

Gender Equality Scheme: Annual Report – June 2009

Introduction

This report summarises the continued progress Dundee College has made to eliminate gender inequality as required under the Gender Equality Duty (2007).

Dundee College continues to promote and embed equality of opportunity in all aspects of its work as well as prevent discrimination. We believe that discrimination, direct or indirect, based on a person's gender is unjust and represents a denial of opportunity for individual self-fulfillment. Following Dundee College's published Gender Equality Scheme (June 2007), last years report noted key achievements. These included:

- Significant development towards a Single Equality Scheme
- Introducing a Job Evaluation scheme
- Establishing a Dignity at Work Policy to assist in tackling Transgender Discrimination and Harassment
- Monitoring and reporting on College developments for Staff, Students & Service Providers

This report was also bounded by Dundee College's Gender Equality Scheme action plan setting out a range of objectives for the next three years to achieve gender equality for our staff and students.

College Developments: Towards a Single Equality Scheme

During academic session 2008-09 the college has continued to address the legislative requirements in relation to Equality and has devised a Single College Strategy which now features in the College Strategic Plan. The strategy was devised by college staff with the support of Equality Forward. The strategy is developed and monitored by the Equality and Diversity Strategy Group operating with the assistance of a Steering group as well as staff and student subgroups. The strategy group consists of college staff and students and has met 5 times in addition to Steering Group meetings and informal advisor meetings/forums. This will increase from the previous triennial meeting structure, the aim being to meet 6 times a year for 2009/10. The Strategy Group has developed an advisor structure to provide specialist advice, act as a conduit and reference point as well as keep abreast of each area of legislation. The advisors have responsibility for:

- Disability
- Gender
- Age
- Race
- Sexual orientation
- Religion and belief

Reflecting on the Equality and Diversity Strategy as well as updating the three-year action plan, Dundee College has identified further action to meet the four key objectives specified in the strategic document. Such action includes synthesising imminent new duties (religion, age and sexual orientation), collating and reporting on promotional

activity, utilising student and staff subgroups to monitor and assist development, using new HR software interrogate further data characteristics, and cascade across the college good practice. These actions effectively update the college's action plan to align several duties within a single equality scheme.

This single strategy approach and cross college equality and diversity focused meetings, coupled with advisor remits will allow the college to continue to tackle inequalities in a more coherent and transparent approach and puts the college in a better position to meet the requirements of the government's proposed legislation, "Framework for a Fairer Future – The Equality Bill" with the assistance of students and advisors.

Also during the academic year 2008 – 09 a survey of students and staff highlighted that both groups agreed that the college does not discriminate on the basis of gender.

Progress in Relation to Specific Gender Equality Duty Requirements

In September 2007 the college revised its equal pay policy and communicated it to staff (see Appendix 1). The college has subsequently carried out job evaluation for all positions in support functions. The Job Evaluation exercise should be completed by October 2009. The Job Evaluation exercise also gives rise to an equal pay audit to eliminate any gender discrepancies ensuring that all employees in these areas, irrespective of gender, will enjoy parity of reward for work of equal value. All new positions within the college will be job evaluated on an ongoing basis and an annual report on the college's position on equal pay will be produced for the HR and Development Committee of the Board of Management.

Transgender Discrimination and Harassment

In relation to our students, the Student Code of Conduct and the Staff Disciplinary policy address this aspect of discrimination and details sanctions that can be imposed should any discrimination or harassment take place. They are synthesised within the college's Dignity at Work Policy.

Other College Related Developments

1. Staff

Analysis of employment statistics to identify gender issues

The installation of an HR Database (Resourcelink) to enable us to provide management with accurate data reports on employment statistics will be fully operational by December 2009. Age and gender data now exist within this database. Planned six monthly reports on these statistics produced by HR will enable the monitoring of gender issues and take action on issues identified.

