



# **GENDER EQUALITY SCHEME**

**JUNE 2007**

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## **Introduction**

Dundee College is committed to a comprehensive policy of equal opportunities for its staff and students. The College aims to ensure that all staff and students are treated equally, regardless of age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, trade union activity, or unrelated criminal convictions.

In order that all students and staff are treated with equality and fairness and that their treatment is based solely on objective criteria, the College ensures that equality issues are embedded into all relevant policies and procedures.

As a learning environment and as a major employer we strive to make the organisation completely inclusive in which all people, irrespective of gender, can participate fully as equal citizens. We have undertaken to adhere to the relevant legislation – Equality Act 2006.

With the Equality Act 2006 we welcome this opportunity to publish our Gender Equality Scheme whereby we become proactive agents of change. Our scheme covers students, staff and service users, and sets out our framework to tackle discrimination and institutional barriers before these can impact on an individual.

The College's Gender Equality Scheme has been informed by staff and students and was written by the then Gender Sub Group of the College's Equality Group. The Scheme has been approved by the College Executive, considered and endorsed by the College's Strategic Forum and approved at Board of Management level.

**CHRISTINA POTTER  
PRINCIPAL**

**JUNE 2009**

## **Gender Equality Duty**

Under the terms of the General Duty, when carrying out our function as a Public Authority, Dundee College must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment on the grounds of sex
- Promote equality of opportunity between women and men

In addition, as an education provider, we undertake to fulfil specific duties, as listed in our Equality and Diversity Strategy Action Plan.

## **Gender Equality: Vision, Values and Principles**

Dundee College is committed to promoting and embedding equality in all aspects of its work and preventing discrimination. We believe that discrimination, direct or indirect, based on a person's gender<sup>1</sup> is unjust and represents a denial of opportunity for individual self-fulfilment. Dundee College has adopted a whole organisational approach to embedding gender equality across all functions and services.

We acknowledge that with a minority of staff and students we have some way to go to address attitudinal barriers towards gender equality. We will make explicit the range of activities we will undertake to address gender equality and identify measurements of success.

For all users of the College we seek to actively promote equality and to emphasise the benefits to the College of an ethos and culture which acknowledges and celebrates diversity.

Dundee College seeks to be a model of good practice in relation to Gender Equality, an environment where females, males and transgender individuals are encouraged to join as students or staff because we respect them as individuals and value their contribution to the development of the organisation.

## **Gender Equality: Students**

In relation to gender equality for all students (including prospective students) Dundee College will:

- Promote the College as an inclusive learning environment where they can access the College and all aspects of the curriculum based on their needs and aspirations
- Ensure that there are no gender barriers in relation to pre-entry guidance, admission, learning and teaching, assessment/examination and progression
- Review all policies and procedures to students to ensure compliance and consistency with gender equality

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<sup>1</sup> This embraces staff, students and service-users, males, females and transgender individuals

- Apply a gender free approach when dealing with any complaint or disciplinary issues (under the terms of the Student Code of Conduct)
- Elicit student views on matters relating to equality (including gender)
- Encourage representation on committees and other Dundee College groups, irrespective of gender

### **Gender Equality: Staff**

In relation to staff, Dundee College will:

- 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
- Review all Human Resource policies and procedures to ensure compliance and consistency with gender equality
- Elicit staff views on matters relating to equality (including gender)
- Encourage representation on committees and other Dundee College groups, irrespective of gender

### **Gender Equality: Service Providers**

In relation to service providers Dundee College will:

- Contract with providers who apply equal opportunities in their organisation
- Promote our Gender Equality Scheme to these providers
- Provide opportunities for feedback to the College

### **Gathering Information to Improve Gender Equality – Students**

Information from a variety of sources has been gathered to inform developments to support and formulate our Gender Equality Scheme. This information will contribute to the development of our Action Plan.

- Student recruitment to the College
- Student retention rates
- Student achievement rates
- Student success rates
- Student progression rates
- Student views

The process for the gathering and the analysis is ongoing – on an annual cycle. This will inform and update our Action Plan and link to other College planning mechanisms.

### **Actively Involving Students**

To support the creation of our Gender Equality Scheme, and in particular the identification and implementation of the Action Plan, we have sought the views of a representative sample of students.

A questionnaire has been compiled and issued to the students concerned. The information gathered will be benchmarked against future surveys and will inform the action planning processes, as outlined above.

### **Gathering Information to Improve Gender Equality – Staff**

Information from a variety of sources has been gathered to inform developments to support and formulate our Gender Equality Scheme. This information will contribute to the development of our Action Plan.

- Job applications and selection
- Staff in post by gender
- Promotion opportunities
- Staff development opportunities and uptake
- Grievance and disciplinary records
- Staff views

The College is committed to equal pay. All roles are assessed to ensure the principles of equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, or work of equal value are maintained in the College pay structure.

