

Leading Inclusion

A Guide to Good Practice in Leadership of Equality, Diversity
and Inclusion in the Learning and Skills Sector



This Guide has been produced as part of an East Midlands regional project sponsored by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS); the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA); and EMFEC, the East Midlands regional membership organisation for learning and skills.

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Leading Inclusion Guide

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1. Preface

When we published *Leading Inclusion: A Guide to Leadership of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Learning and Skills Sector*¹, in June 2010, we seemed to strike a chord with colleges and training organisations. There is evident good practice in equality and diversity in the sector, much of which is promoted by our organisations. Until *Leading Inclusion*, though, there had been less specific focus on the role and importance of leadership in ensuring that good practice becomes the norm and best practice is the ambition.

Following feedback from the sector, and building on the professional development work that has been undertaken by LSIS and EMFEC, we have sponsored a further guide which looks at how fourteen providers that have demonstrated good practice in equality, diversity and inclusion have acted to improve and succeed in this area.

It is important to emphasise that there is no one way to set and achieve high standards of practice in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). The inspection reports produced by Ofsted demonstrate that. One encouraging aspect of the work undertaken by the diverse providers represented here is that many started by recognising a particular need for improvement and acting on it. That in itself shows leadership.

The support of the Young People's Learning Agency has been appreciated as a partner and co-sponsor in this work. All three sponsors take their responsibilities for supporting good practice in this area as seriously as we know you, as providers, do. During 2011 both LSIS and EMFEC will continue to work with colleges and training organisations to identify common issues in equality, diversity and inclusion, aiming to share approaches and solutions.

We commend this guide to good practice to all providers in the learning and skills sector. Please share it, and discuss it, with learners, staff, and with the boards of your organisations that set the strategy and put the leadership in place. We expect and hope there are lessons to be learned from providers here which may be like your own organisation and also from others, whose leaders will have faced and tackled the issues you also face.

We encourage the continued sharing of good practice in EDI and would be pleased to receive it from you and to promote it, nationally through LSIS and in the East Midlands region through EMFEC.



2. Introduction

- 2.1 The author of this report recently had a conversation with the head of an organisation in the sector who had undertaken work-shadowing of a leader in another profession. She chose to shadow the captain of a large cruise ship. There were leadership lessons she expected to learn and there were also some less predictable benefits. She commented that she thought her own organisation's approach to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) was good until she saw how it was done on the cruise ship, under the captain's leadership.
- 2.2 For this "organisation within an organisation" – a cruise liner within a shipping company - EDI expectations were set by the company then managed and operated by the captain and crew. For both organisations the policies set the expectations at a very high level. In our conversation though, my colleague said that policies were far from being the most important thing. Everyone knew they existed but the most impressive aspect of EDI on the ship itself was how unspoken and integrated the outstanding practice was. It was "how they did things"; all the crew knew what was expected of them. This was in terms of both their own behaviour with other crew members and, of paramount importance in a people-centred business, how they showed respect for the passengers, or "guests". This was more than ensuring that the guests had their needs met, although some had an ailment or disability. It was, my colleague concluded, about ensuring all the guests felt equally important and valued. She witnessed this at work and was impressed.
- 2.3 In the learning and skills sector we often talk about embedding or integrating a particular value, like promoting EDI, into our working practices. Many providers do so. When this is most effective it is seldom in need of special focus, whether in a college, a training organisation, or on a cruise liner. It is "how things are done here"; it is "what we are". Of course, the policies set the framework and guide the standards and expectations. It is the attitudes and behaviours that make the difference to learners, clients and staff, though.
- 2.4 The Leading Inclusion Guide made a significant impact when published last year. Partly, that was a result of timing. It came a few months after the Equality Act 2010 became law and fitted in just before providers' annual self-assessment reporting activity was fully underway. Beyond its timing though, its focus on leadership seemed beneficial for providers. In particular, the evidence provided there that good general leadership has most of the characteristics of good leadership of EDI² resonated with many who have discussed the guide with its sponsors since publication.
- 2.5 The guide addressed the question: why should anyone be led by you? As the authors of a book with that title³ found when asking this question of a wider audience, it makes would-be leaders stop and think. Part of the answer lies in how a leader exemplifies the values of the organisation being led. More details may be found in chapter three of the previous guide but, in essence, leaders need followers. If their leadership behaviour encourages others to follow, then they will do so. As well as demonstrating knowledge and skills this often means a non-hierarchical, problem solving approach by a leader, drawing on the skills and experience of all in a team. It means authenticity in leadership, with consistency between words and deeds.
- 2.6 Leaders exist at all levels of an organisation, whether or not their job titles identify this. Authentic, values-driven leadership behaviour seems the right type for enabling colleges and training

2 Chapter 3 of Leading Inclusion: A Guide to Leadership of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Learning and Skills Sector. LSIS, EMFEC and YPLA, June 2010.

3 Why Should Anyone Be Led by You? Rob Goffee and Gareth Jones, Harvard Business School, 2006.

organisations to improve EDI practice, itself values-driven when going beyond compliance with particular laws or regulations; when the good practice is about “what we are”.

- 2.7 As well as living the key values there is also the need for informed leadership, setting standards and driving improvement. In the wider context of creating outstanding provision, Ofsted has described this as “scaling up the ambition”; establishing a shared purpose and ambitious goals⁴. It is clear that this approach is necessary if the EDI practice of colleges and training organisations is to move towards outstanding, or to maintain that level once reached.
- 2.8 The main EDI issue for most providers in the learning and skills sector is how to improve their practice, to benefit all learners, staff and the communities served. All providers wish to be compliant with the current legal or regulatory requirements and, currently, the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 is seen by many as a leadership focus. Moving on from compliance is an ambition for most, though; how to, and where to, scale up the ambition.
- 2.9 In this context, an outline is presented here of the equality, diversity and inclusion activities of fourteen providers. None would say they have all the answers. What they all have done is address, through their leadership decisions, most of the key questions of good EDI practice faced by their learning community.

3. Leading Inclusion: The Context

- 3.1 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) present significant opportunities and challenges to colleges and training organisations. EDI represents a set of values and the chance to show “what we are” and “how things are done here”. There is the opportunity to serve disadvantaged learners, as well as communities where skills may be the route to prosperity. At the same time there are issues of compliance with regulatory requirements, including equality law and inspection standards. There is also a constrained environment for funding and resourcing practice.
- 3.2 Inequality in wealth and income is recognised across the political spectrum as related to wider inequalities, although policies to address this differ. It is notable that both of the two government departments with a major interest in the performance of the learning and skills sector have signalled the importance of the economic role of education. At its outset as a newly-named department of the Coalition Government in 2010, the Department for Education (DfE) was stating two primary educational objectives: raising standards for all and narrowing the attainment gap between rich and poor.⁵ The Department for Business, Enterprise and Skills has similar priorities in developing adult skills, to improve the lives of individuals and strengthen the economy (see paragraph 3.7 page 7).
- 3.3 The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister noted, in their Foreword to the Schools White Paper⁶ (WP, p3), that “what really matters is how we’re doing compared with our international competitors...”. This document presaged the current Education Bill 2009-10 and was published by the Department for Education, responsible for the 16-19 age group in learning and skills (up to 25 for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities). The outcomes of formal education were emphasised strongly in the strategy.

4 Twelve Outstanding Providers of Work Based Learning. Ofsted, July 2010.

5 See for example Secretary of State Michael Gove’s letter to Ed Balls, dated 7.6.10.

6 The Importance of Teaching: The Schools White Paper. Department for Education November 2010.

- 3.4 The Foreword went on to state that "...no country that wishes to be considered world class can afford to allow children from poorer families to fail as a matter of course. For far too long we have tolerated the moral outrage of an accepted correlation between wealth and achievement at school; the soft bigotry of low expectations..." (WP, p 4). These are powerful terms for senior ministers to use to describe disadvantage and the vital importance of tackling it.
- 3.5 The Secretary of State for Education also addressed disadvantage in his own Foreword to the WP: "... it matters so much that access to educational opportunities is spread so inequitably in England. The gulf between the opportunities available to the wealthy and the chances given to the poor is one of the widest... far from opportunity becoming more equal, our society is becoming less socially mobile..." This in relation to how few of the poorest children make it to university at Oxford or Cambridge. He went on to add: "...Our schools should be engines of social mobility...But, at the moment, our schools system does not close gaps, it widens them..."(WP, p6).
- 3.6 Colleges and training organisations enrolling young people at 16 will recognise some of these characteristics of disadvantage within the compulsory school age system. Many young people achieve well up to 16; through their own efforts; with the support of their schools and families; and with increasing numbers doing so supported by a vocational provider at Key Stage 4. For those who do not achieve highly, as well as for those who do, colleges and training organisations have provided a second chance or another stepping stone to a fulfilled life and career. The DfE funds this post-16 stage of learning through the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA).
- 3.7 The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS) funds and regulates general further education colleges (which usually also receive 16-18 funding from the YPLA), and funds post-19 provision made by training organisations. For both types of provider this is done through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). DBIS published a Skills Strategy for England in 2010⁷. In this strategy the Secretary of State, and the responsible Minister of State, note that "...a strong further education and skills system is fundamental to social mobility, re-opening routes for people from wherever they begin to succeed in work, become confident through becoming accomplished and to play a full part in civil society... We need to give fresh hope to our young people, one in seven of whom is currently not in education, employment or training" (p3).
- 3.8 Although the focus of the Skills Strategy is on the requirements of the economy, a key principle is to promote fairness: "... Skills play an important role in creating a fairer society by promoting social inclusion and social mobility..."(p6). The strategy points out that: "... Skills have the potential to transform lives by transforming life chances and driving social mobility. Having higher skills also enables people to play a fuller part in society, making it more cohesive, more environmentally friendly, more tolerant and more engaged..." (p5). Elements of the Skills Strategy are being brought into law through the current Education Bill, once again indicating the cross-over of action for skills and action through education to reduce inequality and improve inclusion. Through the Skills Strategy, there is the intention to prioritise funding support for learners with very low levels of skills or the disadvantaged.
- 3.9 In the first year of the Coalition Government the policy context for the learning and skills sector in addressing equality, diversity and inclusion may be seen as one where the drive for efficient use of public resources is being aligned to the drive to reduce inequality of access and outcome. Related to these issues of education and training policy, post-16, there is the progressive impact of the Equality Act 2010.

Guidance exists for the sector on the requirements of this legislation, through, for example, the Equality and Human Rights Commission⁸ or through the events and programmes operated by LSIS.

- 3.10 It is not the purpose of this guide to provide a detailed introduction to equality law, though it is worth noting for colleges that a new Single Equality Duty is in place. This single public sector equality duty will require public authorities (including colleges) to: eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations. All publicly-funded providers should note that their funding bodies, such as the YPLA and SFA, are required to work to this duty in allocating funds, whether the recipient is a public body such as a college or a private/voluntary sector provider. Non-public sector training organisations will need to meet the other requirements of the Equality Act, in any event. The soon-to-be revised Financial Memorandum for colleges, and the terms of contracts with other providers issued by the YPLA and SFA, will reflect these equality requirements, as will contracts issued by the Department of Work and Pensions for its own programmes.
- 3.11 Across government, disadvantage, and the means of addressing it, may be seen as a generic term for the core EDI issues engaged with by the learning and skills sector. As an example of an initiative of which there may be more in the years ahead, the Cabinet Office took the lead in February 2011 on a cross-departmental activity: creating “Local Inclusion Labs” as a response to multiple disadvantages among adults⁹. This initiative combined efficiency, reform and the “Big Society” in actions to improve outcomes for people affected by multiple disadvantages in local areas. Locality was to be defined by those seeking to create a local inclusion lab. These sponsors could be businesses, community groups or local authorities, with one taking the lead. Among the non-governmental organisations involved in planning the local inclusion lab initiative, as Big Society partners, were the Community Development Foundation, the National Council of Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), and the Confederation of British Industry (CBI).
- 3.12 The local inclusion lab idea exemplifies community and locality initiatives of the type many learning and skills providers support. The Big Society concept is being developed by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG). This has responsibilities for neighbourhood and local regeneration which again often engage providers in the sector. Increasingly, regeneration activities will link to the emerging Local Enterprise Partnerships¹⁰ sponsored by DBIS and supported by DCLG. Local government itself retains an important strategic role in post-16 provision, without the previously-intended full commissioning function for education and training serving this age group. It also addresses equality and inclusion in communities.
- 3.13 The Coalition Government has stated that its policies will be driven by three principles: fairness, responsibility and freedom¹¹. These principles inform the Big Society agenda, whereby local people and groups act to address a concern or need (fairness) by taking responsibility and acting themselves, perhaps with public agency support, free of micro-management (a term used in the Schools White Paper) of how they do so.

