



COLEG POWYS

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Revised November 2005

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

- 1.1 Coleg Powys is committed to the elimination of unfair discrimination and to the provision of equality of opportunity for all in education, training and employment.
- 1.2 In light of the above no applicant for a programme - course, or for employment, shall receive less favourable treatment on ground of sex, marital status, age, language, colour, race or ethnic origin, socio-economic status, sexual orientation or disability.
- 1.3 Coleg Powys will promote access to and extend opportunities in education, training and employment to those groups identified as under-represented in Further and, where appropriate, Higher Education. In addition the college will actively seek to address issues related to rurality including those associated with:
 - programme availability at a variety of levels
 - access of opportunity
 - the development of outreach provision
 - the appropriate use of learning technology
 - the use of flexible and distance learning systems.
- 1.4 In recognising the importance of equality of opportunity as central to the efficiency and development of the institution, Coleg Powys as a provider of education, learning, training and employment, will take positive action to implement this policy and to monitor and evaluate its development. The policy has been reviewed and appropriately modified to embrace the delivery of Government funded training programmes, such as New Deal and Modern Apprenticeship.
- 1.5 The policy covers the following areas of focus:
 - Programme Provision
 - Access and Recruitment
 - Curriculum Content and Delivery
 - Recruitment of Staff
 - Staff Training and Development
 - Employers and the Community
 - College Ethos and Environment
 - Implementation, Review and Evaluation.

2 PROGRAMME and COURSE PROVISION

The College will:

- 2.1 Aim to ensure that all courses or programmes are open to everyone with the exception of those provided specifically for a single sex, through the medium of Welsh, or for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- 2.2 Seek to provide certain targeted programmes, courses (or modules within courses) through the medium of Welsh.
- 2.3 Encourage wider participation on programmes dominated by a single gender, making positive efforts to redress the balance.

- 2.4 Take positive action to develop specific programmes which will provide opportunities for both men and women, ethnic minorities and people with learning disabilities in vocational and academic areas where they have, in the past, been under-represented.
- 2.5 To promote and further develop opportunities for inclusive learning within the college and address instances of social exclusion.
- 2.6 Consider the provision of programmes which support unemployed women returners and those requiring access to Higher Education, paying particular attention to the needs of women in both the foregoing two categories.
- 2.7 Provide foundation programmes to increase access to vocational courses and learning opportunities.

3 ACCESS AND RECRUITMENT

The College will:

- 3.1 Provide unbiased guidance and advice to prospective students, learners or clients covering potential opportunities available within the college and elsewhere.
- 3.2 Ensure that prospective students, learners or clients are not debarred or disadvantaged from joining suitable programme due to physical disability, language or other disabilities.
- 3.3 Ensure that prospective students, learners or clients are correctly informed at recruitment and interview of all available College facilities, resources and learning support measures.
- 3.4 Develop appropriate strategies which address the needs of specific client groups including ethnic minorities, women and those with learning disabilities and the mid to long term employment.
- 3.5 Take steps to ensure that prospective students or learners have access to information on grants, accommodation and benefits for those returning to study.
- 3.6 Ensure that students and learners have access to support, advice and counselling on personal and confidential issues. Where possible, this advice should be provided in Welsh for those specifically seeking it.
- 3.7 Consult widely with employers, community groups and organisations regarding the provision of suitable programmes and learning opportunities to meet their needs.
- 3.8 Seek to ensure that students or learners are not disadvantaged through family responsibility or a break in study.
- 3.9 Carefully monitor the college's admissions and recruitment procedures which aim to widen access to further and higher education.

- 3.10 Continually review and revise the college's publicity and marketing materials, such as prospectuses and course profiles so as to ensure that the college is seen to welcome all members of the local communities.
- 3.11 Ensure that all NVQs and similar programmes are available to all those who have the assessed potential to achieve the required standard and are free from barriers which restrict access and progression.
- 3.12 Ensure that all qualifications and learning programmes are free from overt or covert discriminatory practices and pay due regard to the special assessment requirements of individuals who may require support in a variety of respects.
- 3.13 Where possible ensure that all qualifications, learning opportunities or training programmes are free from age or other restrictions.

4 CURRICULUM CONTENT AND DELIVERY

The College will:

- 4.1 Offer, where appropriate, single sex programmes under Section 47 of the Sex Discrimination Act.
- 4.2 Ensure that all resource materials used in the delivery of programmes are free from racist, sexist, or any other discriminatory assumptions, images or language.
- 4.3 Actively promote inclusive learning and encourage the integration of learners with learning difficulties / disabilities onto mainstream courses.
- 4.4 Provide 'drop-in', workshop and ILT facilities to enable learners to study at times convenient to them, and to progress at their own pace.
- 4.5 Where appropriate, revise timetables to accommodate mature students with domestic commitments, e.g. formal classes which start at 10am and finish at 3pm for students with young children at school.
- 4.6 Provide modular programmes of delivery in order to increase access and participation for those wishing to follow only selected units of a course.
- 4.7 Ensure that Equal Opportunities features as part of the students' and learners induction process, as well as Employers who participate in the delivery of training programmes.
- 4.8 Ensure that curriculum design takes full account of progression, access and accreditation of prior learning.