The process for the gathering and the analysis is ongoing – on an annual cycle. This will inform and update our Action Plan and link to other College planning mechanisms.

### **Actively Involving Staff**

To support the creation of our Gender Equality Scheme, and in particular the identification and implementation of the Action Plans, we have sought the views of all college staff.

A questionnaire has been compiled and issued to all staff. The information gathered will be benchmarked against future surveys and will inform the action planning processes, as outlined above.

## **College Leadership and Infrastructure to Support Gender Equality**

Strategically the College is strongly committed to equalities:

- We seek to align the curriculum to the needs of the different communities we serve
- To continue to widen access and embed equal opportunities in all our operations

To support the implementation of these aims a cross college Equality and Diversity Strategy Group with representation from college executive, policy, human resources, curriculum, student support, site services, quality, management information services, trade unions and student association meets on a regular basis to implement strategy in all areas of equality. This group reports to the College's Strategic Forum and the Board of Management's Human Resource and Development and Quality Enhancement Committees.

A sub group of this committee was established to address Gender Equality issues and to prepare this document.

The executive is committed to ensure that equality is embedded within all college policies and procedures.

## **Victimisation, Harassment and Sexual Harassment**

The College has a Dignity At Work Policy for staff and Code of Conduct for students. This covers all types of harassment and victimisation. The College and recognised Trade Unions recognise the problems associated with harassment and are committed to providing an environment in which all individuals can operate effectively, confidently and competently. If a complaint is brought to the attention of management, it will be investigated promptly and appropriate action taken.

## **Training and Development**

To ensure that staff and students are aware of the Gender Equality Scheme and the General and Specific Duties, the College will ensure that all staff and students will be briefed. This will ensure that they are aware of their individual responsibilities. The Gender Equality Scheme will be available on the website and the staff and student intranets.

## **Impact Assessment**

We are committed to carry out gender equality impact assessments on relevant policies, procedures, plans and practice. These will build on and complement our current action planning processes and procedures.

The impact assessment will be conducted in accordance with college procedures and will actively involve staff, students and stakeholders, where appropriate.

The impact assessment will be conducted by:

- Mapping relevant policies, procedures, plans and practices
- Screening to determine priority
- Considering the evidence
- Assessing likely impact
- Exploring options and making decisions
- Identifying monitoring processes
- Publishing results
- Mainstreaming the process of impact assessment

## **Monitoring, Evaluation and Publication of the Gender Equality Scheme**

The monitoring and evaluation of the College's Gender Equality Scheme will be built into the current processes and procedures.

- Responsibility to provide reports on the progress of the Scheme and Action Plan rests with the Equality and Diversity Strategy Group
- The College Equality and Diversity Strategy Group will monitor the progress made in implementing the College's Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Progress will be monitored through the current annual review processes
- Each year an annual report will be produced and reported and evaluated by the College Executive and Strategic Forum
- The annual report will be endorsed by the Board of Management via the Human Resource and Development and Quality Enhancement Committees
- The annual report will be published and made available to stakeholders, staff, students, service providers, employers and partner organisations
- The Gender Equality Scheme will be made available to the public via the College website

## **References**

The following documents were used to compile this Policy.

1. Legislative/Guidance:

*Gender Equality Duty: Code of Practice Scotland*, Equal Opportunities Commission, March 2007

*Overview of the gender equality duty: Guidance for GB public authorities*, Equal Opportunities Commission, February 2007

*First steps on the gender equality duty: Guidance for GB public authorities*, Equal Opportunities Commission, February 2007

*Gathering and using information on gender equality: Guidance for GB public authorities*, Equal Opportunities Commission, February 2007

*Consulting stakeholders on gender equality: Guidance for GB public authorities*, Equal Opportunities Commission, February 2007

*Developing gender equality objectives and a gender equality scheme: Guidance for GB public authorities*, Equal Opportunities Commission, February 2007

*Meeting the gender duty in employment: Guidance for GB public authorities*, Equal Opportunities Commission, February 2007

*Meeting the gender duty for transsexual staff: Guidance for GB public authorities*, Equal Opportunities Commission, February 2007

*Equality Impact Assessment Tool (EQIA)*, Scottish Executive, November 2006

*Approach and criteria for Gender Equality Duty monitoring and enforcement in Scotland*, Equal Opportunities Commission, May 2007

*Equal Pay Act 1975 which was replaced by the Equality Act 2006.*

*Sex Discrimination Act 1975*

2. Dundee College:

Strategic Plan 2008-2011

Equality Policies/Strategies (Notes of Meetings, Action Plans, etc)

Staff Handbook (including Human Resources Policies and Procedures)

Student Code of Conduct

Student Learning Agreement