8 For example, the EHRC Starter Kit on the Act: www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/equality-act-starter-kit. Also advice for Further and Higher Education providers: www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/guidance-for-education-providers-further-and-higher-education/

9 Resolving Multiple Disadvantage: leading local responses to local needs. Local Inclusion Labs: developing new approaches and current response to multiple disadvantage in the context of Big Society and Efficiency and Reform

10 www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/economic-development/docs//cm7961-local-growth-white-paper.pdf

11 See, for example, the introduction to Skills for Sustainable Growth, cited as reference 7.

- 3.14 Relating all these policy indicators to the opportunities and challenges of “scaling up the ambition” (paragraph 2.7 page 6) in leadership of equality, diversity and inclusion within the further education and skills sector, the following key points seem evident.
- A) Current public policy values emphasise fairness, responsibility and freedom to act locally
 - B) Disadvantage is one key concept
 - C) Closing the attainment gap is another
 - D) Local activity is intended to provide local solutions with local accountability
 - E) Efficiency drivers, and reductions in funding, will lead to a focus on priorities. Reducing inequalities of outcome is a key priority
 - F) For publicly-funded providers, regulatory accountability will remain and will support legislative and policy goals.
- 3.15 The important work done by colleges and training organisations in differentiating learners by type so that their needs may be met remains a cornerstone of effective EDI practice. This is reinforced by the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. However, it is more evident now through public policy than it may have been before to some sector leaders, that a “tick-box” approach to ensuring policies are in place, or equality impact assessments are undertaken, is insufficient in scaling up the ambition. Even ensuring learners and communities are “in scope” may not be enough. A comprehensive understanding of disadvantage is called for. In addressing the consequences of disadvantage in education and training, scarce resources need to be focused on improving outcomes. Often this will mean collaboration and partnership, to share the load and spread the benefits.
- 3.16 It is also worth noting here the comments made by the Secretary of State for Education when he wrote¹² to Headteachers and Chairs of Governors at the launch of the Education White Paper in November 2010. Among other points which focused on the importance of teaching, he stated that “making opportunity more equal” was part of the Department’s plan. He also commented that, in schools, “Governors – the unsung heroes of our education system – will receive the recognition, support, and attention that they deserve...”
- 3.17 Leaders in the learning and skills sector probably also feel the time is right for governors in colleges, and board members of training organisations, to receive an equal share of this recognition, support and attention. The leadership of the whole organisation starts at this level. Returning to the question in paragraph 2.5: “why should anyone be led by you?” it is evident that, as for strategic leadership as a whole, leadership of equality, diversity and inclusion will need to be seen as a living priority for boards and heads of sector organisations as they meet public policy priorities through their services to learners.

4. How the Providers were Selected

- 4.1 Providers selected for this guide were chosen from many that could exemplify some aspects of good practice in leadership of equality, diversity and inclusion. Both LSIS and EMFEC engage with other providers that are effective in this area; they also operate events to encourage collaboration and dissemination¹³. For instance, LSIS supported a number of regional activities leading to case studies of good practice in equality and diversity in 2009-10¹⁴. Most of these were of providers, mainly colleges, not included in this guide. As an example, one regional project at Orpington College produced an E&D Scorecard with Key Performance Indicators (see reference cited).
- 4.2 In selecting providers for this guide the sponsors, LSIS, EMFEC and YPLA, recognised the limitation of numbers and the need for a variety of provider types. Success in meeting the demands of the first year of the Ofsted limiting grade for equality and diversity at inspection was a significant criterion. Seven of the fourteen providers featured here achieved a grade one, outstanding, for equality and diversity from Ofsted in 2009-10 and one more achieved this early in 2011. Another provider had achieved outstanding in this area just prior to the introduction of the limiting grade and had also been highlighted by Ofsted for work done to support young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and for community cohesion activity: West Nottinghamshire College.
- 4.3 In seeking to identify distinctive leadership practice by providers not inspected in 2009-10, and in the interests of variety of provider type, several other providers were selected. Criteria included success in addressing challenging circumstances in which to lead good EDI practice, notably in serving the needs of particular client groups. The Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) is in this category. One college was selected because of good practice recognised outside the inspection cycle in addressing disadvantage in predominantly rural and coastal communities: Boston College.
- 4.4 In most cases the provider selected was visited by the author of this report. In two cases structured telephone calls and emails substituted for visits (RBLI and National Grid). Structured questions were asked of all providers but, as importantly, a dialogue was undertaken with each one, to help identify which aspects of good EDI practice were guided by effective leadership.
- 4.5 The outcomes of this dialogue with each provider are presented here as case studies. Each case study begins with an introduction to the provider followed by separately-listed examples of good practice, along with areas identified by the provider for improvement in 2011. The amount of information varies a little in relation to each provider but the structure remains similar. Each provider is introduced by a quotation exemplifying its approach.
- 4.6 There are seven colleges, including an independent specialist college; two local authorities; three private training organisations; and two not-for-profit training organisations. None of the providers would claim to be experts in this field. Indeed, the best providers recognise how far they still have to go to drive improvement and, in the term used by Ofsted and cited earlier, to scale up the ambition.
- 4.7 Where the identification of strengths includes a judgement such as excellent or outstanding, this is drawn from an independent source such as inspection unless indicated otherwise. In keeping with the view in section two, that good leadership practice generally can serve equality, diversity and inclusion well, there are some findings listed as provider strengths that may not obviously link to the

13 Websites: www.lsis.org.uk and the Excellence Gateway for exemplar EDI material: www.excellencegateway.org.uk/edresource. Also www.emfec.co.uk.

14 [www.excellencegateway.org.uk/media/ED/ED % 20Project % 20Report % 202009 % 20- % 202010.pdf](http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/media/ED/ED%20Project%20Report%202009%20-%202010.pdf)

EDI agenda. Beaumont College, for example, was found at inspection to provide outstanding value for money. This is important for a specialist residential college serving people with disabilities as the provision is expensive so value is crucial. Another example is Investors in People accreditation. Where staff are appreciated, supported and developed this in turn helps enable good practice in EDI to be created and sustained.

- 4.8 The case studies offer a range of ideas and approaches other providers may wish to consider for their own EDI activities. Clearly though, simply importing ideas from elsewhere will not work. The success of those providers represented here lies in the integration of this practice into their cultures and operations. It is what they are and what they do. The benefit of learning from their experiences is to inform and develop what you are and what you do.

5. Beaumont College

“There is equality of respect in everything we do...”

Graeme Pyle, Principal

Context

- 5.1 Beaumont College¹⁵ is an independent specialist college for people with disabilities run by the national charity, Scope. It was founded in 1977 and is located on the northern edge of the city of Lancaster. The college was inspected by Ofsted and received a judgement of “outstanding” for its equality and diversity in the 2010 report. This was part of a full suite of judgements at grade one for the provision inspected, for overall effectiveness and for capacity to improve. The college has also been judged “excellent” by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- 5.2 As well as making residential provision, Beaumont College offers services through Scope Inclusion Northwest. This is a domiciliary care service for disabled children and adults. It has an innovative programme of support for inclusion in the community and a focus on targeted learning opportunities throughout each service user’s daily routines and leisure activities.
- 5.3 The college reports that developing EDI to an outstanding standard was part of a journey that the senior staff believe they are still on...”the college was too disability focused...learners needed to engage more with the world outside”. The Ofsted limiting grade for equality and diversity is seen as useful in focusing staff on the right issues. Leadership is seen by the principal as participative and engaging of all staff.
- 5.4 The “Out Teach programme” takes the Beaumont College learning method out to schools, to enable young disabled people to sample the innovative and highly inclusive ways of working whilst still at school. College learners take their work to community venues and have a presence in the wider local community to raise awareness of the abilities of young disabled people. This is done predominantly through art and sport activities.
- 5.5 At the time of the Ofsted inspection Beaumont had 89 adult learners (aged 19+). Four were of minority ethnic heritage. The college describes its main offer as providing both residential and day programmes for learners aged between 18 and 65 with a broad range of physical and learning disabilities. “Our aim is to empower Learners to take responsibility for their own lives”. The college offers an extended curriculum with a strong emphasis on creative arts, communication and self expression. Beaumont has a Theatre Company engaging both learners and staff.
- 5.6 Approximately one-third of the learners attend on a day basis. In recent years the college has experienced a growth in referrals of learners with more complex needs and associated challenging behaviour. Beaumont offers a supportive and stimulating environment to live and study. It aims for all learners to increase their independence and gradually take on greater responsibility and control over their lives.
- 5.7 The college’s main teaching and residential accommodation is located on one site. The curriculum framework is individualised for each learner; at inspection, 31 were working on entry level 1 programmes and the remaining learners were working at pre-entry level. The college offers a range of external awards.

- 5.8 Beaumont College aims ‘to give its students confidence in living as independent young adults; help them to acquire the skills they need to determine their own lifestyles; meaningful preparation for the next phase of their lives as young adults; support in achieving an appropriate post-college destination; and provide services which are in line with Scope’s vision and mission’.

Main Successes in EDI

- 5.9 As care standards enable Beaumont’s students to learn and progress, these may be seen as equality factors. The CQC inspection report noted that:
- the college uses a person-centred approach to working with the students who live there. The work with prospective students starts several months before they are enrolled and involves lots of contact between college staff, students and their families;
 - the college prepares a detailed and sensitive support plan for the student. These plans are of an excellent standard and give the support staff clear guidance as to how best they can support each student; and
 - students are involved at all stages of the planning process so that they can ensure that staff know their preferences.

Educationally, successes¹⁶ include:

- the college has outstanding success in raising learners’ self-esteem and confidence and promoting self-advocacy;
- learners develop highly effective communication and personal skills, and are enabled to participate actively as valuable members of the wider community;
- a rigorous analysis of destination data clearly demonstrates that learners make excellent progress in achieving their long-term goals and in a range of national awards from pre-entry level to level 2;
- excellent use of alternative and augmentative communication systems gives learners the ability to make choices and express their opinions. This includes a project on assistive technology with BT, involving a General Further Education College (GFEC) and another specialist college, helping people with more complex needs develop their independence. The technology was launched at the BT Tower, London;
- the promotion of communication, social interaction and independence in lessons is particularly effective;
- each learner builds a Person-Centred Plan with staff at induction;
- target setting is rigorous and well informed by the outcomes of thorough trans-disciplinary assessments;
- A more functional timetable has been built around the needs of individual learners;
- teaching is outstanding. Tutors skilfully use a wide range of strategies to motivate, challenge and raise learners’ aspirations;
- the highly innovative and inclusive curriculum has a strong focus on disability arts;

- staff promotion of learner interaction in lessons is exceptional;
- assessment processes are outstanding;
- individual learner goals and targets are very specific, challenging and clearly linked to long-term aims in highly personalised ways;
- well-documented policies and protocols for staff assist them in meeting learners' needs; these cover welfare, communication and behaviour as well as formal and informal learning;
- all policies and procedures are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment;
- learners benefit from the excellent partnerships with local schools, colleges and national arts organisations. These include working with a local radio station, "Diversity FM";
- these links also provide highly effective support and training for staff;
- the partnerships also assist external organisations in their understanding of the needs of disabled people; this aspect has been developed as training for staff at a local Health Trust, including respect for disability. Social workers are also provided with relevant experience early in their formal training, to enable them to understand and respond to disability;
- work experience benefits learners and also gives employers insights, relevant to their business in some cases, e.g. retail or leisure facility access;
- arrangements for care, guidance and support are outstanding;
- transition planning is highly effective;
- inspirational and committed leadership from senior managers and governors; the latter support and challenge on a wide range of EDI issues, going beyond disability;

Note: the high quality of governance has been built from a weak base five years ago, with a particular focus on the need for well-informed leadership

- the promotion of safeguarding, equality and diversity permeates all activities in the college;
- a well-developed culture of informed risk taking and comprehensive, well monitored risk assessments ensure that these vulnerable learners can participate in a range of practical and community-based activities;
- meticulous analysis and evaluation of learners' performance identifies those at risk of underachieving and removes barriers to learning;
- learners contribute to the running of the college through the very active Student Council, student working groups and representation at Governors' meetings;
- learners achievements are celebrated within the college and with external partners, for example, at a dance project in Kendal attended by Beaumont learners;
- continuing professional development (CPD) for staff is well-developed, with mentoring, supervision and coaching support. At induction, new staff learn the importance of Beaumont's mission, ethos and values;
- experienced staff model the behaviour expected by all. The emphasis on CPD was seen as exceptional in the most recent Investors in People (IiP) re-accreditation;

- an Equality and Diversity Group advises on policies and provision. Learners are well-represented; the group also includes a Board member as well as staff from all areas of the college;
- if an unacceptable practice involving anyone at the college is noted by a member of staff, a “Concern Incident” report form can be used to bring this to the attention of management for immediate action;
- all information relevant to learners’ wellbeing or progress in learning is shared and standardised;
- college learners and staff will lobby externally in the interests of improving understanding of, and response to, the needs of disabled people;
- age discrimination has been addressed effectively in staffing;
- disability is represented positively by the staff; a quarter of all employees are disabled. A supportive and pro-active approach to supporting disabled staff has resulted in 25 % of the workforce declaring their disability; and
- Ofsted found the college to provide outstanding value for money.

