

South- Nottingham College – Disability Equality Scheme

Introduction

South Nottingham College is pleased to present its Disability Equality Scheme.

The college wants to be a place that values diversity and respects difference. The Disability Equality Duty will help us become more inclusive. We can become more able to respond to the needs of individual learners. We want to achieve a more representative workforce.

The Scheme will enable us to:

- Promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Eliminate disability-related harassment
- Promote positive attitudes towards disabled people in public life
- Encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- Take account of disabled peoples' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourable than others.

The college is aware that there is still prejudice around disability and both staff and students may be reluctant to disclose. We hope to create an environment where no-one feels excluded.

Student Profile

The college has over 12,000 learners enrolled.

1112 are on fulltime courses which are mainly aimed at 16-19 year old learners.

574 learners have identified themselves as having a learning difficulty and/or disability.

Students are invited at many stages of their journey to tell us about their needs.

This year, 495 have told us about a need and have been contacted. 45 of these are self-managed conditions, such as asthma. Some have a learning difficulty; some have a disability, visible or invisible. Support plans have been made with students to help them study successfully. The college has a large team of specialist tutors who work with students and their tutors to achieve their learning goal.

Staff Profile

The college employs 275.3 members of staff on a permanent/fixed term contract and 38.8 staff on sessional contracts.

Accurate figures of disabled members of staff has yet to be gathered. This will be a priority.

Individual needs of staff are met through discussion . Adjustments are made to enable staff to take up posts, continue or resume work.

Our Disability Equality Vision, Values and Principles

The Scheme will be part of the college's strategic vision. Our mission statement is "Success through Learning". Our values are:

Partnership
Learner centred
Staff Quality
Equality and Diversity
Achievement
Financial strength
Continuous Improvement

We believe that by improving Disability Equality, we will create an inclusive college which will benefit all within it.

In three years time, we want to have changed attitudes, systems and practices that might be a barrier to disabled people and might be stopping their full participation.

We need to show that we have actively involved disabled learners and staff in identifying gaps and barriers.

We need them to help us prioritise our targets and monitor the impact of the changes.

We need to develop our links with other agencies, for example, community disability groups who will help us clarify our targets.

We need to show that policies have been reviewed, with disabled people.

We need to show that practice has changed in all areas of the college and is promoting disability equality.

We need the impact of our targets measured regularly against the 6 parts of the duty.

We need to make sure that Disability Equality is understood and embedded in all areas of the organisation.

What we have done

The college has done much to implement the DDA. We can improve further. 8 Senior Managers for key areas of college have reviewed their current position in Disability Equality progress.

Curriculum Programmes, Curriculum Support, Estates and Premises, Information Systems, Student Services, Human Resources, Marketing and Business , Quality Assurance have all taken stock and proposed their priorities for the next 3 years.

What we need to do

The College will use this information alongside other information from disabled people to make and implement its 3 year plan.

How have we engaged disabled people?

Students

495 of this year's students have said that they have an additional need. We have contacted **385** students and have given them the action points identified by the different areas of college. (see appendix 1 and 2)

We have asked them to prioritise action points and to add any others. We have received a good response. These students have been asked if they would like to be actively involved in a student forum.

63 students have replied (**16.3%**) Their responses have now been grouped (see appendix) This information will be taken to the Steering Groups.

17 said they would like to be in a focus group. This group will be invited to come together and will be asked to lead the prioritising of the action points and suggestions. We will use independent consultant to do this.

Students on our Entry and Pre-entry programmes have been contacted through their tutorial programme. They have been asked for their views on college and how improvements can be made. (see appendix 3)

A focus session will be held with them. We will use an independent consultant to work with them. The results of their comments will be given and we will ask for their priorities.

Induction

All students are given a college induction, which includes the college's values, including our no tolerance of bullying and harassment.

Students are given a diary with contact numbers.

Student Services attend Induction sessions to tell students about the services we offer

Tutorial

Full time students are given a Personal Tutor. Progress reviews are held 3 times a year on a one-to-one session.

There is a group tutorial programme which includes sessions on Equality and Diversity.

Student surveys

Two annual surveys collect information from students about their college life.

These surveys are modified in language and format.

Responses from students who have identified as having a disability and/or learning difficulty are analysed and compared with the whole college group.

Issues from surveys are taken to the Equality and Diversity group.