5 RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF STAFF

The College will:

- 5.1 Employ policies and procedures related to the recruitment, selection and promotion of staff that are based on sound Equal Opportunities practice.
- 5.2 Supply copies of this policy to all staff on appointment, or prior to, if requested.
- 5.3 Seek to ensure that interview panels, when appropriate, contain representation from both genders.
- 5.4 Actively seek to encourage applications from people with disabilities.
- 5.5 Aim for the recognition of child-rearing career breaks as being relevant experience and encourage job sharing.
- 5.6 Ensure that staff appraisal takes place within a framework of good Equal Opportunities practice.

6 STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The College will:

- 6.1 Promote staff awareness and encourage good Equal Opportunities practice in both the learning environment and the college generally.
- 6.2 Make all staff aware of the responsibilities for implementing the college's Equal Opportunities policy.
- 6.3 Provide access for staff to counselling by a trained counsellor.
- 6.4 Provide interview techniques and appraisal training where appropriate.
- 6.5 Ensure that staff are trained in the use of teaching and learning strategies which support the development of access and equality of opportunity.

7 EMPLOYERS

The College will:

- 7.1 Distribute a summary of the Equal Opportunities policy to all employers who provide work-experience placements for students and those that participate in the delivery of training programmes.
- 7.2 Encourage development links with acknowledged "good practice" employers.
- 7.3 Discontinue the use of work placements where discrimination is apparent and negotiations with the employer have failed.

- 7.4 Actively encourage employer liaison activities in order to promote wider opportunities for people with disabilities and those under-represented in the workplace.

8 COLLEGE ETHOS AND ENVIRONMENT

The College will:

- 8.1 Create a welcoming environment in which all staff, students, learners and the public feel comfortable, regardless of race, gender, disability, age or sexual orientation, etc.
- 8.2 Ensure that all notices, displays, advertisements for jobs etc. are non-discriminatory in content and appearance and reflect good Equal Opportunities practice.
- 8.3 Work towards providing an environment which actively expresses the Equal Opportunities ethos by displaying signs and permanent notices in both English and Welsh.
- 8.4 Improve access for those who are disabled and / or wheelchair bound to include ramps, lifts, toilet facilities and changing rooms, etc.
- 8.5 Provide where necessary special areas or rooms at given times for particular staff, students or learners.
- 8.6 Ensure that college refectories offer varied menus which meet the dietary needs of customers.
- 8.7 Act swiftly to remove and discourage offensive graffiti occurring in any part of the college buildings.
- 8.8 Take disciplinary procedures' against any student, learner or staff member found behaving in a manner which constitutes harassment or discrimination on grounds of gender, race, age, disability or sexual orientation, etc.

9 IMPLEMENTATION, REVIEW AND EVALUATION

- 9.1 At a primary level the manner of implementing the Equal Opportunities Policy (EOP) is focused on the tangible delivery of the policies principles and related objectives. To this end it is recognised that Equal Opportunities underpins all relevant dimensions and activities of the college.
- 9.2 The Institutional Plan provides the overall context for the delivery of the policy. Particular importance is attached to the complementary nature of the Mission Statement, strategic aims, objectives and management strategies. Accordingly the EOP should be read in conjunction with the aforementioned sections of the plan.

- 9.3 Within the context established by the Institutional Plan the implementation of the EOP is managed through the college's defined organisational structure. The Vice Principal exercises a delegated management role for the overall application of the policy. However, it should be noted that all members of staff (to a greater or lesser extent depending upon the nature of their specific posts) are directly involved in the delivery process and hold a consequent degree of associated responsibility. Programme and Course Team quality assurance systems also contribute to the implementation and monitoring process.
- 9.4 All members of staff are supplied, on appointment, with a copy of the Equal Opportunities Policy. Given that the policy has a dynamic nature requires that the EOP is subject to ongoing development. Where changes are deemed necessary the policy shall be amended and revised copies distributed to each section within the college.
- 9.5 All students and learners of the college shall be supplied on induction with an appropriate summary of the Equal Opportunities Policy. The Student Diary also includes reference to the policies primary elements. Complaints related to the application of the Policy shall be investigated in accordance with the college's established Grievance Procedures.
- 9.6 The EOP is subject to annual review and evaluation. The review process will be conducted in relation to each objective contained within the various sections of the policy, namely:
- Course Provision
 - Access and Recruitment
 - Curriculum Content and Delivery
 - Recruitment and Selection of Staff.
 - Staff Training and Development
 - Employers
 - College Ethos and Environment

Associated with the review process are those of evaluation and subsequent action planning. The format employed relates the three elements in a sequential holistic manner.

- 9.7 The review and evaluation process is however not limited solely to the action described within the preceding point. Given the contents of point 9.1 and an acceptance of the fact that Equal Opportunities underpins the general activities of the college, implies that self assessment is evident on a much broader front.