Main areas for development in EDI

5.10 These include:

- ensuring that management information on the performance of individual and different groups of learners is analysed and evaluated more fully for equality and diversity indicators;
- ensuring that highly differentiated programmes are meeting the needs of learners and narrowing the achievement gap; this will include confirming the right match of learning programme to learner, for example in the arts curriculum with autistic learners;
- promoting services for parents and carers, including through the parents support networks and the college website;
- promoting diversity in teaching and learning, including through better resources;
- developing e-portfolios to enable learners to communicate their achievements to friends and families as well as staff;
- improving the experience of disabled staff at work; and
- improving further the wider staff experience, to support their work with learners.

The college aims to:

- increase the ethnic diversity of learners and staff; and
- raise awareness of the full range of equality and diversity characteristics and promote full awareness of the Equality Act 2010.

5.11 The College has identified as risks to its continuing good practice in EDI the fact that funding changes encourage localisation, not always appropriately. If taken to its full extent this approach would risk the long term future of the college.

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6. Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council

“We don’t use poverty as an excuse...”

Janet Jackson, Head of Young People’s Learning Service

Context

- 6.1 Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council¹⁷ created its Neighbourhoods and Learning Service (NLS) in October 2008 following the merger of two services, lifelong learning and neighbourhood engagement. The merger supported council strategic objectives to promote neighbourhood devolvement and tackle deprivation and unemployment. The NLS was inspected by Ofsted in 2010 when equality and diversity was judged to be outstanding.
- 6.2 At the time of its inspection Blackburn with Darwen had a population of 139,300 and ranked as the 17th most disadvantaged area in the 2007 indices of multiple deprivation. Just over 20% of the population are from minority ethnic groups. The proportions of adults who are disadvantaged by unemployment, low pay, or lack of no qualifications are higher than national averages.
- 6.3 NLS offers learning for social and personal development as community learning and skills for employability, to around 3,000 adults each year, funded by the Skills Funding Agency. Courses are available in the service’s three neighbourhood learning centres, the council’s employment agency and a range of community venues, including schools and community centres.
- 6.4 Courses are offered in seven subject areas: health and well-being; information and communication technology (ICT); art and craft; modern foreign languages, preparation for life and work; family learning and community development. Preparation for life and work is the largest area and includes literacy, numeracy, English for speakers of other languages (ESOL), provision for adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and employability. Just over 25% of courses lead to a qualification or offer this option. The NLS sub-contracts an element of family literacy, language and numeracy (FLLN) to Blackburn College and St Mary’s College, utilising joint planning arrangements.
- 6.5 At the time of inspection the Head of Service led the NLS, supported by a management team comprising: five neighbourhood managers; two senior managers responsible for skills, employability, quality and resources; eight managers covering projects, Skills for Life, inclusion and learning support, information advice and guidance, business development, quality, and policy and strategy.

Main Successes in EDI

- 6.6 These include¹⁸:
- the promotion of equality of opportunity is outstanding;
 - excellent strategic direction focuses clearly on learner engagement, skills and employability;
 - particularly effective initiatives have closed the achievement gap between different groups;
 - excellent projects have been highly effective in engaging the most hard to reach groups;

¹⁷ www.blackburn.gov.uk/

¹⁸ Material judgements here are taken from the Ofsted report.

- learners from different groups, cultures and those with disabilities work harmoniously and are supportive of each other;
- many learners participate in supportive social networks;
- a wide range of multi-agency groups work very effectively within the five neighbourhoods;
- partnership working ensures the wise use of scarce resources in ways that benefit learners. This includes employer partnerships;
- self-assessment is highly effective in improving the quality of provision and outcomes for learners;
- managers believe the council is committed to inclusion and support this objective through their work;
- the council has focused activity to support the needs of particular groups; for example, it runs SEMA, the Service for Ethnic Minority Achievement, as a priority project;
- the council's data management is seen as helpful to service planning and the analysis of outcomes;
- the Children's Trust has worked effectively to reduce NEETs, with a focus on ex-offenders and learners progressing from the PRU in 2010-11;
- transition support at 16+ has included close collaboration between the Youth Offending Team and local colleges to ensure individualised programmes are planned effectively; welfare packages support each learner;
- the borough makes provision for vulnerable groups not always accommodated elsewhere; for example, gypsies, Roma and asylum seekers;
- there is a holistic approach to the education service so that, although children's educational development entering foundation stage is well below national averages, by age 16 and 19 achievements are almost at the national average;
- this holistic approach includes close links between the school-age service, adult and further education;
- an example of this is services to learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD: those with special educational needs -SEN- in schools). Schools link closely with Blackburn College which has an assessment centre and wide-ranging provision, so that nearly all post-16 needs can be met locally;
- the local authority provides a sub-regional lead for LLDD planning, involving Beaumont College, the specialist residential college in Lancaster, in workshops;
- effective work is being done to promote routes to employability for SEN learners at the transition from school, through a specialised support service;
- collaboration is effective. For example, Tauheedul Islam Girls' High School has a long-term partnership with Blackburn College to provide post-16 learning; it also supports another school as part of a national Challenge Trust;
- good cooperation is also characteristic of the borough's 14-19 Partnership. This has supported a project to reduce gender stereotyping in learning that has won a national award;

- promotion of apprenticeships at the council is supported in conjunction with Blackburn College and with Training 2000, a charitable trust and group training association for WBL, working across the North West. This promotion includes work with male candidates to encourage apprenticeship take up in Childcare, and with females into engineering;
- Foundation Learning has been enhanced through provider partnerships to improve access and flexible routes to qualifications;
- a “skills escalator” is being developed by the borough’s Strategic Employment Group, to provide bridging study programmes linked to employment for 16-25 year olds;
- voluntary sector co-working includes the Prince’s Trust, for which the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service provides a Team programme;
- there is highly targeted community support, including a project for vulnerable girls providing somewhere safe to stay (“Operation Nightsafe”) and similar, aimed at stabilising lifestyles so that learning opportunities can be taken;
- the Borough engages Blackburn Rovers in its community learning projects, which also involve local schools and colleges; and
- value for money is good. Financial management is very good.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

6.7 These include:

- the productive engagement of white working class males is seen as needing improvement; actions are in place but impact is still to be determined;
- doing more for the gifted and talented through programmes to identify and differentiate them. This includes access to a project linking independent and state schools together to achieve high potential in maths;
- a greater focus on employability;
- maintaining ESOL as a coherent offer at a time of reduced resources;
- working with schools and other partners as they adopt responsibility for services, such as providing independent Information, Advice and Guidance;
- a restructure within the council provides an opportunity for an even greater holistic approach, linking education and skills to employment and economic prosperity; and
- continued work to increase apprenticeship opportunities and take up by those from BME communities and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.

6.8 The service has identified the following as risks to its continuing good practice in EDI.

- Removal of the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is seen as a huge risk in a town where 79% of local college students received the award.
- Reductions in the work of Connexions services reduces interventions with young people who are NEET, and already appears to be resulting in an increase in the numbers who are NEET in the borough.

- Overall local authority reductions in staffing will affect the management and delivery of some learning and improvement services.
- Competing priorities for resources will involve difficult decisions about which services to retain, and at what capacity, e.g. those linked to the Supporting Ethnic Minority achievement initiative (SEMA).

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7. Boston College

“Equality and diversity are the core values of our organisation...although we prefer to talk about creating a culture of respect...”

Sue Daley, Principal

Context

- 7.1 Boston College¹⁹ in Lincolnshire is a medium sized, general further education college with two campuses and a town centre site in Boston, four centres in surrounding areas and a new centre in Spalding, opened in partnership with the local council. Boston is in an area with many low-wage and low-skill jobs and a high proportion of migrant workers; the highest proportion, relative to the indigenous population, in the country. Borough council estimates range from 15,000 – 20,000 migrant workers in relation to a core population of 50,000.
- 7.2 The county has grammar schools with sixth forms. No other further education colleges are nearby. Most learners are white British, although 72 nationalities were represented in the college in 2009-10. Very few have black minority ethnic heritage, reflecting the local population. The college’s mission is: “Boston College: a learning organisation raising aspirations and meeting the skills needs of individuals, communities and employers through high quality education and training”.
- 7.3 The college provides courses and progression routes in all sector subject areas. Currently the most enrolments are in health, public services and care, information and communication technology and preparation for life and work. Numbers of enrolments for men and women are about equal for those aged 16 to 18. Amongst adults, significantly more women enrol.
- 7.4 At its last full inspection in 2008 the college received a grade two, good, as a contributory grade for equality of opportunity. Inspectors commented that “it has an outstanding approach to educational and social inclusion, characterised by its well maintained and developed links to take learning to under-represented and vulnerable groups over a wide, mainly rural, geographical area”.
- 7.5 The college regards inclusion as a huge issue, with the rural nature of the catchment. Lincolnshire is the fourth largest county in England and also the fourth most sparsely populated. Success has been achieved but this is at risk through increased transport costs for learners and the loss of the EMA. Lincolnshire has a poorly-developed broadband service, reported by the college as being the slowest in the country. Learning through Information and Learning Technology (ILT), whilst possible, is affected by poor connectivity. This has an adverse effect on inclusion. In addressing this, the college provides out-centres and has operated a mobile learning unit.
- 7.6 Leadership of EDI through governors is seen as very important. Much of the initiative has been taken by the principal, particularly when first appointed, when she reports that it was essential to show that inclusion had the highest priority. What the college describes as “the cultural environment” for best EDI practice steers staff appointments and staff behaviours; sends strong messages to students; and is seen as the sustainable way to embed the values of EDI, rather than just the words and the systems.

Note: The Ofsted limiting grade is not seen by the college as helpful, as it appears to treat equality and diversity as a separate element, rather than as an integral one. The case for doing this with safeguarding is seen as different as it was a less-well developed concept nationally at the time the grade was introduced.

Main Successes in EDI

7.7 These include:

- learner involvement to influence and shape practice; for example, an innovative scheme whereby learners made pledges to promote inclusion at a specially-convened event. A joint student/staff “Hate Crime” conference has been provided successfully;
- effective learner involvement in contributing to the Single Equality Scheme;
- a change in strategic planning through governors to ensure E&D is a guiding principle of all planning. All Board papers have a section on E&D implications and this is effective. Strategic and Operating plans all have specific E&D content from which the E&D Action Plan is derived. Managers report on E&D matters through the monthly Management Reports;
- productive working arrangements with the South and East Lincolnshire communities & voluntary sector, to identify need and promote access for learners;
- strong understanding of demographics and community needs which inform decisions;
- making progress in meeting the needs of the migrant worker population, currently mainly from Eastern Europe;
- action to support community cohesion;

Note: Boston was the lowest-ranked area in England on this measure in 2007. It has since improved, with an increased college presence in deprived neighbourhoods. Boston Council, however, has dropped the term “community cohesion” as it is seen as misleading. The college also tends to avoid this term in favour of others such as respect, individual rights and responsibilities, justice and fairness – seen as less alienating and ‘political’ and more resonant of a culture than a dogma.

- the effective use of data to drive improvement in equality indicators;
- active membership of the Local Strategic Partnership and seeking to be instrumental in achieving its inclusion goals;
- The Matrix Standard: Boston was the first college to achieve an excellence rating for this standard for information, advice and guidance. It achieved the Matrix for students, potential students, staff and external stakeholders simultaneously – a unique achievement at the time. The standard is also about raising students’ ambitions and aspirations;
- in the interests of inclusion, a leadership decision was taken to re-locate international students to the main campus, to encourage integration, despite setbacks in capital funding;
- staff satisfaction surveys are conducted. Ratings are usually high and show no material differences by type;
- CPD in this area is effective; it was mandatory but has since become embedded from staff induction onwards. Staff surveys show almost 100% awareness of the importance of EDI to the college;

- the E&D Committee has challenging targets, often numerically-based (e.g. for participation of particular groups). EDIMs are reviewed every year in order to address specific and current issues; and
- this Committee also commissions work from other individual staff and groups; an example is the Human Resources Group which dovetails its work on EDI with this committee.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

7.8 These include:

- ensuring Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) improve practice in targeted ways;
- increasing the impact of EDI strategies on delivery for learners – specifically on lessons – delivery of other services is seen as very good; and
- some improvements in detail are required in particular parts of the curriculum and this is identified in action plans.

7.9 The college has identified the following as risks to its continuing good practice in EDI:

- less income being available to support learning centres outside the main market towns; and
- proposals by Lincolnshire County Council to halve the transport subsidy and the national withdrawal of the EMA, both of which are seen as having a massive impact on participation and success rates, at a time when local and national priorities are to increase these.

