Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report - June 2023

The Equality Act 2010 was introduced to ensure protection from discrimination, harassment and victimisation on the grounds of specific characteristics (referred to as protected characteristics). For Colleges, this means that it is unlawful to discriminate against individuals or treat them less favourable because of their race, sex, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, age, marriage and civil partnerships.

Under the Act, the College is expected to comply with the **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**. This general duty applies to all of the College's activities relating to employees, students and service users and requires us to:

a) **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** (e.g. remove or reduce disadvantages felt by people from different groups);
b) **Advance equality of opportunity** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
c) **Foster good relations** between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

As a public organisation, under Regulation 3 of the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2011 the College is also required to:

- Have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty when making decisions, taking action or developing policy and practice;

- **Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty**. This is done via our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy available on the College's internet site, and:

- **Prepare and publish equality objectives**. The objectives should focus on what the College believes it should reasonably achieve to further one of more of the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty outlined above.

Review of Progress against Equality Objectives

Following a series of staff equality forums and student focus groups which commenced in July 2021, a revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy was shared with staff at a whole College inset session on October 2021 which focussed on the lived experiences of staff and students. This EDI strategy was subsequently shared with Trustees in February 2022 and the Local Governing Body in March 2022.

To support this strategy and ensure compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty, a number of equality objectives were prepared and actions to further these objectives. A review of the actions taken during the period January 2022 to June 2023 is outlined at Appendix A.

This report is separate to the information already presented to governors in other reports related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion such as the annual Safeguarding Report, Student Outcomes and Destinations, Learning Support and therefore the report does not seek to duplicate the detail of these reports.

Any concerns or complaints regarding breaches of the college's EDI policy are addressed promptly and appropriate action taken to prevent further instances occurring. The annual safeguarding report to governors outlined any EDI issues which have been raised either through Whisper, Smoothwall (previously ESafe) or the college's complaints procedures and the immediacy in which issues have been addressed.

The next steps

In September 2023, the annual report to Governors regarding Student Outcomes for 2022/23 will include identification in any achievement gaps for students based on protected characteristics as well as Bursary students. This will help inform equality objectives and priorities for the 2023/24 academic year.

As outlined at Appendix 4 below, end of year and in year data relating to student outcomes based on protected characteristics is readily available and monitored at SLT level. However, one of the priorities for 2023/24 is to widen the scope of quantitative equality data that is readily accessible to identify gaps in the participation of students in all aspects of college life based on protected characteristics in-year. This will enable appropriate action to be taken where any gaps in engagement or participation are identified.

Ruth Knight, Director of HR

In conjunction with
- **Sharon Hedger, Rashida Hassanali, Damian Higgins (College Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group)**
- **James Quested, Head of Bilborough Xtra**
- **Michelle Harvey, Assistant Principal, Student Support Services**

APPENDIX A - College Equality Objectives (January 2022 to August 2023)

Objective 1

To improve the staff and student voice in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion

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The actions taken below are in addition to the existing student voice feedback collected through an annual cross-college SPQ, Subject Showcase Student Questionnaires, Leavers Questionnaires, feedback from the student executive and safeguarding/mental health/wellbeing student voice questionnaires and focus groups. Staff voice feedback an annual schedule of staff meetings, staff surveys and the *OfficeVibe* system.

Action: To establish a series of staff equality focus groups relating to protected characteristics

To ensure that the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and objectives are informed by the direct participation of those staff most affected by equality issues, a number of staff focus groups have been held to gather information and share lived experiences both at work and outside. Ongoing communication has taken place outside of these focus groups with these staff who have also provided support for key student activities:

o *Staff Equality Forums in July 2021, September 2021, March 2022, June 2022, November 2022 (primarily focussed on Race, Religion & LGBT+ equality)*
o *Men's Forum – November 2022*
o *Women's Forum – November 2022*
o *Disability & Neurodiversity Focus group with staff – January 2023*

Action: To establish a network of Student Equality Ambassadors to improve the student voice in relation to EDI

In February 2022, 15 Student Equality Ambassador were appointed to inform the College agenda in relation to equality diversity and inclusion. The equality ambassadors attended regular meetings with the Staff EDI working group between the period February 2022 and May 2023 to share their insights and experiences regarding EDI at college and acted as the student voice by seeking the views of the wider student community. Specific consultation was undertaken with student equality ambassadors in relation to:
o EDI content within the college's tutorial programme;
o Embedding equality in the curriculum;
o Feedback obtained from student equality forums;
o Mechanisms for the reporting of equality-related incidents within college;
o An equality code of conduct for students to be introduced in September 2023.

The college has recruited new Student Equality Ambassadors for the 2023/24 academic year and a meeting scheduled will be in place for the year.

