness and seek suggestions for improvement.	May 2010	Staff Development Officer/ Personnel Officer with responsibility for	Continuing Feedback delayed somewhat in 2010; provided via Weekly Diary and Staff Meetings with Principal.

Area	Action	Target Date	Action by	Progress
			Equality and Diversity.	Survey for 2011 to take more proactive approach and daily monitoring to encourage higher response rate from 40% in previous years to 60% in 2011. Feedback to staff planned for July 2011
	Consult with staff and students in specific groups, on a regular basis regarding communication methods, seeking suggestions for improvement	Annually	Academic Registrar.	Staff survey for 2011 underway. Results for 2010 were monitored and some suggestions actioned.
Employment	Equal Pay Audits to continue to be conducted every two years.	Every two years	Head of Personnel	Gender Pay Gap Analysis conducted April 2010. A further audit will be conducted in 2012.
	Conduct regular analysis to maintain the current staffing ratios in line with national guidelines for other HEI's.	Annually	Head of Personnel	Analysis undertaken confirms that equality strands within the College are currently in line with national guidelines for HEI's, taking curriculum offer into account
	Benchmarking exercise to be undertaken with other HEI's to identify staffing ratios and recruitment objectives. Report to staffing committee on findings and recommendations.	2011	Personnel Officer	To be completed
	Aim for recognition under the double tick 'Positive About Disabled People' standard by the end of the DES planning period	2010/11	Head of Personnel and Personnel Officer with particular responsibility for Equality and Diversity	Completed Achieved recognition Aug 2010. To be reviewed on an annual basis.
	Personnel Officer will undertake a benchmarking exercise with other HEIs and LANDEX members and report to Staffing Committee during 2010 with a view to recommending staff employment targets for 2011 and 2012	2010/11	Head of Personnel and Personnel Officer	Continuing. Most recent HESA staff data report purchased May 2011 to inform target setting
Implementation and monitoring of SES	Ensure that staff and student surveys include a specific opportunity to feedback on areas where people feel that there are equality and diversity issues and seek	2010	Academic Registrar and Head of Personnel.	From 2010 Equality and Diversity has been a standing item on the Staff Consultative Group agenda

Area	Action	Target Date	Action by	Progress
	suggestions on resolution.			at each meeting. Specific questions are asked in staff and student surveys. The inclusion of all staff and students in opportunities to debate and discuss all or any aspect of the work of the college is a positive feature of working and studying at HAUC.
	Continue to produce annual statistics on a range of College activities to demonstrate the College's performance in relation to the scheme	Ongoing annually	Academic Registrar and Head of Personnel.	The annual Equal Opportunities Report to Staffing Committee includes this information for staff. Student data has been included in the Annual report to Academic Board.
	Continue to produce and further develop annual reports on college activities in relation to the SES that will be considered by the Academic Board and Staffing Committee	Ongoing annually	Academic Registrar and Head of Personnel	Continuing The annual reports include more specific mapping to relevant action areas included in the action plan for 2010 – 2013. More user friendly and accessible reporting is being developed for student and staff data
Buildings	Continue programme of disabled access improvements using funds allocated in the capital development programme Include a review of the number and location of parking bays designated for staff with disabilities and a review of accessible signage as part of the new signage programme.	2009-2012	Estates and Facilities Manager	A significant programme has been achieved. Examples include: Main Building: lift, automated entrance doors, ramps to all entrances Other buildings: automatic doors, tactile signage, hearing loops, "deaf alerter" fire alarm systems; fire safety refuse areas and escape equipment Contrasting colour schemes for spatial awareness