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8. Grimsby Institute Group

“An eye for an eye makes the whole world go blind”

Mahatma Gandhi, as cited in a Grimsby Institute diversity publication²⁰

Context

- 8.1 The Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education²¹ (GIFHE) is a large general further and higher educational establishment offering a wide range of provision in all subject areas. Following its merger with the former Yorkshire Coast College serving Scarborough and district, in 2010, the larger organisation is known as The Grimsby Institute Group.
- 8.2 The Institute, which is the focus of this case study, is the main provider of further and higher education and vocational skills, including employer and work-based learning provision for North East Lincolnshire. It also serves large areas of the county of Lincolnshire, in particular the East Lindsey district, including Louth and surrounding villages and encompassing the coastal strip down to Skegness. Around one thousand GIFHE 16-18 learners are recruited from the wider Lincolnshire area.
- 8.3 The Grimsby Institute Group plays a leading role in promoting EDI within the region of Yorkshire and Humber. It has recently led the “Exemplars in Equality”²² project for LSIS, highlighting good EDI practice among a number of providers from around England. GIFHE has won three Beacon awards in recent years for its activities in equality and diversity; for promoting race equality and also for sustainable partnerships in 2007, then for promoting inclusion through its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) work in 2009.
- 8.4 At its last full inspection (in 2008, prior to merger) the Ofsted report noted that “educational and social inclusion are outstanding”. In 2009, equality and diversity was one of two areas at the former Yorkshire Coast College found to be inadequate at inspection. Within five months of the merger this had moved to satisfactory, with a number of Grimsby-led innovations in place.
- 8.5 Some of the most deprived wards in England are served by the Institute; those in Grimsby are ranked 34th out of 342 most deprived in the Index of Local Deprivation. The proportion of level 4 qualified people within the local economy is approximately half the national average (12.7% compared with 23%). GIFHE serves significant numbers of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, school pupils (14-16), young people (16-18) and adults, including employers and employees. There are also increasing numbers of international learners.
- 8.6 In 2009-10 GIFHE enrolled over 21,000 learners, of whom nearly 5000 were 16-18 year olds. Of the current learners on roll, there is a 50:50 gender split and 89% are of white origin. Population estimates in 2007 showed BME representation in North East Lincolnshire to be 3.2% (up from 1.4% in the 2001 census). GIFHE serves significant numbers of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, school pupils (14-16), young people (16-18) and adults, including employers and employees. There are also increasing numbers of international learners.

²⁰ www.grimsby.ac.uk/documents/diversity/DiversityBooklet.pdf

²¹ www.grimsby.ac.uk/

²² www.exemplars.org.uk

8.7 The Institute's mission is 'to be a world class, customer focused and dynamic provider of education and skills'. It has experienced considerable growth in recent years and is a local provider of higher education programmes through the University Centre Grimsby.

Main Successes in EDI

8.8 These include:

- full integration of EDI values and culture within the Institute - branded memorably as "FRED" (Freedom, Respect, Equality and Diversity). Learning and promotional activities are created under each of these headings, within mainstream learning wherever possible;
- a wide variety of internal activities recognising and celebrating diversity;
- meaningful contributory roles for learners in the planning and delivery of EDI activities;
- "The Learner Voice": a forum for all learners, equivalent to a local Student Union and contributing to EDI activities;
- purposeful engagement with external EDI partnerships locally, including leadership and coordination roles where appropriate. Partnerships include management of a local initiative to reduce NEETs; the Interfaith Forum; a "Hate Crime – so do we" group; and Communities Together for Racial Justice and Equality;
- the development of a databank of resources promoting EDI for use in teaching and learning, available on the VLE;
- examples of outreach work in offender learning to promote rehabilitation and encourage further study on release;
- embedding EDI into teacher education programmes and other forms of continuing professional development (CPD). Induction of new staff includes an "EDI toolkit";
- cross-curriculum learning opportunities in gender-stereotyped subject areas, such as Hair & Beauty linking with Engineering;
- promotion of courses to tackle gender stereotyping with local schools, leading to significant improvement in progressing females into construction and engineering;
- creating enthusiasm for EDI across teaching and support staff so that active involvement in, for example, celebratory events comes naturally;
- organisationally, the Equality and Diversity Committee links to governors and also supports a Diversity Group, which draws on expertise among staff to create learning materials and activities in the curriculum. Governors have contributed to EDI resources;
- Equality Impact Assessments are well-established and applied across all policies, procedures and structured processes;
- Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) have been used to address issues like BME profiling in certain areas of the college; "going beyond percentages" to look at participation in activities, qualitative improvements and actions taken;
- the institute is an accredited Investor in Diversity, through the National Centre for Diversity;

- the equality and diversity team of three reports through the Quality Division, locating this work in what is seen as the optimal place for learner benefit;
- as part of a strategy to narrow achievement gaps the Institute led on an LGBT equality project, resulting in additional guidance to providers in terms of how to support and retain staff of different sexualities and gender identities²³; and
- all college policies are developed to address EDI. For example, the procurement strategy requires suppliers to be compliant with equality and diversity standards.

8.9 In addition to the above, the Institute has a leading role in promoting EDI across the Yorkshire and Humber region through the East Coast Centre of Diversity²⁴, which it operates as a network. Through the East Coast Centre for Diversity a wide range of regional professional development activities are arranged and resource materials are made available. These include an on-line diversity toolkit. The fourth LSIS Regional Diversity Champions Scheme in 2010, managed by the Institute, brought together a wide range of colleges and training organisations to celebrate and learn from good EDI practice. Other 2010/11 events to date have included the Exemplars in Equality project dissemination, Embedding Equality & Diversity, and Autism and The Transition Trap.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

8.10 These include:

- further responsiveness to learners, including more targeted action on EDI trends in learner satisfaction surveys; and
- continuing improvement in EDI services at the former Yorkshire Coast College.

8.11 The Institute has identified, as a risk to its continuing good practice in EDI, the reduced funding opportunities for FE equality projects. This has meant a shift in the focus of the diversity function. More full cost work is contributing to the sustainability of the centre.

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23 Project 'Empower': visit www.lgbt-nelincs.org.uk

24 www.eastcoastdiversity.org.uk.

9. London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham

“Leadership in our service had to develop from static to dynamic. The best way to do that was to cascade it through our teams”.

Eamon Scanlon, Assistant Head of Adult Learning & Skills

Context

- 9.1 The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham²⁵ (LBHF) is full of contrasts. It has the fourth highest property prices in the United Kingdom and several of its wards are amongst 10% of the most deprived wards in the country. Whilst it has the highest number of graduate residents in the United Kingdom, 27% of adult residents have some of the lowest basic literacy and numeracy skill levels in London. Employment rates are relatively high across the area, although in some specific wards levels of worklessness exceed 35%. Some 22% of the borough’s residents are from minority ethnic groups, with large numbers of migrants from eastern European countries and refugees from Somalia and Eritrea.
- 9.2 The Borough contracts with the Skills Funding Agency to provide learning for qualifications and for social and personal development. Operationally, the Adult Learning and Skills Service (ALSS, the service) provides learning on behalf of the Borough. At the time of its Ofsted inspection in 2010 the service provided 986 courses to 6,312 adults. Some 23% of the learners were on qualification-based provision. The service employs 60 staff and a team of 190 part-time tutors to provide learning from one main centre, a number of satellite centres and 20 other schools and community venues during the day, evenings and weekends. The service provides learning in all subject areas except construction.
- 9.3 The service was judged outstanding for equality and diversity at its inspection in 2010. Also last year, Hammersmith & Fulham Council became the first borough in London to be awarded Beacon status by LSIS for adult learning; one of only six local authorities in the country with this status.
- 9.4 The service recognises that a judgement of outstanding for equality and diversity at inspection represents a journey with significant milestones in driving up the quality of provision. Three years earlier, the service had received a “Notice to Improve” from the then Learning and Skills Council, largely based on inadequate data, but also some areas of poor quality teaching and learning - an issue which was resolved in a way seen as creating a strength (below). The inspection report in 2010²⁶ noted that: “The service has a very clear vision and mission and is fully supported by the council. It is making an excellent contribution to engage learners into learning from the most deprived wards and communities to gain new skills and improve their life chances. Under the inspiring leadership of the head of the service and the efficient stewardship of the assistant head, highly experienced and qualified staff work extremely productively as a team to provide an inspiring learning experience”.

25 www.lbhf.gov.uk/Directory/Education_and_Learning/Adult_and_Community_education/
 26 [www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_reports/download/\(id\)/124709/\(as\)/53121_345786.pdf](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/oxedu_reports/download/(id)/124709/(as)/53121_345786.pdf)

Main Successes in EDI

9.5 These include²⁷:

- leadership focused on meeting the needs of learners and communities through services based on, and supporting, the local authority's key objectives. This addresses the mission: to be "a Borough of opportunity," and provides a focus on local regeneration through skills development;
- leadership of cultural change among the tutors and frontline staff, with delegated responsibility for quality and outcomes, supported by training in leadership and management;
- setting and meeting ambitious targets for learners' recruitment, attendance, retention and achievement. All tutors are fully aware of the targets for their courses and they work extremely well as a team;
- locating the service within the Housing & Regeneration department, which provides strong challenge, extensive support and rigorous scrutiny;
- working from the mission with a long-term plan to support deprived communities, aligned with regeneration projects in other services where appropriate (such as estate renewal or major retail development);
- a curriculum-led rather than data-led approach to improving management information systems (MIS) so that all tutors can ensure their teaching and learning objectives, processes and outcomes both inform and are informed by the service's data management and reporting processes;

Note: among other outcomes, Ofsted judged outstanding the recognition and recording of progress and achievement (RARPA); robust course reviews and highly inclusive, analytical self-assessment

- an excellent range of programmes, developed on the needs of learners and potential learners;
- support for LLDD learners is exceptional. More learners with mental health needs are benefiting from learning than ever before;
- ensuring that a core form of provision, Skills for Life, has been re-focused and improved substantially;
- ensuring that learners receive outstanding care, guidance and support both within the classroom and beyond;
- being extremely effective in narrowing the achievement gap and improving outcomes for learners;
- continuing professional development (CPD) for staff to ensure their knowledge and skills are meeting the service's aims well;
- appointing staff so that their race, gender and disability profile reflects the borough's wider community. The tutors are highly knowledgeable and aware of equality and diversity issues;
- effective engagement with a London-wide network of ACL providers to share ideas and use peer improvement processes i.e. the West London peer reference group, benchmarking provision and quality. Also London Language Network developments;

- engagement and development of learners as advocates of relevant parts of the service, e.g., the older learners' provision ("Agewell");

Note: this is part of an extensive contribution to improving provision made by learners and service users, including "Learner Champions" of particular programmes, working especially well in outreach and estate-based services. The use of the learner voice to improve provision was found by Ofsted to be exemplary

- evidence – based recording of how learners benefit from the service, including health and wellbeing improvements. This was noted by Ofsted as benefiting not only the learners but their families and communities;
- outstanding operational management, with monitoring that is appropriately challenging;
- effective use of particular funding, such as New Deal in Communities, and Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities, with elements of these resources being longer term, enabling projects to become sustainable;
- a focus on learners from marginalised and disadvantages groups, who make significant progress;
- achievement of personal goals for learners attending social and personal development courses is very high. Learners develop good employability skills. Many use them to gain employment or progress within employment. Progression onto higher level courses and further education is good;
- quality improvement is managed through a formal, regular cycle of activity;
- an efficient, successful fee policy, ensuring that income contributes increasingly to particular provision from learners who can pay, enabling fee remission to be supported elsewhere. The service was found by Ofsted to provide outstanding value for money; and
- strong, purposeful and productive local partnerships, including the local primary care trust. There is effective engagement with the large and successful local FE College (Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College). Extensive provision is also made in local schools and on estates, based on careful planning and assessment of need.

In addition, The "Learning with Adult Mentors Project", or LAMP, trains local residents aged 19 or over so that they can advise and support their friends, neighbours, colleagues or family members about returning to education and training.

Note: Service leaders take the view that equality and diversity means, as well as a focus on the most needy, provision should be made for the more affluent in the Borough, who will pay appropriate fees...this contributes in a different way to the development of "Big Society" ideas locally, as provision serves diverse groups and learning needs.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

9.6 These include:

- improvements to particular programmes, such as arts, media and publishing and languages;
- embedding of staff use of ILR across all learning programmes;
- extending use of the "Learner Journal" personal learning record to all programmes;

- embedding literacy, numeracy and language support is properly embedded in all lessons;
- further targeting of programmes with low achievement to act on outcomes by type of learner;
- continue to improve target setting and outcomes for Skills for Life learners;
- continue with CPD programme focused on specific EDI issues;
- develop Learner Voice in the community through a peer review and development (PRD) Community Development strategy review;
- further develop targeted provision in the community to respond effectively to local priorities; and
- ensure a mixed and balanced programme offer that reflects the wider community profile i.e. cost recoverable courses for those who can afford to pay, subsidising other programmes aimed at marginalised communities, and those that cannot afford to pay.