Action: To obtain student feedback via an annual Student Equality Survey

In consultation with Student Equality Ambassadors, a comprehensive Student Equality Survey was compiled, and students asked to complete this in May 2023. The results of this survey are currently being collated and will help inform priorities for the 2023/24 academic year.

This data will also provide a useful benchmark to review progress in relation to EDI in future years.

Action: To hold Student Equality Forums on an annual basis to raise awareness and increase the engagement of students in relation to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion.

The two forums held during the period have included Black and LGBT+ guest speakers, Q&A sessions and students working in small groups to provide feedback to the college on EDI issues. The topic for the most recent session was *"The importance of representation."* 92 students attended the first equality forum in March 2022, with 152 students attending the forum in October 2022. Students provided very positive feedback regarding the events and useful feedback was gathered to inform EDI actions and areas of focus.

Objective 2

To ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is integrated into the student experience and all aspects of college life.

Action: To continue to provide opportunities to highlight, promote and celebrate Equality Diversity and Inclusion with EDI Events and Activities

- The enrichment programme continues to promote and celebrate EDI at the college. A wide range of different celebrations have taken place during the 2022/23 academic year including: Culture Day, Black History and LGBTQIA Month, International Women's Day, Holocaust Memorial Day and International Day of Persons with Disabilities. This year there was also a campaign across the college to increase awareness of Ramadan. These events were organised by students throughout the college including Enrichment Leaders, the Student Executive and with the support of Bilborough Xtra.

- There is a wide range of clubs and societies already on offer that students can attend such as the Afro-Caribbean Society (ACS), the Islamic Society, the Christian Union and the LGBTQI + Society. Further additions were added to the timetable this year including Bollywood History, K-pop, African & Caribbean Dance, Don't Dis Our Ability (DDOA) and wheelchair basketball. Bilborough's Got Talent took place once again this year run by the Arts Award students. This event celebrates the talents and diversity of the college and is always a highlight of the year.

- The Student Support Team have continued to promote Mental Health Awareness week, national anti-bullying events and other network / support events including those for Looked After Children support.

- In addition to the staff focus groups highlighted above, on 8th March a celebration event was held for staff on International Women's Day on 8th March to celebrate women's achievement. Staff are encouraged to support the activities led by the Student Exec and Enrichment Leaders.

Action: To ensure an Inclusive Curriculum which engages students of all backgrounds and identities with inclusive teaching that allows students to bring their unique identity into all aspects of their studies.

- All schemes of work are designed to promote equality and diversity with sections highlighted where related content and activities are actively planned into sessions. Feedback from students as part of the College's Subject Showcase process includes questions regarding equality.

- Feedback received via the Student Equality Ambassadors and through the equality forums was that practice across the college was variable in relation to how well specific courses embedded equality into their curriculum. As a result, further action has been taken to ensure a consistence experience for student across all subject areas:
  o An inset session for Course Leaders relating to *Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Curriculum in July 2022* and the establishment of a working group following this session.
  o Further inset in May 2023 - *Embracing EDI: How to (meaningfully) embed EDI into the curriculum* which showcased examples of good practice from certain subject areas.

  This action will remain as a priority for 2023/24 and quality processes further developed to support progress in this area.

Objective 3

To ensure that all members of the college community have the knowledge and understanding of equality, diversity and inclusion to work as part of a diverse organisation.

Action: To continue to deliver INSET to staff relating to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Following the very positive feedback received from the whole staff inset session in October 2021, the purpose of which was to share the revised EDI strategy for the college and share accounts of the lived experiences of staff in relation to protected characteristics, further inset sessions have taken place for staff in relation to equality during the period.

o *Active Bystander Training for Staff in April 2022*
The purpose of this session was to provide staff with techniques to challenge poor behaviour in relation to equality so that everyone plays their part in ensuring that the college is an inclusive environment free from any form of harassment and discrimination.

o *Developing an Inclusive Curriculum (July 2022 and May 2023)* – as highlighted above

o *July 2022 - Whole College Inset on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*

This session focussed on *The Impact of Language and Microaggressions* and included sharing the feedback provided by students at the Student Equality Forum in March.

o   *Inclusive Leadership Training -* A number of senior managers attended an Inclusive Leadership Programme delivered by the AoC in the Spring term of 2022 and 2023.

o   *Disability (including neurodiversity) Awareness Training Planned for July 2023*

In addition to the above, specific members of the staff team have attended equality-related training relating to their job role, for example Learning Support Staff and HR staff.