Area	Action	Target Date	Action by	Progress
				Fully accessible dairy complex, two new self catering accessible rooms and accessible wash room facilities Disabled parking bays
	Consult disabled staff and students about particular building access needs and priorities as individual needs arise	2009-2012	Estates and Facilities Manager working with Head of Learning Support/Personnel Officer with responsibility for Equality and Diversity	Continuing Staff and students have been actively consulted on a one to one basis about their needs as part of their recruitment to the College and/or as part of the College's day to day support for its staff during their employment as and when circumstances change and new needs are identified
	Arrange a SKILL audit at a date to be agreed with Finance and General Purposes Committee	2010 onwards as current capital programme is completed	Estates and Facilities Manager/Learner Support Co-ordinator	A legislative compliance audit undertaken May 2011
IT Systems	Review e-learning portal to ensure that it remains accessible to disabled students and staff	2009-2012	Director of Finance/Head of IS/IT	Review completed. Moodle installation is W3C level 2 compliant, based on the following points: (i) Alt text on all images for screen readers and browsers who have pictures turned off in settings. (ii) Black text on white background used for bodies of text - easiest type to read (iii) Liquid layout re-sizes to match the user's browser size (iv) Can be navigated using the tab key (v) Breadcrumb trail helps users with cognitive problems to navigate through site without

Area	Action	Target Date	Action by	Progress
				getting lost (vi) Has capability to use multiple languages for the module layout (vii) Text can be resized using browser settings - important for users with visual differences (viii) Can have different style sheets for different devices
	Ensure that any newly purchased major College systems (finance, students, contacts etc) meets industry accessibility standards	2009-2012	Director of Finance/Head of IS/IT	All systems comply with accessibility best practice and meet industry standards.
Learner Support	<p>Maintain proactive approach to learner support,(including briefing tutors on the provision of lecture notes in an accessible format) through established systems and develop and put in place new systems for gathering student feedback if required following review of consultation approaches already in place with student community</p> <p>Review the effectiveness of the current use of the Marshall ACM Software</p> <p>Review the document "Learning, Teaching and Assessment Policies for students with disabilities and guidance for staff, students and applicants" to ensure that it fully embraces the needs of PGT and PGR students</p>	2009-2012	<p>Academic Registrar. HEDQE and Learner Support Co-ordinator</p> <p>Academic Registrar. HEDQE and Learner Support Co-ordinator</p> <p>Academic Registrar with HEDQE and Learner Support Co-ordinator</p>	<p>Continuing</p> <p>Students are invited to complete a Learner Support Self Assessment form prior to commencing their course disclosing if they have a disability and offering the opportunity to discuss their support needs.</p> <p>All students complete numeracy and dyslexia screening tests at student induction.</p> <p>Relevant training sessions are run by the disability co-ordinator for new academic staff.</p> <p>College policies supporting disabled students are updated and reviewed regularly.</p>
	<p>Publicise learner support services widely within the College and in student recruitment literature including further information on the relevant web pages</p> <p>Ensure that Employers, Applicants, FE Colleges and Schools are aware of the facilities and support available for students with disabilities</p>	2009-2012	<p>Academic Registrar and Learner Support Co-ordinator with Head of Liaison and Marketing</p> <p>Director of</p>	<p>Improvements to published information. All students are briefed at student induction about the learner support services.</p> <p>Wardens undergo disability awareness training during their induction training.</p> <p>Staff training on supporting</p>

Area	Action	Target Date	Action by	Progress
			Communications	students with disabilities has been provided by Jane Hill in learning and teaching forum
	Maintain membership of SKILL	2009-2012	Learner Support Co-ordinator	Continuing Membership is maintained plus attendance at a Skill conference on student support.
Student Recruitment	Establish targets for student recruitment that reflect the College's national, but rural, student recruitment market	2009-2012	Academic Registrar	Targets in place
	Review and evaluate with the Counsellor and with inputs from the Student Union the effectiveness of the peer mentoring support system for students with disabilities and report to Academic Board	2011	Academic Registrar with Student Services Manager	To be completed
Partnership Arrangements	Continue to ensure that partner organisations are aware of, and comply with the requirements of the SES	2009-2012	Academic Registrar	Continuing. All partners informed annually
Implementation and Monitoring of the DES	Establish and maintain meetings of the DES Group at least twice a year to ensure that annual reports are drafted and evaluated	2009-2012	University College Secretary	This group is superseded by the E&D Working Group in 2011.