9.7 The Service has identified the following risks to continuing to serve EDI goals through its provision:

- national funding policies that disallow learners on non-active benefits accessing ESOL provision. Transitional funding is seen as being needed to ensure that providers can plan for this contingency;
- funding targeted at higher level vocational courses rather than first steps engagement could bar access;
- the development of merged services between local authorities, and with FE colleges, along with the setting-up of mutuals, may threaten existing provision which meets EDI priorities;
- the continuing development of an effective community strategy may be undermined by a market approach to learning and skills provision;
- streamlining of funding may reduce the number of providers delivering programmes in the community and leave possible gaps in provision. Certain marginalised groups would not be catered for effectively; and
- the reduction in budgets to support the training and development of staff, enabling them to deliver provision which meets EDI themes.

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10. In Touch Care Ltd

“Respect is at the heart of our approach to equality, diversity and inclusion”

Jo North, Executive Director, In Touch Care Ltd

Context

- 10.1 In Touch Care Ltd (ITC)²⁸ is a privately owned training provider based in Sheffield. The primary areas of training delivered by ITC are health and social care, and childcare learning and development. It also offers programmes in oral health and hygiene. ITC makes provision nationally throughout England, although the largest numbers of learners come from the Sheffield area.
- 10.2 In Touch Care (ITC) has substantial programmes for young learners, including significant numbers aged 14-16 on school links, and post-16s; at the time of the inspection there were more than 280 apprentices. Substantial provision is also made for adult learners, mostly part-time, including programmes for carers, assessors and mentors.
- 10.3 ITC’s mission is: “To provide outstanding learning opportunities and solutions within a vibrant, inclusive ‘College’ experience that leads to recognised qualifications and outcomes that contribute to personal development and the economic growth and social well being of our community”.
- 10.4. ITC operates as a business with strong social and community values. For example, it works with young parents as part of a community development initiative. ITC has undertaken projects targeted at particular groups under-represented in the care workforce and also those not in paid employment. This has led to an increase locally in those employed and contributing to the community, socially and economically. Another project to improve inclusion provided training for volunteers who were usually parents of young school-age children. This led to their achievement of level 2 and level 3 qualifications and, for some, employment opportunities in a local school. In addition, this work raised the level of engagement for ITC with its local community.
- 10.5 ITC is now developing a Social Enterprise with partners that will spread across three geographical areas in Yorkshire and Humber, and Derbyshire (see website). The main initial focus is on a district in Derbyshire near ITC’s head office. The project will involve opening a local vocational college and creating a learning disability village. To support the project “community scorecard” indicators are being developed, clarifying which particular needs are being met. Wider goals include addressing the NEETs issue and promoting employability through qualifications, including apprenticeships.
- 10.6 ITC has framed its objectives and progress goals in a Balanced Scorecard (see website) with quadrants covering the Business Model, Finance, Organisational Development and the Social Return. For the Social Return, these are essentially individual and community benefits.
- 10.7 ITC was inspected by Ofsted in 2009. At that time, it made provision for 283 apprentices and 438 learners on Train to Gain programmes. There were 121 learners on informal adult learning in preparation for employment opportunities and 91 part-time 14-16 year olds. ITC employed 43 staff at the time of inspection. The company was graded “outstanding” by Ofsted for equality and diversity as part of a contributory grade for leadership and management, which was also judged outstanding. Since the inspection ITC has continued to grow and diversify its services within the broad care vocational sector.

- 10.8 As a step forward in EDI from its success at inspection, in self-assessing its EDI performance for the 2009/10 year ITC decided to use the LLUK Equality Framework, which it has piloted. This covers areas such as Leadership and Organisational Commitment; Learner and Stakeholder Engagement; Learner Achievement, Access and Experience; A Modern and Diverse Workforce; Community Awareness and Equality Mapping. In each of these areas evidence for judgements must be provided. The Framework concludes with an action plan for further improvement. ITC reports that the Framework is a very effective tool for structuring self-assessment in EDI. Self-assessed judgements made by ITC for equality have been subject to external validation support by LLUK. The whole self-assessment process is also subject to peer review. Equality and diversity was judged by ITC to remain as outstanding in 2010.

Main Successes in EDI

- 10.9 These include²⁹:

- the strategic vision clearly reflects the needs and interests of users;
- the strategic and operational management to raise expectations and promote ambition is outstanding;

Note: ITC views its strategic leadership as particularly benefiting EDI practice;

- arrangements to promote equality and diversity are outstanding and well integrated across all aspects of the company's business;
- there is a clear focus on inclusion and community cohesion;
- the provision is outstanding in meeting the needs and interests of users;
- tutors embed equality and diversity into class sessions and also make these issues explicit where needed; for example, in learning related to the role of equality named coordinator (ENCO) for early years work;
- the performance of different groups of learners is monitored effectively, and with a particular focus on narrowing any gaps in achievement;
- ITC is outstanding at using partnerships to develop its provision to meet learners' needs. For example, there are effective employer partnerships for work experience;
- ITC also has a business exchange arrangement where staff are placed in partner organisations for their own development, including enhancing EDI practice;

Note: ITC has strong links with local schools in developing its 14 to 16 provision and encourages non-stereotypical choices

- ITC is also developing strong links with community and voluntary groups;
- ITC has developed good strategies to overcome access barriers, such as by providing evening and weekend programmes for employed learners with Skills for Life and key skills support;
- communication and teamwork are very good;
- specialist staff roles in equality and diversity are proactive and effective, fostering inclusive practice;

- staff work very effectively with partners and employers to uphold important inclusive values;
- the use of technology and other resources to promote learning and secure value for money is excellent;
- ITC is one of the first providers to achieve the National Skills Academy for Social Care³⁰ endorsement of the 'Excellence Standard'; this involves the end service users (care clients) and the community. In order to achieve the standard providers need to demonstrate, among other criteria, that EDI is intrinsic to relationships with learners, the workforce, employers and communities, and constitutes part of the continuous quality improvement targets for the organisation;
- the company actively promotes careers in health and social care to under-represented groups, through the substantial school links programme, careers services and community activities;
- ITC ensures end-users - the clients of social care - are involved in the planning and delivery of training;
- continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities are very good;
- equality is also a themed module within the CPD programme;
- ITC operates a peer review system with complementary WBL provider organisations in the North East and North West of England, which has been supported for EDI issues by a representative of the Sector Skills Council for Lifelong Learning (then LLUK). This supports ENCO development, among other priorities, in sharing and benchmarking policies and processes;
- data systems are utilised to measure progress on equality outcomes utilising relevant performance indicators. These can demonstrate clear outcomes that have improved equality in services and employment, as part of the quality cycle; and
- ITC's management system manuals are audited to ensure that they represent current legislation and the company's commitment to equality and diversity.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

10.10 These include:

- improving the links between EDI and safeguarding, particularly given the nature of ITC's area of learning – care. Although contributory judgements were “outstanding” at inspection, ITC does not find the separate Ofsted grades helpful;
- further enhancing staff CPD so that equality and diversity has the right current focus. Staff will be encouraged to identify their own needs and share their own knowledge, as some are taking qualifications relevant to EDI practice;
- embedding equality and diversity in procurement policies and practices;
- assisting employers, through ITC's extensive network, to improve their EDI practice and, in particular, the acceptance of males in recruitment to care employment roles;
- more targeted use of data to improve operational practice; and

- utilise the Executive Director's senior representation in the Association of Learning Providers to promote EDI in work based learning.

10.11 ITC identifies as a risk to continuing the enhancement of EDI practice the uncertainty over the future funding of adult learning, as the Train to Gain programme is replaced.

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11. Leicester College

“Promoting equality and valuing diversity”

A Leicester College core value

Context

- 11.1 Leicester College³¹ is the only general further education college (GFE) in the city of Leicester and one of the largest colleges nationally. The college has three main campuses, and offers provision in over 80 community venues and in partnership with others, as well as for employees of over 1000 businesses. The college states that it is committed to enriching the lives and creating new opportunities for all members of the community. This is reflected in the mission statement: “To deliver a wide range of high quality learning experiences to support the diverse communities we serve and the personal, social and economic development of individuals and enterprises. We believe in learning for success”.
- 11.2 The population of Leicester is very diverse with significant variation in its social, economic, educational and ethnic composition. This diversity presents a number of challenges for the college, not least, how it serves such a complex and changing population and the nature of its role and position as the major education and training provider in the local community.
- 11.3 According to the 2001 Census, Leicester City had the highest proportion of minority ethnic groups in the country at 36 % of the population. However, the population has been changing fast with newly arrived refugees and asylum seekers and migrant workers, particularly from Eastern Europe. There are also estimated to be around 2,000 refugees and 1,000 asylum seekers living in the City. The Ofsted Report 2011 (see below) noted that Leicester is the 20th most deprived local authority area in England and its unemployment rate is 11.5 % compared to 7.9 % nationally. In terms of community cohesion, Leicester scores moderately well against other cities, as the population is relatively mixed with few areas where one minority ethnic group is dominant.
- 11.4 In 2009-10, the college provided for 28,400 learners, 81 % of whom were part time and 19 % full time, delivering to 11,496 adults, 5,595 16-18s and 1,312 under-16s through partnerships with schools. It has continued to meet the needs of the diverse local population with 35 % of its cohort coming from areas of deprivation, 43 % from ethnic minority groups and 3,300 learners with a learning difficulty and or disability. With 3,550 ESOL enrolments, it is the largest provider of ESOL within the East Midlands region. Of the student body, 51.5 % of students were in “widening participation” categories, i.e. with a disadvantage. The college has around 1,500 staff and an annual budget of around £56 million.
- 11.5 When Leicester College was inspected in 2006 it was judged outstanding for educational and social inclusion. The judgement for equality and diversity was sustained and the evidence strengthened when the college was inspected in January 2011. The college was given grades of outstanding for equality and diversity, and community cohesion. The college has found the Ofsted limiting grade helpful in providing a focus on these priorities. Ofsted commented in 2011 that “Equality and diversity are outstanding; they are promoted extensively throughout the college and contribute enormously to community cohesion in both the college and locality”. The college’s two day nurseries for children of students and staff have also both been judged outstanding by Ofsted.

- 11.6 The college holds the LSIS “Leading the Learner Voice Award” for Community and Social Cohesion. This award recognises innovation and action in promoting equality and diversity within the learning and skills sector. The college’s activities have included providing a range of pastoral support, taught enrichment and celebratory sessions through its chaplaincy team of Faith Ambassadors. It has a broad network of links with local community organisations, a number of initiatives to improve the success of black and minority ethnic students, and many other activities to celebrate diversity.
- 11.7 The college’s efforts to encourage social integration and community cohesion, and the embedding of Functional Skills of English, maths and ICT in all areas of the curriculum, led to two Association of Colleges Beacon Awards. One was the OCR Award for Functional Skills and the other the Churches’ Award for Sustainable College Partnerships that Recognise Diversity and Develop People and Communities.
- 11.8 A “Community Scorecard³²” is utilised by the college to monitor progress in relation to a series of indicators. These indicators are split into three categories to show different areas of activity, with an overall quality indicator. Within the community indicator, the scorecard has sections for participation, range and responsiveness, reputation and influence, community engagement and sustainability.

Main Successes in EDI

- 11.9 These include³³:
- leadership and management are outstanding, placing the learners at the heart of the college’s work;
 - the college is an inclusive community that welcomes learners from exceptionally diverse backgrounds;
 - a culture of respect and tolerance is evident throughout the college;
 - the Board has specific EDI responsibilities and a member with responsibility for this area. Several governors have EDI experience outside the college; for example, one governor is the Chair of the Leicester Council of Faiths;
 - in 2009/10 the Equality and Diversity Committee structure was refreshed. The Strategic Committee chaired by the Principal, with representation from senior managers, students, the chaplaincy team and Staff Equality Forums drives improvements, working through the Equality and Diversity Implementation Group;
 - the college’s arrangements to provide individual care and support are outstanding;
 - initial screening and diagnostic assessment are very good;
 - teachers plan lessons very well. They give a high priority to equality and diversity;
 - learning mentors are highly effective. They deal with a wide range of issues, including emotional well-being and complex health issues. They have a comprehensive assessment process which identifies any EDI issues early in a student’s time at college and they then act on them;

³² www.leicestercollege.ac.uk/about-us/community-scorecar

³³ Material judgements here are taken from the Ofsted report.