Action: To ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded within the College's tutorial programme for students

The tutorial programme and tutor bulletin highlight key EDI events through the year and full group sessions are dedicated to themes such as EDI awareness raising, and activities related to protected EDI characteristics and positive mental health and resilience. Other tutorial sessions have dealt with topics such as voting, democracy, child on child abuse and promotion of Bilborough Values.

Specific EDI tutorial sessions following consultation with Student Equality Ambassadors include:
o   Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Tutorial Sessions for both year 12 and year 13 students in May 2022
o   Active Bystander Training for Students (pilot sign-up session) I May 2022
o   Students Equality Code of Conduct in September 2022
o   Introduction to Black History Month in October 2022
o   Microaggressions and being an active bystander in November 2022
o   LGBT+ and Pride in June 2023

Objective 4
To improve data collection, reporting and monitoring in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion and take appropriate action to address gaps in outcomes.

Action: To take appropriate action to address any gaps in outcomes based on protected characteristics.

The headline monitoring data for the college in relation to student outcomes for the 2021/22 academic year is incorporated into the college SAR and reports are presented to the college on a regular basis. This information contains details of student progress and outcomes with reference to protected characteristics and illustrates the following:

* That achievement and retention rates for students from Black and Asian ethnic minority backgrounds were higher than those students from White British/Irish/Other White although their pass rate is 0.1% lower when compared with that group.

* Similarly, the achievement and retention rates for LLLD students are higher than for non LLLD students although their pass rate is 0.5 % lower when compared with that group.

* There were no significant differences are no significant differences in the achievement, retention or pass rates for between male and female students based on 2021/22 outcomes.

The above illustrates positive outcomes for Students from Black and Asian Ethnic Minority backgrounds as a whole. However, within this broad group of students from ethnic minority backgrounds, differences between students from the different ethnic minority backgrounds which make up this broader group can be identified.

For example, achievement and retention rates for students from mixed race White and Black Caribbean backgrounds as well as Black Caribbean students are lower when compared to students from Black African, Indian and Pakistani backgrounds and White British students. However, their pass rates are in line or above the national average for all students.

To address these differences between groups, end of year data and in-year data has been scrutinised at course level and individual student level to understand the circumstances contributing to underachievement (including retention) and to identify any further changes to the way that programmes are delivered that may be required. Teachers and tutors have continued the strategy to provide targeted support to individual students. This approach will be reviewed when 2022/23 outcomes are available to identify whether further targeted intervention is required for these smaller groups during the next academic year.

Action: To continue to provide targeted support for vulnerable students and students with learning support needs.

As highlighted in the College's Safeguarding Report, the Assistant Principal, Student Services works closely with the Welfare Officer who has specific responsibility for management of bursary funds, Looked After Children, independent students and Young Carers. This adds an additional tier of support over and above that provided by personal tutors for these particular groups of vulnerable students. Wellbeing Coaches work alongside the college counselling service to support students with mental health issues and ASD and ADHD targeted support.

The Learning Support Team continue to provide specialist support to help students who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities to succeed. Students are encouraged to declare additional learning needs prior to or during enrolment, or at any point during their studies. Staff regularly make referrals to learning support if they identify that a student may have a learning difficulty. The needs of each students are assessed (either internally or externally as required) to ensure the necessary assistance is provided promptly. The learning support study room has been replaced by the new Wellbeing Hub adjacent to the staffroom where extra help/ targeted support is provided for students identified as having dyslexia or other learning needs including use of assistive technology.

Action: To improve the monitoring and reporting of levels of student engagement in all aspects of College-life (especially the most disadvantaged) to ensure equity and fairness in access and engagement.

The Careers and Work Experience Coordinators organise a wide range of activities to encourage participation of underrepresented groups including girls in engineering, an alumni programme of talks, involvement in Sutton Trust activities and other widening participation activities.

In the Autumn term, Bilborough Xtra applied to become an Inclusion Centre for sports. Its application was accepted and from this funding was awarded to increase the sports enrichment and the number of students from Black and Asian ethnic minority backgrounds who participate. This has enabled the college to now offer the fitness suite for students to use during lesson time. Students have free access to the facilities and also receive support from a personal trainer. They are offered a 6 to 12-week programme where they receive nutritional advice and set physical goals to achieve. Other great successes that have been made possible from becoming an Inclusion Centre include women's self-defence and cheerleading.

The college has been working to develop systems which enable equality information to be more readily accessible in relation to the following areas. This will allow improved monitoring at SLT level to identify any gaps in participation/engagement at an early stage:
o   Careers appointments/ work experience placements
o   Destination data based on protected characteristic
o   Enrichment take-up
o   Counselling and wellbeing appointments
o   Attendance at subject support

Whilst progress has been more limited due to the introduction of Cedar and other new college information systems, this action will be a priority for 2023/24 academic year.