We will see if we can add extra questions to our survey to give us more information on disability issues

Raising awareness of the Disability Equality Duty

All students will be given information on the Disability Duty and will be invited to join the student forum if they have an interest in disability issues. Marketing will think of the most accessible ways of getting information to students.

Course representatives will be involved through the Student Council.

Staff

Induction and staff training

All new staff have an induction which includes information about our equality duties.

The college has yet to make sure that all staff know and understand our Duty.

This is a staff development priority.

Community Groups and other stake holders

The college has yet to identify and contact outside groups, for example, the Rushcliffe Mental Health Team. They will be contacted and invited to share their knowledge. They can help us identify priorities.

An independent consultant will be used to research local groups and contact them.

How will we regularly seek advice of disabled people on their involvement?

- Student focus groups will be established and will meet regularly. A group for students with learning difficulties may be held separately. They will help to see that the scheme is moving and targets are being met. They will be represented at the Equality and Diversity Group to lead on the Disability Equality Duty agenda.
- Disabled staff and those interested in disability issues will be involved in all stages of the design and implementation of our scheme.

Leadership and Management

- The college will promote its vision and the college's intentions.
- All senior management have attended information sessions on the DED.
- Information has been given to middle managers.
- The Scheme will be reviewed and monitored through the Equality and Diversity group which is led by the Executive Director and has Senior Managers attending. (see appendix 4)
- The DED will be a standing item on the Equality and Diversity group.
- Progress on the action plan will be monitored by this group.
- The annual assessment of the Scheme will be done by this group.

- Staff training on the Duty will be a priority.
- Disability equality will be monitored through Course Reviews and Self Assessment reports. Targets may be set through these processes.
- Partnerships need to be developed.
- The membership of the Equity and Diversity Group needs to be reviewed, Union reps and in particular, Disability Champions, will be welcomed.
- The Student Council will have 'Disability Issues' as a standing item.
- A disability champion will be identified from the Student council who will attend the Equality and Diversity Group meetings and raise issues from students.
- Governors have received information about their responsibility in delivering the Duty, and will monitor progress.

Impact Assessment

All college policies are in a cycle of review.

As policies are reviewed, we will build in impact measures, so that we can be assured that they are all promoting disability.

- This will be done through the Equality and Diversity Group, who will be the final check on policies, before approval by the Corporation.

Gathering Information

The college has information on the numbers and range of disabilities in the student group.

- Student Success (Retention and Achievement) monitored by Student Services and reported in the annual self assessment report
- Curriculum areas report annually on the number of disabled learners on their course and their success.
- The Equality and Diversity group receive data on the success of disabled learners compared to the college whole and make recommendations.
- The college has not yet collected full data on Disabled staff.
- Data is available on staff receiving support from the college

Publishing

The scheme will be published:

On the college website

On the staff Portal

On the student IT area

In Governor's papers

In hard copy form

In customised formats, on request.

Action Plan

The final operational plan will be completed on 12/1/07 by the E&D group.

What we want to do	Who will do it	What are the outcomes	When will it be achieved	How will it be monitored
1. Communicate the vision for disability equality across the organisation	Marketing Student Services	All staff, students and stake holders are aware of the college's intentions to promote Disability Equality. All new publications to state this	March 2007. As new publications are published By Sept 2007 as new students have Inductions Representatives from student Focus Group to meet with Student Support Tutor and Marketing to view and comment on literature inc. web-based 28/3/07	Publications will be reviewed by focus groups. Student surveys.
2. Get information to all staff and students about the Disability Duty	Marketing Human Resources	An awareness of the responsibility that everyone has to uphold the duty	Sept 2007 Staff Development in July will have input on Equality/Diversity issues inc. DED	Interview questions at selection will be sampled by HR and results reported to E&D group. Student awareness checked through surveys Reference to Disability issues to be considered for inclusion in Support Services Questionnaire which goes to students and staff.
3. Collect information on staff with disabilities	Human Resources	Accurate data on the number of disabled staff within the organisation, which gives a baseline for monitoring and increasing	March 2007	Report to E&D
4. Convene a staff disability forum and support them to lead the	Human Resources	Involvement of disabled staff in delivering the Duty	July 2007	Report to E&D