- the college's partnership work is outstanding. Links with a wide range of community groups and voluntary organisations benefit learners greatly. Successful collaboration with other providers through franchise arrangements has contributed to the reduction in the proportion of young people who are not in education and employment;
- a new integrated data system has been developed to provide managers with accurate E & D data, in order to enable them to take timely action at a curriculum level. Action following analysis of achievement by gender, ethnicity and disability has successfully narrowed the achievement gap between different groups of learners;
- vigorous Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) are set at a curriculum area and college-wide level with accompanying action plans where gaps are most evident;
- the college supports a wide range of nearly 300 disabled learners in mainstream classes through its Inclusion and Disability Support Team. In addition, Leicester Communication Service (LCS) provides support to 40 deaf or hearing impaired learners;
- the college is working with "DisabledGo³⁴", a national organisation, which carries out comprehensive access audits. It then provides comprehensive access information to prospective disabled learners, staff and visitors and advertises staff vacancies through the links from its website to college publicity;
- the college also has an innovative partnership with REMPLOY and Leicester City Council, to support people with learning difficulties into work placements;
- an Inclusive Sports Week, facilitated by student volunteers, is held each year to include more disabled students, including those with profound and complex learning difficulties, in a range of sports activities. The college has held two Inclusion Conferences to promote disability equality, attended by disabled and non-disabled students, with disabled people as keynote speakers and facilitators, and a theatre group of people with learning difficulties;
- enrichment sessions delivered to all full-time 16-19 year learners are linked to themed weeks and are delivered by the Enrichment Specialists in each area e.g. on Black History Month, Interfaith Week, RESPECT Week, Anti-bullying Week, Preventing Extremism, and faith celebratory days;
- there is a Positive Action Strategy Group set up to increase the representation of BME staff and managers, with an agreed action plan. There are also Black and Minority Ethnic, and LGBT and Disabled Staff Equality Forums which act as support groups, promote equality issues and identify areas for improvement for the Single Equality Scheme;
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in EDI is mandatory at induction for new staff, who also benefit from an "Introduction to E&D" course which has to be undertaken within 6 months of appointment;
- there are also focused EDI sessions on staff development days; for example, training in "Preventing Extremism" has been provided for managers and the college-wide Leadership Team, and on forced marriage and honour based violence for the Learning Mentors;
- customised training has been created for curriculum areas on embedding E&D in teaching and learning. Schemes of work and lesson observation records have EDI sections;
- there is a peer mentoring programme for Black students currently being piloted with Leicester University African Caribbean Society students;

- EDI has been successfully embedded into the quality assurance processes, and underpins the new SAR format, with Effectiveness Panels taking a lead on monitoring how successful each area has been. The internal lesson observation process has a strong focus on equality and diversity and functional skills, and on learners and learning;
- the HR department analyses the recruitment and the workforce profile of each department by gender, ethnicity, age and disability. It is in the process of introducing monitoring on grounds of religion and belief, and sexual orientation;
- the college works with the Black Leadership Initiative to develop staff and provided positive action opportunities through the “First Steps in Leadership” programme and by offering initial teacher training courses in outreach bases in ethnic minority communities;
- the “Breaking the Mould Project”, previously funded through Aim Higher, is an annual programme offering non-stereotypical taster sessions to Year 9 pupils in particular vocational areas (e.g. girls into construction, Black and Asian learners into Hair and Beauty). This has had positive feedback from participating schools. Other Aim Higher-style programmes continue to be utilised for raising aspirations;
- in Work Based Learning there have been encouraging improvements in representation. The proportion of BME learners on apprenticeships has risen from 5.5% in 06/07 to 13.3% in 09/10 and the percentage of females from 17.7% in 06/07 to 34.7% in 09/10;
- a similar trend is evident in Train to Gain, where the percentage of BME starts went from 13.2% in 06/07 to 28.3% in 09/10 and females from 4.4% in 06/07 to 46% in 09/10;
- the college has highly effective arrangements to enable learners to be engaged in decision-making processes. Many improvements to provision have resulted from learner voice contributions in most curriculum areas;
- the college has a comprehensive learner voice system involving over 600 course representatives and is part of a NUS pilot aimed at including marginalised learners in the course representative system. Student Union officers now have specific training in EDI and safeguarding and the Student Union Executive includes officers for particular equalities groups, an Interfaith officer and a Work Based Learning Officer role to represent these groups of learners;
- a “Catch Up Club” has been established to support Looked After Young People run by the Learner Engagement and Enrichment Team and Learning Mentors, with a programme of support with academic work and social activities;
- a Refugee and Asylum Seeker Student Group has been established, which acts as a support group but also plans activities and raises issues of concern;
- the college initially developed a Community Cohesion Plan (for which it gained a Beacon award) but has now embedded the actions into its Single Equality Scheme, sharing good practice with other providers; and
- college publicity reflects strong EDI imagery. The staff survey showed that 76% of staff (up 9% on the previous year) believe the college environment (displays etc) illustrates a commitment to EDI.

Areas for Improvement

11.10 These include:

- enhancing the range of electronic mechanisms available for learners to express their views on the college and further develop the feedback mechanisms;
- acting as a pilot college for the NUS Course representatives project to improve the representation of harder to reach learners e.g. PMLD, WBL;
- undertaking further work on ensuring that disabled and non-disabled learners mix better through the “Inclusion Champions” training programme; and
- taking action to improve learners’ understanding of equality and diversity in certain areas of Work based learning.

11.11 The college has identified as risks, to sustaining its performance in EDI, the changing economic climate, reduced public sector funding and possible reductions in staffing and resources. These may make the increased level of activity on EDI over the last few years difficult to sustain. In addition national funding decisions (EMA, ESOL fee policy etc) may particularly affect certain groups of people, potentially impacting on the diversity of the college and on retention rates for particular groups of students

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12. National Grid plc

“We need to create the next generation of jobs and get people interested in science and technology, as well as foster the talent of our existing workforce, including through embracing inclusion and diversity, giving them every opportunity to reach their full potential”

Steve Holliday, Chief Executive, National Grid

Context

- 12.1 National Grid is an international energy company, delivering gas and electricity across Great Britain and north eastern USA. National Grid owns the high-voltage electricity transmission network in England and Wales and operates the system across Great Britain. It also owns and operates the high pressure gas transmission system in Britain and its distribution business delivers gas to 11 million homes and businesses.
- 12.2 National Grid promotes inclusion and diversity actively throughout its workforce³⁵. It also seeks to contribute to the local communities where it operates. This corporate approach is reflected in its education and training programmes.
- 12.3 The Ofsted inspection report for National Grid in 2010 judged equality and diversity as outstanding. This was part of a suite of grade ones across all the areas inspected. National Grid has received awards in the UK for its inclusion practice including, for the second year running, being recognised as one of Stonewall’s Top 100 Employers in the UK for LGBT support; a “Women Empowered” award; and Opportunity Now’s Inclusive Culture award, recognising an initiative that is said by the company to be driving change at an organisational level.
- 12.4 The company’s key performance indicator in this area is the number of female and ethnic minority employees. This also includes the number of female and ethnic minority employees in the management team. Data for this performance indicator are published on the National Grid website.
- 12.5 At the time of its Ofsted inspection in early 2010 National Grid had 124 advanced apprentices across its gas and electricity operations. Directly employed and sub-contractor staff support the apprenticeship programme nationally for both on- and off-the-job training. All apprentices are employed and, subject to satisfactory apprenticeship completion, continue in their chosen job role. Some training is provided by partners.
- 12.6 National Grid aims to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity - its preferred term. The company has an Inclusion Charter (see website). This has a strong focus on meeting the needs and potential of individuals, along with their own contribution to behaviour and standards in this area. The value of respect permeates this charter. Expectations for, and of, apprentices in their learning reflect the whole-company emphasis on inclusion and diversity.
- 12.7 The company operates a Framework for Responsible Business (see website), based on seven values. One of these is “valuing an inclusive, diverse and talented workforce”.

Main Successes in EDI

12.8 These include³⁶:

- the promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding;
- the company has very high expectations for apprentices and staff;
- an excellent range of initiatives widens participation and promotes a strong culture of inclusiveness;
- learners have a particularly good knowledge of equality and diversity issues;
- innovative initiatives are in place to widen participation;
- senior executives and managers provide outstanding leadership and management. They promote high standards of learning and skills;
- very good use of management information is made to compare the performance of different groups of learners;
- self-assessment is extremely accurate and evaluative;
- the company works very effectively with partners including other employers, colleges, schools and sector skills groups, to meet the needs of young people;
- the support for learners is particularly good, involving individual mentors;
- learners discuss fully equality, diversity, health and safety aspects in the context of their working environment;
- very good opportunities exist for learners to influence programmes;
- staff and learners have particularly high levels of awareness of equality and diversity, which learners' reviews and staff training regularly reinforce;
- the company Board and managers have inclusion and diversity training and act to achieve priority outcomes. For example, the chairman of National Grid launched a 'global inclusion fortnight', to raise awareness of diversity, in 2009;
- senior managers set demanding targets to widen participation of under-represented groups
- staff and learners have particularly high levels of awareness of equality and diversity, which learners' reviews and staff training regularly reinforce;
- a wide range of initiatives to encourage women and minority ethnic groups in to engineering are in place and representation is currently in line with national averages. Studies are in place to explore increasing recruitment from these groups;
- the company has introduced secondments from minority ethnic groups to assist in widening participation;
- excellent systems are in place to analyse regularly the performance of different groups of learners including at each stage of the recruitment process, to inform future inclusion strategies;
- strict anti-bullying and harassment procedures are in place and implemented successfully;

- regular “respect” surveys take place and show National Grid to be a well-regarded and inclusive employer;
- National Grid makes very good use of strategic alliances to extend its education and training aims through careers pathways and progression into further and higher education;
- apprenticeship recruitment practices utilise diversity indicators from application, through interviews and assessment centres to the offer of role;
- National Grid has pioneered an offender training and employment programme which has had significant measurable impacts on reducing re-offending;
- learner induction emphasises inclusion and diversity. It utilises professional actors to illustrate these issues through drama, promoting debate and understanding;
- on-programme reviews with apprentices use standardised inclusion and diversity questions. There are also learner surveys three times p.a. Responses are checked and acted upon;
- apprentices completing their qualifications and progressing to roles within the company are tracked for 10 years for retention and promotion, using diversity indicators;
- Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) are used and acted upon effectively;
- apprentices have places on the company’s Quality Improvement Group; and
- one company initiative is ‘School Power’, where its employees are leading a programme of activities designed to inspire and motivate children to learn about science and technology.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

12.9 These include:

- continue to review marketing of the apprenticeship programme to increase the participation of women and minority ethnic groups;
- identify other providers of technician apprenticeships who have been particularly successful in this area of recruitment to share good practice; and
- advise partners in recruitment of apprentices of the company’s current inclusion and diversity priorities and continue to monitor impact.

12.10 Risks to continuing to enhance diversity in the expansion of recruitment of minority groups would relate to the economic environment for business.

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13. Newham College

“We have the most diverse community in England”

Newham self-assessment report

“Newham College has a fantastic commitment to equality and diversity”

Wilson Igbeneka, Student Union President

Context

- 13.1 Newham College of Further Education³⁷ (NCFE) is a large general further education college in the London Borough of Newham, East London. There are two main campuses in East Ham and Stratford and six local neighbourhood and specialist learning centres, integrated with partners’ and community activities. The college has a range of collaborative partners for its substantial adult skills programmes. The college has five designated specialist vocational centres. It provides vocational and academic programmes for young people and adults across the curriculum, with over 10,000 learners to date in 2010-11, of whom around 3,000 are full time. Nearly 80% of learners are adults.
- 13.2 The college has established the University Centre Stratford, to develop undergraduate provision of its own.
- 13.3 Newham is an area of extreme and multiple deprivation; it is rated the 6th most deprived English local authority district. It is an area of very high population density (ranked 42nd out of 354 boroughs in terms of population size), and has amongst the highest levels of population mobility in the UK. Newham is the most ethnically diverse community in England (Simpson’s Diversity Index). In 2007, 61% of the local population were from ethnic minority groups compared with 30% for London as a whole. Over 100 languages are spoken in Newham, and data from the Benefits Agency and the health authority indicates that there are at least 15,000 refugees.
- 13.4 Newham has the youngest population in London, with 41 per cent under 25 years of age, and the highest rate of birth. Child poverty, including the risk to health, is the second worst in England. Unemployment in Newham was at 21% in February 2010, considerably above the rate of 15.4% for London. In addition, the number of people who were economically inactive is also high at 35.4%, compared to 25% for London. There is now a significant number of families in Newham with inter-generational unemployment, and therefore no culture or expectation of employment.
- 13.5 Employment in Newham is largely within micro, small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), with a large concentration being ethnic-minority owned. Many providers target hard-to-reach learners. Newham also does this, but targets hard-to-reach employers as well. Local investment for the Olympics in 2012 is providing employment opportunities, for which the college is seeking to prepare learners from across the community.
- 13.6 The college is strongly focused on its partnerships for the benefit of learners. In turn, the London Borough of Newham’s Adult Learning Service is itself recognised through the Ofsted Good Practice Database³⁸ for the benefits its own partnership work brings to learners and the community through collaboration with the college. This includes building a network of community learning centres offering courses through both providers – the Council and the college. These have broad access

37 www.newham.ac.uk

38 www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=goodpracticdatabase

arrangements, participation from across the community and good rates of qualification success. Efficiencies of operation have also been gained. The Newham Foundation, a registered charity jointly owned by the College and Newham Council, has been established to benefit residents.

