



Disability Equality Scheme

Annual Report 2007

The North Highland College Board of Management and staff recognise that they have a responsibility to create and build an environment in which all are equally valued and treated, as well as its wider responsibility in assisting in the creation of a fair and just society

It is our belief that no discrimination on account of Disability, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religious or political beliefs, shall be shown towards any person in determining whether that person will be admitted as a student of the college, or appointed to its staff or shall hold any advantage or privilege thereof.

The college will promote opportunity for all, particularly for study, employment and involvement in its community, without discrimination on grounds of gender, sex, age, disability, religion, and socio-economic background, sexual orientation, colour, ethnic or national origin, language or nationality.

The college requires its staff, students, clients and visitors to behave and communicate in non-discriminatory ways and to support, implement and develop college institutional policies, procedures and practices which promote and reinforce equality of opportunity and fair treatment for all.

This is the college's 1st annual report as required under current legislation. The college successfully published its Disability Equality Scheme on 4th December 2007. It has since been reviewed and the outcome concluded that it did not fully comply with the legislative requirements viz:

It did not fully comply with respect to:

- ✚ An explanation of how disabled persons were involved in the Scheme's formulation
- ✚ How the college would address the consideration of the requirements to eliminate harassment or to encourage disabled people to participate in public life.

The revised document addresses the first issue of providing:

- ✚ An explanation of how disabled persons were involved in the Scheme's formulation;

by adding additional text to the scheme to explain how this had been achieved and the Disability Action Plan was also revised to include a section containing specific operational targets.

Both revised documents were uploaded onto the colleges' web site in October 2007.

The second issue of:

- ✚ How the college would address the consideration of the requirements to eliminate harassment or to encourage disabled people to participate in public life;

The college acknowledges that all staff have a responsibility to work to eliminate discrimination and promote disability equality. This issue will be fully addressed in the next revision of our Scheme and Action Plan which will be published in January 2008.

Our revised scheme will contain the following operational aspects:

- The Human Resources Manager will continue to organise and promote disability awareness training for all staff
- Disability equality in the learning and teaching process will be followed up when the Quality and Equality of Learning and Teaching Materials (QELTM) project guidelines are finalised and released to the sector.
- The Staff Induction process will be reviewed to ensure that all Staff understand their responsibilities under the DDA and are aware of the North Highland College's vision for disability equality.

- The Equalities section of college's web pages will be revised and upgraded to better reflect & promote disability awareness to the public and also convey the college's vision for disability equality.
- The revised Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan for 2008 - 09 will be posted on the College intranet and Web Site
- College 'Learning Days' will provide continuing professional development opportunities for staff to further develop their skills to achieve improvements in disability equality.
- The College will ensure that disability equality is built into course reviews, self-assessment and the quality improvement processes.
- The support for Learners Section will provide a number of "Community Roadshows" to promote disability equality and promote the level of service provision and support available to potential learners with disabilities.

Review of the Disability Action Plan

A full review of the 07-08 action plan has been carried out. The achievement of approximately 85% of objectives against the stated timeframes were met. This document has been posted on the Colleges' Web Site. The action plan report for 06/07 will be reviewed by the Colleges Board of Management and appropriate committees at their next scheduled meetings.

A new Disability Action Plan will be published on the College's web site in January 08 after the appropriate involvement of stakeholders.

Staff Development

A member of the Support for Learners section completed the full BRITE training programme in May 07.

Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Impact Assessment Screening Checklist has been reviewed and will be completed by the responsible person/team:

- for all new policies and procedures
- when changes to existing policies or procedures are being considered
- as part of the review process of existing policies and procedures.

A complete/full Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken if any potential adverse impact cannot be resolved at Stage One. Designated members of the Equalities Group

will work to support any person/team/area that is required to carry out a complete/full Equality Impact Assessment.

Future reports will include data on Equality Impact Assessment progress

Equality Monitoring

Equalities monitoring is mainstreamed and embedded in the self - evaluation activities of Academic and Support Sections. SMT members are responsible for bringing any issues to the Equalities Committee. The Academic Council will consider the following College equality monitoring information at their next scheduled meeting.

Monitoring and Reporting: Staff

Staff are encouraged to disclose disabilities and a supportive framework for putting adjustments in place is managed by the HR Section and the Support for Learners Section. Monitoring of pre-exit interviews confirms that disability matters do not impact on staff retention.

A total of 6 staff indicated they required an assessment to support their disability. Assessments were carried out and the appropriate assistive technology provided for session 06/07.

Monitoring and Reporting: Learners

The College has systems in place or is currently developing systems to gather information on the educational opportunities and achievements of disabled learners who have disclosed at the time of registration.

Data is collected on:

- disabled learner enrolment in terms of numbers and specific impairment
- disabled learner early retention and overall retention
- disabled learner attainment on programmes of study.

Supporting Equality of Access

	Total Weighted SUMS	Total Weighted SUMS (ELS)	Total Weighted SUMS Group 18
2004-2005	16430	811	1384
2005-2006	15065	1023	1120
2006-2007	16018	1400	1358

SUM: Student Unit of Measurement

ELS : Extended Learner Support

Group 18 : Students with profound disabilities

Disability

Enrolments by Disability

Disability	2007-2008	2006-2007
Dyslexia	189	280
Blind/partially sighted	20	46
Deaf/hearing impairment	46	91
Wheelchair/mobility	57	145
Personal care support	4	8
Mental Health	45	103
Unseen disability	259	441
Multiple disabilities	38	147
Information Refused	113	330
Unknown	36	283
Not listed above	112	220
Total Enrolments	919	2094

- As of October 2007

Future reports will include data on:

- disabled learner early retention and overall retention
- disabled learner attainment on programmes of study.

Reporting and Publishing Progress

This Disability Equalities Report will be made available, in accessible formats, to staff, learners and stakeholders and will be published on the College Website.

The Report will be presented to the Equalities Committee and the Academic Council. It will also be made available to the General Purposes and the Audit Committees of the Board of Management, who in turn will make their recommendation to the College's full Board of Management.

M Mennie
Assistant Principal
December 2007