scheme				
5. Convene student groups of interested students and support them to lead the scheme	Student Services	Involvement of disabled students in delivering the Duty 2 focus groups have had initial meeting, (one for students with Learning Difficulties) Issues have been identified, actioned where possible by relevant personnel and progress will be feedback	July 2007	Report to E&D Presentation of report on Student Focus Groups received from Heather Howard on 2/3/07
6. Widen the remit of the Equality and Diversity group to ensure a disability representation	E&D group	Steer on disability issues from staff and students Representative from Charnwood Student Council attended meeting	March 2007	Report to E&D See minutes 2/3/07
7. Ensure a standing item on the group to monitor the scheme	E&D group	An awareness of Disability issues and a corporate approach to promotion of Disability Equality	All scheduled meetings	Minutes of meetings
8. Plan and deliver staff development of the Duty	Staff Development	An awareness of Disability issues and a corporate approach to promotion of Disability Equality	Staff Development calendar Every new staff induction	Staff development report Staff Files
9. Have 'Disability Issues' as a standing item on Student council	Youth worker	Promotion of the Duty	All scheduled meetings	Minutes of meetings
10. Contact Community partners to actively involve them in the scheme.	Consultant with knowledge of disability issues	Involvement of partners to inform our scheme Tutor identified to contact local partners. Initial list drawn up and contact started	Jan 2007	Report to E&D

11. Review all policies and procedures to ensure they promote disability equality	E&D group	Promotion of the Duty	As each policy is reviewed in 2 year cycle	Minutes of meetings Agreed in meeting 2/3/07 that Student Behaviour and Disciplinary and Child Protection should be priority Policies for Student group to review
12. Review and detail the Action Plan	E&D group	Ensure all targets are SMART and have accountability built in	Jan 17th	Minutes of meetings

Updates in red, as of 2/3/07

Appendices

APPENDIX 1

06 March 2007

Our Reference – DED

Dear Student,

We are always interested in getting students views on their college experience and our services and facilities.

We now have a legal duty to become even better in our support of disabled students and staff under the Disability Equality Duty. As you have identified yourself as having additional needs, I am contacting you directly to ask for your views on how well you think we support students with additional needs and/or disabilities.

We have gathered some suggestions together on what we think we could do to make the college better. We would greatly value your views on these suggestions and, even better, if you have other suggestions, we would like to hear them.

All information received will be anonymous, however we are also interested in setting up a student focus group to help us become more 'disability aware' and if you are interested in joining this, please express your interest.

We would be very grateful if you would look at the enclosed sheet and give us some feedback and return it in the prepaid envelope by 17th November.

Many thanks

Yours sincerely



Dianne Fortescue
Student Services Manager
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APPENDIX 2