- 13.7 NCFE operates an open access policy on the basis of principle and applies the minimum entry criteria for courses to ensure the broadest possible take-up across the communities served. In doing this it also maintains good quality standards. The college was inspected by Ofsted in 2009 and was judged as outstanding overall. The college also received what was then a contributory grade of outstanding for its equality of opportunity. NCFE has identified that learner involvement was a key part of its inspection success. The college has won several awards, including being designated as a Beacon College by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service after its Ofsted inspection in June 2009.
- 13.8 The college was ranked 32nd in Stonewall’s top 100 employers in 2010 – a definitive national benchmarking of Britain’s top employers for lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) staff . The College is also a recognised “Age Positive” champion and has become one of a few employers to be recognised with the Investors in People Gold Award and then subsequently the Champion award – recognition of how the College develops, involves and supports staff.

Main Successes in EDI

- 13.9 These include³⁹:
- governors are representative of the local community and provide outstanding support and challenge for the college;
 - leadership and management are outstanding. Leadership is clear and purposeful;
 - equality of opportunity is outstanding and its key principles are intrinsic to the college provision;
 - learners make an outstanding contribution to the college and local communities;
 - NCFE has responded well to equalities legislation, typically with good practice;
 - diversity themes are incorporated very well into teaching and learning in most curriculum areas;
 - the quality of provision is outstanding. Teaching and learning are good;
 - NCFE has very effective formal and informal systems to monitor and continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning;
 - the college’s modular provision and its open access admission policy are designed to ensure accessibility at all levels by a wide range of students from the age of 14 onwards;
 - manageable units of study offer students good opportunities for progression and they are supported well to succeed in their studies;
 - there is little difference in the comparative achievement of different learner groups;
 - success rates for most minority ethnic groups often exceed national averages for similar colleges (see also areas for improvement);
 - success rates for black Caribbean and white British learners aged 16 to 18, at around 82 % have improved significantly in 2009/10 from 2008/09 which had a success rate of around 65 %;

- there are no significant variations in success rates by gender;
- success rates overall for learners with learning difficulties/disabilities are higher than for the college overall and are improving;
- similarly, learners receiving additional support often perform better than all learners in their particular group;
- progression for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good;
- the student representative system and suggestions from learners are used well to improve quality. NCFE has many ways of formally and informally involving learners in quality assurance;
- equalities monitoring is extensive and actions for improvement are prompt;
- learners treat each other, and staff, with great respect;
- the college is a calm and harmonious environment;
- NCFE's response to meeting the needs and interests of learners is outstanding;
- the initial assessment of learners' support needs is thorough and follow-up support is timely;
- learning activity plans and schemes of work are comprehensive; activities and strategies include the promotion of equality and diversity;
- the college's own progression and employability framework is particularly effective in attracting learners from exceptionally diverse and often disadvantaged backgrounds;
- arrangements for identifying and supporting learners with additional learning needs are very thorough;
- learners make an outstanding contribution to the college and local communities;
- awareness of local labour market needs is particularly strong. It includes making provision in niche sectors;
- strategic planning and operational decision making are very effective and highly inclusive of managers and staff;
- the college has a secular approach which has proved successful in maintaining a harmonious and productive environment for learners; and
- there is an extensive range of continuing professional development activities with a focus on diversity.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

13.10 The main focus in 2010-11 has been to continue to monitor achievement by ethnicity and improve it where necessary.

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14. Royal British Legion Industries LTD

“To empower individuals to find and sustain work – promoting diversity, inspiring ability and enabling success”

RBLI Mission Statement

Context

- 14.1 Royal British Legion Industries Ltd⁴⁰ (RBLI) was established in 1919 to provide treatment, training and rehabilitation for ex-Services personnel suffering from tuberculosis. Over the years, it has evolved to provide employment and employment-related services to anyone with a disability or health condition, regardless of Services connection, and a range of welfare, healthcare and housing solutions to the Armed Forces community. RBLI has 13 offices across Kent, Surrey, Sussex, and Newcastle. It is a registered charity based in the RBLI village in Aylesford, Kent.
- 14.2 RBLI has held several contracts with publicly funded bodies including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to deliver a range of programmes for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and long-term health conditions. RBLI held the Workstep contract since April 2001-2011 and acquired several contracts in various parts of the country from other providers. RBLI also delivers other welfare to work programmes funded by the DWP. These provide support to both those trying to get back to work and to employers aiming to retain staff and manage sickness absence. Approximately 60% of the RBLI work is publicly funded. Third sector and public sector sub-contractors extend RBLI's reach in providing some of its services.
- 14.3 RBLI combines business activities with charitable values to achieve its mission of supporting people with disabilities, health conditions and welfare needs in the modern world. It provides a wide and diverse range of services including signs production, pallet manufacture, print and mailing services, nursing home care, and assisted and supported living schemes. Amongst other activities, RBLI was the leading supplier in 2010 of trackside signage to the rail industry and is one of Network Rail's main suppliers. RBLI is working with the Army to establish one of four Recovery Capability Centres planned to ensure that wounded, injured and sick soldiers receive good quality care and support.
- 14.4 The charity's aim is to provide an environment where those living in the community are encouraged to achieve as much independence as possible. Although many of the RBLI's services are delivered on an outreach basis, at its home in Aylesford it has a wide range of accommodation for ex-Service men and women, and their families, which form the basis of a community providing support to over 500 residents. RBLI maintains a high-dependency care home, Gavin Astor House, which received the highest 3 star rating in 2010 from the Care Quality Commission. The Employment Solutions division of RBLI supported 10,000 people seeking work in 2009-10 and helped more than 2,000 people into meaningful sustainable employment.
- 14.5 The charity was inspected by Ofsted in 2009 and was graded “good” for equality of opportunity. Of the 777 places funded by DWP at that time, 537 participants were based in the South East, 75 in Essex and Hertfordshire, 120 in the North East and 45 in Bristol. Some 718 participants were working with various external organisations and employers. RBLI is currently collaborating with partner organisations to help deliver the government's new Work Programme in 2011.

- 14.6 RBLI received the top grade (Strong) on a four grade scale in a DWP Provider Assurance Team (PAT) audit conducted in December 2010. The audit covered contractual compliance and processes against contracts, as well as core delivery practices to clients. RBLI viewed this as confirming its position as a robust, data-secure provider which delivers as promised and has the training, systems and ethos to ensure compliancy with contract objectives.
- 14.7 RBLI has strong links with Kent County Council (Kent CC), sharing a mutual ambition to 'do more' together to assist disabled people back into employment and support those from the Armed Forces community. The RBLI Welfare team was awarded an 'A' grading by Kent CC for its performance in 2010 for delivering the Supporting People Programme⁴¹ (assisting disadvantaged people with housing). RBLI has also received a Kent business award for customer care.
- 14.8 RBLI has recently been assessed and accepted as a full member of Social Firms UK,⁴² a charity formed in 1999 to lead the development of the social firms sector in the UK. Social Firms UK has three values: Enterprise (a commercial activity focus); Employment (a focus on employing disadvantaged people); and Empowerment (a commitment to integrating disadvantaged people in the open labour market). This recognition confirms that RBLI operates under the Social Firms model, acknowledging that RBLI's values and objectives for its beneficiaries are at the forefront of its business. One of RBLI's main social purposes is to create real, good quality jobs with opportunities for training and development to severely disadvantaged people, in a commercially-focused environment.

Main Successes in EDI

- 14.9 These include⁴³:
- RBLI has a clear direction and vision for its welfare to work programmes;
 - its strategic leadership and operational management are good;
 - communications and relationships are excellent;
 - RBLI policies, mission statement, values and core objectives contain explicit references to key EDI messages;
 - participants make good progress in their job roles and in developing employability skills;
 - participants receive highly individual support from the advisers and employers;
 - there is a good customised programme that matches participants' and employers' needs;
 - the culture of continuous improvement is very strong throughout RBLI;
 - audits and action planning as well as sharing of good practice, are particularly strong;
 - there is good progression and development of employability skills;
 - job coaching is highly effective;
 - employment advisers closely match the skills, aspirations and interests of participants to employers and local job opportunities;

⁴¹ www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/HomeAndHousingOptions/SupportedHousing

⁴² socialfirmsuk.co.uk/

⁴³ Material judgements here are from the Ofsted report or similar as cited in the text.

- RBLI has particularly strong links with over 700 employers, who provide very good job and career development opportunities, including work trials or work experience placements. Employer satisfaction is high;
- RBLI makes extensive use of a wide range of adaptive technology to enable participants to continue in their employment and live independently;
- RBLI has a comprehensive and well-established management information system. Data are used well by staff at all levels;
- RBLI makes excellent use of new technologies to work remotely;
- staff have a thorough understanding of equality and diversity issues;
- participants also have good awareness of equality and diversity issues, complaints, rights and responsibilities;
- RBLI has produced a range of easy-to-read booklets and learning resources on equality and diversity that the participants use to reinforce their understanding;
- RBLI is highly effective at promoting disability issues with employers and has provided equality and diversity training for a number of employers;
- RBLI puts a strong emphasis on achievements of the participants through annual celebrations;
- RBLI has particularly good arrangements to remove participants' barriers to employment and tackle unfair discrimination;
- it has firmly established a culture of respect and expects high standards from and for the participants;
- the working environment promotes strong commitment to equality and diversity at all levels; and
- participants develop positive attitudes to life and work as their self-confidence and self-esteem improves.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

14.10. These include:

- continuing to improve the Skills for Life strategy, to ensure high standards across all centres
- continuing to improve procedures for the collection of learners' feedback;
- finalising improvements to staff recruitment practices to ensure disabled people receive all necessary support in sustaining applications to RBLI;
- increasing success rates by particular participant types to ensure all attain high levels of achievement;
- finalising implementation of a Dignity at Work policy – the equivalent to a Customer Charter for staff;
- revision of the Employee Handbook to include current legislative and best practice EDI requirements;

- extend engagement of external partner (Grass Roots⁴⁴) to support EDI staff development; and
- completing the integration of current EDI standards into all aspects of RBLI activities.

14.11 RBLI has identified the following risks within its longer term strategy:

a) inability to locate beneficiaries for specific Social Enterprise projects;

Note: RBLI is setting up a number of projects which will be targeted at ex- Service personnel with specific challenges in terms of sustainable employment:

- Blue Sky Grounds Maintenance Contracts (specifically to support ex Service, ex offenders);
- Learning Café (specifically to support disabled ex Service personnel); and
- Small Business Incubation Unit (to support ex Service personnel from both above groups wishing to enter Self Employment).

b) Other risks include:

- not achieving enough business from the Work Programme to support continuation of infrastructure and therefore inability to develop and market added-value services (such as Work Place assessment services);
- not gaining Access to Work contracts later this year to enable continuation of the workplace assessment services to support Access to Work; and
- challenges are provided by the current economic climate in terms of RBLI's specialist services for people with disabilities and health conditions and ability to compete effectively for vacancies, without access to appropriate and sustainable levels of support.

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15. South Birmingham College

We do what we say we will do”.

Mike Hopkins, Principal

- 15.1 South Birmingham College (SBC⁴⁵) is a large general further education college located across four campuses within central and south Birmingham. A number of smaller centres are also based in the community. The college’s core business is vocational education and training with the majority of its further education provision funded by the YPLA and SFA.
- 15.2 The college offers programmes in all subject areas with the exception of agriculture, horticulture and animal care and social sciences. The college enrolls just over 14,000 students, of whom around a third are aged 16 to 18 years and follow full-time courses. The majority of adult students are enrolled on part-time courses. An increasing number of students aged 14 to 16 attend the college to study part-time and full-time vocational courses. Some 8% of the college’s provision is employer-based training.
- 15.3 Most students travel to college from the Birmingham area and 73% are from inner city wards which have high levels of deprivation. Around 60% of students in the college are of minority ethnic heritage, well above that of the local population. The college sets targets for student and staff recruitment and progression. The staff profile is 56% female, with 59% at management level. Among the staff, 25% are from BME backgrounds with 24% at management level, which is significantly above the sector average. The college has been very successful in ‘growing its own’ in achieving a diverse workforce. The college’s mission is, ‘to provide outstanding education and training which is primarily vocational, in response to the needs of learners and employers’. The senior management team emphasise that SBC is a community college.
- 15.4 As part of its statement about equality and diversity (see website) the college says: “We are proud to be a multi-cultural, multi-racial College and are striving to be an inclusive organisation where individual differences are accepted and valued and where everyone is able to fulfil their potential”.
- 15.5 At its Ofsted inspection in 2010 the college was judged outstanding for equality and diversity. SBC has been recognised by the European Social Fund (ESF) as National Champion for the Equal Opportunities Mainstreaming Leader Award (Policy and Plan), for its Train to Gain activity. This award recognises the integration of equal opportunities policies in practice throughout the College. A website features several relevant case studies⁴⁶.