Review of HR policies and procedures

A systematic assessment of HR policies and procedures is in progress to ensure that there is no direct or indirect discrimination in Dundee College's employment practices. Policies have been rewritten, on an ongoing basis, to promote the College as an inclusive employer where there are no barriers to employment, promotion, remuneration, benefits or educational opportunity, through either direct or indirect discrimination on the

grounds of gender. Our Recruitment, Sickness Absence, Probation and Maternity policies have recently been completed and agreed by our Trade Unions.

Training and Development

A number of events have occurred during the year including: Equality forward annual conference (February, 2009), Dundee diversity day (February, 2009), Dundee diversity promotion (June, 2009) and Dundee College mutual respect training day (June, 2009). Participation at such events has ensured that awareness of gender/transgender issues is given to staff, ensuring that they are aware of their individual responsibilities.

The development of advisers within the Equality and Diversity Strategy group with specific tasks and responsibilities enables up-to-date information to be conveyed. The remit of the advisors includes:

- Provide an Advisory role to the Group on legislation, case law, initiatives etc.
- To be a Conduit for information coming in and going out of the College in their respective areas.
- To be a Reference Point for staff and students who may wish to discuss anything concerned with each area of specialism. To signpost people in the right direction relevant to the nature of their issue.
- To Update themselves on their area of interest, and ensure the College is kept abreast of changes.

2. Students

Marketing and Promotion

We actively promote the college as an inclusive learning environment. Marketing and promotional materials are rigorously checked to ensure that they are free from gender bias. We encourage applications from diverse backgrounds and where appropriate target under represented groups. A qualitative report which includes measures of effectiveness to facilitate the establishment of meaningful baselines is planned for 2009/10.

Pre-entry Guidance, Admissions, Welfare and Progression

All processes and procedures have been audited to ensure that equal opportunities apply. Through our Young & Vulnerable Learner Structure we can monitor the number of students supported. In year 2008/09 we reported and supported: 30 female and 21 male. From this list 4 were gender-based violence involving internal and external support.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Staff are encouraged to promote equal opportunities in their learning and teaching and that learning and assessment materials are free from bias.

Monitoring

We are currently devising procedures to more effectively monitor student recruitment to programmes in order to ensure that gender-representation is addressed where appropriate. Similarly we propose to extend our monitoring of student retention and success to include gender analysis.

Student Views

The college has recently reviewed the structure and operation of its Students' Association. To ensure that the student voice is more effectively heard on a range of issues, including gender and equality, the Association has become more representative and a Learner Involvement Strategy has been devised.

Furthermore, student representatives now sit on the college's Equality and Diversity Group, Board of Management and Student Affairs Committee. The student residential in June 2009, included evaluation of operational plan, HMle report, student access to proposed building developments and student evaluations. Student representation has increased by 100% in academic year 2008/09 and is represented: Male 135 (45%) Female 165 (55%)

3. Service Providers

We now make every attempt to contract with service providers who have an equal opportunities policy and ensure that they are aware of the college's policies in relation to Equal Opportunities.

Christina Potter
Principal

June 2009

Appendix 1

Dundee College

EQUAL PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Forward

In response to the requirements of the Gender Equality Duty, Dundee College published its Gender Equality Scheme in June 2007 and now publishes its Equal Pay Policy Statement. This statement will be reported on every 3 years

The Policy

Dundee College is an equal opportunities employer and all staff will be treated equally, irrespective of their age, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital/civil partnership status, religion or trade union membership, and will receive equal pay for work (or broadly similar work) of equal value.

In order to show commitment to equal pay the College will:

- ◆ Examine and review existing and future pay practices.
- ◆ Carry out regular monitoring of the impact of the College's pay practices.
- ◆ Provide training and guidance for managers directly involved in decisions about pay and benefits.
- ◆ Continue to work in partnership with the recognised Trade Unions on the actions and implementation of this Policy.

Through these actions the college aims to avoid unfair discrimination and reward the skills and experience of all staff.

The College believes it is in our best interest and good business practice to ensure pay is awarded fairly and equitably and in a transparent manner.