DISABILITY EQUALITY DUTY – SUGGESTED ACTION POINTS

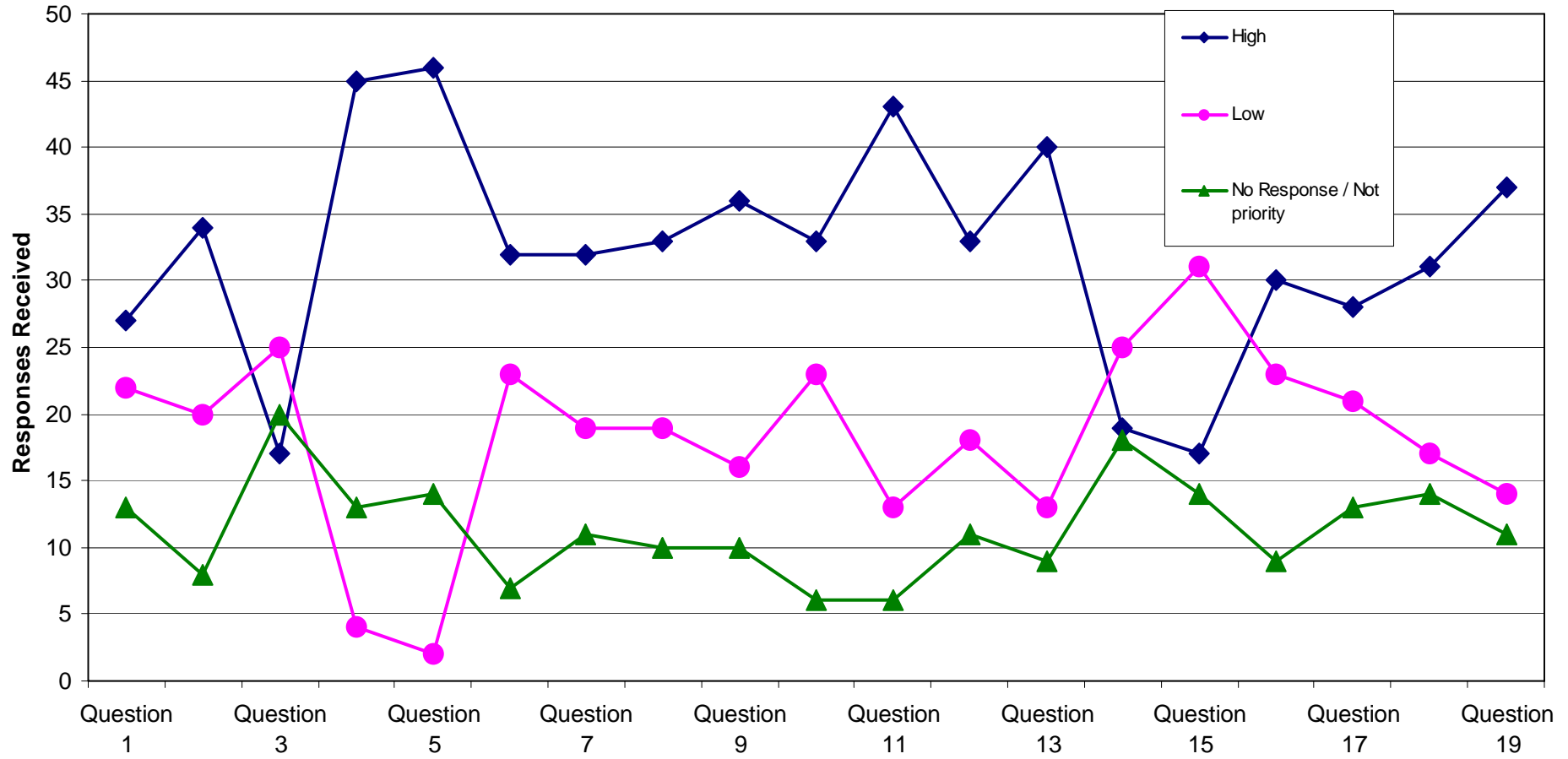
Please indicate if you think the following points are: -

HIGH PRIORITY (H), LOW PRIORITY (L) or NOT A PRIORITY AT ALL (X).

Set up a group of students with disabilities to test website accessibility.	
Invite a group of students with a range of disabilities to review College literature.	
Test advertising campaigns on student groups for effectiveness.	
Ensure that all new staff have information on disability issues.	
Ensure all teaching staff, particularly part-time, know how to access support for students with disabilities	
Accelerate development of student intranet to communicate to students more effectively.	
Set up a student forum, either on-line or actual, to get views of students interested in disability issues	
Act as consultants to Curriculum areas on Inclusive Teaching and Learning materials, e.g. a corporate guideline on Hand Out design using good practice fonts/print size etc.	
Re-visit Student Policies with input from disabled students to ensure that they are non-discriminatory.	
Re-visit premises audit with disabled students to gather their views.	
Ring-fence a proportion of the IT budget for specialist software and hardware, which will benefit students with additional needs, e.g. enlarged keyboards/roller balls.	
Introduce Wireless Access in Student Centre and other key areas to enable easy access to systems and services.	
Introduce training for deaf awareness for Front Desk staff.	
Review use of adaptive technology on the Apple Mac provision.	
Look at on-line system to enable access to services for applications and enrolment process.	
Consider portable magnifying kit for students who would benefit from large print	
Ensure replacement photocopiers have tilt screens and ability to change contrast	
Podcast lectures for those wishing to re-visit resources and those who were absent/distant learners	
Amend risk assessment for visits/trips that take into account of information for students with a disability.	
Your own comments/suggestions	

Your comments will be anonymous unless you wish to be part of any focus group. If you would be interested in this please give name:

Disability Survey Responses



APPENDIX 3

Feedback from students on Life at College

From student(s) on course.....

Why did you choose to come to South Nottingham?

What are the best things about college?

What are the worse things?

What would make college better?

APPENDIX 4

Equality and Diversity Group Membership

John Gray	Executive Director
John Snow	Director of Estates
David Drury	Director of Marketing and Business
Angela Clayton	Director of Human Resources
Don Hustings	Director of Quality Assurance Officer
Dianne Fortescue	Student Services Manager
Equality and Diversity Rep	UCU
Equality Steward	Unison