Main Successes in EDI

- 15.6 These include⁴⁷:
- EDI is practice-driven as well as supported by policies. Governors expect good EDI performance and the Chair drives it;
 - Ofsted noted that the promotion of equality and diversity is outstanding;

⁴⁵ www.sbc.ac.uk

⁴⁶ www.esf-works.com/resources/esf-conference-2010/mainstreaming-awards

⁴⁷ Material judgements here are taken from the Ofsted report.

- large numbers of students come from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds; but “a strong ethos of inclusion, raising aspiration and supporting individuals to achieve, passionately supported by governors, managers and staff, results in high success rates” (Ofsted);
- equality and diversity are very strongly and consistently promoted throughout the curriculum;
- many students make good progress in relation to their starting points and make significant gains in confidence;
- a re-based information system, and management focus, has enabled better monitoring and analysis using real-time data;
- this enables performance monitoring and programme level “MOTs” four times a year, leading to SMT and governor reports. These support the weekly and monthly standard management reports;
- success rates for different groups of students, including more vulnerable groups, are analysed in detail and are high or very high in most cases;
- comprehensive analysis of levels of achievement between different groups of students has led to achievement gaps between different ethnicities being largely eradicated and gender differences reduced significantly;
- teaching staff frequently take the opportunity to extend discussions to challenge stereotypes, perceptions and broaden students’ cultural understanding;
- diversity is celebrated widely in all its facets through dedicated student steering groups;
- students with impaired mobility have full access to the college and can review their routes in detail on the college web site;
- SBC operates a Women’s Academy⁴⁸, providing full and part time courses from entry to level 3, with learner demand determining the offer;
- the college has developed and sustained outstanding partnerships with schools, employers and other partners, all of which contribute effectively to improving students’ well-being and promoting strong community cohesion;
- the curriculum is extensive in its breadth and responsiveness;
- many former NEET and excluded learners are now students at SBC;
- provision includes a “mini” pupil referral unit (PRU) to provide focused learner support for a small group of learners identified as likely to benefit;
- the “PRU” also provides training across the college for staff in behaviour management;
- the college has excellent arrangements to provide additional learning support for students who require extra help with literacy and numeracy;
- pastoral and specialist support are particularly strong;
- the self-assessment process is inclusive and takes good account of students’ views;

- very good opportunities are provided for students to express their views about the college, including through a “Principal’s Question Time”. The college is extremely responsive to students’ views;
- the college has worked hard to ensure the staff profile closely matches that of the students; gender, ethnicity and disability are monitored. More than half of all managers are female;
- a number of staff are former students, especially those with BME backgrounds;
- the appointment of female staff in non-traditional sectors, such as construction, is planned carefully and they are supported;
- staff are fully involved in suggesting, and contributing to, improved EDI practice;
- CPD is strong in this area. It includes an online behaviour management programme, and cross-divisional staff peer support programme;
- the college is highly responsive to the needs of employers, schools and community groups and very resourceful in meeting them;
- community cohesion and tolerance of others is well embedded in the college culture;
- to benefit community cohesion, support staff in local venues are trained in customer care related to the needs of the communities served;
- the promotion of all aspects of health and well-being is outstanding;
- the governing body is diverse, with notable BME and disability representation. It has an Employment and Equalities Committee, meeting four times a year, to monitor issues and recommend action;
- the student governors are trained to encourage their effective contribution;
- procurement partners have a contractual responsibility for good equality and diversity practice, to which they sign-up;
- among much good EDI marketing practice, there is a celebration of diversity successes in college and community locations. For example, the Fashion Design students create displays in Selfridges and other leading retailers, highlighting ethnic fashions;
- the college also provides British Sign Language Videos (BSL) on its website;
- SBC supports other colleges in improving EDI practice;
- SBC is an active member of the Birmingham Local Authority NEETs Steering Group; and
- SBC is on the Equality and Diversity committee of World Skills.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

15.7 These include:

- improvements in performance against EDI indicators in particular programme areas, identified through self-assessment;
- continuing to broaden recruitment to non-traditional programmes, notably involving gender stereotyping;

- ensuring more learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are enabled to join mainstream programmes;
- more targeted marketing will include additional Braille material;
- provision of more focused CPD on particular aspects of provision such as services for 14-16s;
- action to promote diversity in middle management, with targeted groups; and
- compliance with the Equality Act 2010 is being reviewed and appropriate action taken.

15.8 SBC has identified the following as risks to its continuing enhancement of EDI.

- Inadequate Additional Learner Support funding for the level of need served.
- The impact of EMA withdrawal.
- Cuts to the ESOL budget could have serious consequences on learner participation.
- Service reductions related to funding also include reduced provision for community education supporting mental health.

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16. Stubbing Court Training Ltd

“SCT actively promotes fair treatment by and for all apprentices, with positive action and opportunities to ensure achievement”

Stubbing Court Training Guide to Apprenticeships

Introduction

- 16.1 Stubbing Court Training (SCT) is a limited company established in 1982 located near Chesterfield in Derbyshire. The company provides work based learning in horse care. The majority of training takes place at equine centres throughout Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, South Yorkshire and West Yorkshire. However, the company also works with a small number of centres located outside these counties. SCT provides training at 11 centres throughout these areas and works with approximately 66 employers.
- 16.2 SCT⁴⁹ prides itself on very close links to the horse industry at the highest levels of business, competitions and related events. A distinctive feature of the learning provided by SCT is the level of engagement with international-standard riders, who offer masterclasses to the benefit of apprentices in training. These have been recognised by LSIS as examples of good practice⁵⁰. Young people considering a career working with horses are also invited to these events, to inspire and motivate them. Some go on to gain work experience and employment with international riders. Learning involves more than working with horses as, for example, event management, scoring and judging require a wider range of skills. Apprentices gain NVQs and Health and Safety, First Aid, Horse Transport and Key Skills qualifications.
- 16.3 Masterclasses are sometimes run in inner city locations and linked to local Connexions Services which will arrange for a wide participation, including minorities who may not have considered a career working with horses, including vocational taster opportunities in this field. This activity will include young people identified as not in education, employment or training (NEET); SCT has contributed to particular projects to support them. A current project is taking a young person previously out of learning through to a placement with an international-standard stable, providing training leading to qualifications. Many of SCT’s learners are currently employed with potential members of the GB equestrian team for the Olympics in 2012. The chief executive believes strongly in giving opportunities to all, so they can make the most of them through their own hard work.
- 16.4 SCT was inspected by Ofsted in 2010 and received a judgement of outstanding for equality and diversity, as part of a suite of grades that included outstanding leadership and management, and overall effectiveness. Ofsted agreed with SCT that the company has a high profile within the equine industry which is used effectively to benefit learners. In 2005 the organisation was also awarded Grade 1s for all aspects of the provision, leading to the award of Learning and Skills Beacon status in 2006. SCT achieved the Training Quality Standard full award in 2009.
- 16.5 At the time of its inspection SCT had 93 learners on programmes. Of these, 32 learners were advanced apprentices, 60 were apprentices, and one learner was on the (then) Entry to Employment programme. Forty-seven per cent of SCT’s learners have additional learning needs. In addition to government-funded apprentices, SCT provides training for employers and learners in equine transport, safeguarding, teaching techniques and training best practice. There is a team of 20 trainers and assessors.

⁴⁹ www.stubbingcourtraining.com

⁵⁰ www.excellencegateway.org.uk/page.aspx?o=107480

16.6 SCT states that it takes pride in its understanding of the industry: the individual needs and requirements of young people and employers to achieve their personal and business success; the demand for the highest standards and exceptional quality of service; and the opportunities that will inspire, motivate and encourage excellence. Ofsted noted that “the chief executive of the company provides excellent leadership, promoting high standards. Targets for improvement are set and monitored effectively”. Inspectors found that the previous outstanding provision had been maintained and further improved.

Main Successes in EDI

16.7 These include:

- outcomes for learners are outstanding⁵¹. Success rates have been consistently high and are well above the national average for this area;
- many learners achieve practical skills that are higher than those required by their qualification;
- all groups of learners achieve equally well;
- SCT’s approach to promoting equality and diversity, tackling discrimination and narrowing the achievement gap is outstanding;
- SCT has a clear strategy to engage with learners from groups traditionally under-represented in the equine industry;
- very effective use is made of learner and employer feedback;
- data are used well to identify strengths and areas for improvement;
- employer engagement and work with external partners are outstanding;
- enrichment activities are outstanding, inspiring and motivating. They enable learners to work with international equestrian trainers in a series of master classes, providing first class opportunities for learners to improve their riding;
- support with the development of numeracy skills is particularly good, with individual training sessions that link to the vocational area;
- the very effective self-assessment process makes good use of learners’ and employers’ views;
- employment rates for apprentices are excellent, with most progressing to supervisory roles within the equine industry;
- SCT has successfully developed projects with community groups, to promote the equine industry to young people from the inner city and from minority ethnic groups;
- it has effectively increased participation on apprenticeships by these young people and by young men;
- the company has realistic entry requirements that potential applicants do not consider exclusive
- learners have a good understanding of personal values and a respect for differences. They are clear about their rights and responsibilities;

- training for learners in equality and diversity is reinforced during progress reviews and through high-visibility posters displayed at training centres;
- SCT has been successful at raising the understanding of equality and diversity with employers, who have a good understanding of their responsibilities to learners;
- the company has good systems in place to support learners who require additional learning support;
- learners who work in remote areas and are required to be accommodated at their place of work are supported very effectively by SCT;
- the company has utilised its links with other providers to develop projects to improve the overall provision and benefit learners;
- very effective use is made of data and feedback from learners, employers and key partners to support findings in self-assessment;
- the company has developed its own resources for equality and diversity training appropriate to the needs of its learners. These include accessible learning materials; e.g. with coloured backgrounds appropriate to dyslexic learners;
- marketing materials and approaches have a clear EDI focus; the Chief Executive takes personal responsibility for these, aiming to increase recruitment from males, inner-city residents and BME learners;
- many apprentices lack confidence at the start and building this is a key part of the learning experience;
- all staff are trained and updated in EDI. This includes relevant training, for example, in supporting learners with dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism, Asperger's syndrome and deafness;
- Connexions advisers are trained by SCT to increase their knowledge of the opportunities in the industry and assist in broadening applications by type of learner;
- learner surveys have an EDI focus and results are acted upon; there are only minor differences by type of learner. The EDI element of the survey consistently has the most positive responses;
- recruitment of male apprentices has risen from 8% (2006) to 15% (2010);
- nearly half of all apprentices have additional learning needs; 23% had disabilities;
- approximately one-fifth of learners come from a widening participation postcode area;
- the company has assisted in producing ICT-based learning materials for a prison, utilising a prisoner's skills for technical support; and
- SCT has an Equality and Diversity policy that is updated annually, with clear and effectively-communicated complaints, grievance, appeals and harassment procedures.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

16.8 These include:

- increasing the proportion of BME, male and inner city learners recruited to programmes;

- development of on-line learning materials and ensuring they are accessible for all learners;
- maintaining high quality, flexible, individual support for learners employed in micro organisations, over a wide geographical area and with no transport;
- ensuring the Foundation Learning programme requirements are not a barrier to entering work-based learning in the horse industry;
- maintaining high levels of support and development opportunities for employers; and
- maintaining parity of very high success rates for all learner groups, in particular 19+, 25+, and ALN learners.

16.9 SCT has identified the following as risks to the further extension of EDI good practice through its work.

- Reduced funding due to changes in the methodology, e.g. no funding for key skills where learners already have a GCSE. Key Skills are seen as different, being the essential skills required for good performance at work, and they dramatically improve a person's employability and therefore success.
- Substantially reduced funding for 19+ and 25+ learners; the current level of tuition and training support will be impossible to maintain for adult learners.
- No financial support now available for EDI initiatives, e.g. to offer vocational tasters to under-represented groups.

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17. TBG Learning Ltd

“Equality and Diversity is about enjoying differences whatever they are and providing equal opportunities to all.”

TBG Equality and Diversity statement

Context

- 17.1 TBG Learning (TBG)⁵² is a private training provider founded in 1986. It is a wholly owned subsidiary company of the Rehab Group, an independent, not-for-profit charity organisation based in Ireland. TBG currently employs 346 staff. It has its head office in Birmingham and it operates from 25 local centres in the UK.
- 17.2 TBG holds contracts with the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) in several regions. TBG delivers apprenticeship and Train to Gain programmes in retail and warehousing, business administration and law and health, public services and care. It also delivers Foundation Learning -formerly Entry to Employment (E2E) - programmes. TBG also delivers learning contracts for the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 17.3 TBG states that, throughout its history, it has focused upon meeting the needs of disadvantaged people and has contributed to a wide range of programmes designed to reduce unemployment in the UK. The employability and training opportunities TBG offers are focused upon the needs of socially disadvantaged groups in the communities they serve, particularly long-term unemployed people with multiple barriers to employment including low skills, poor self-esteem and lack of self-confidence. Learning centres are based in offices and commercial buildings rather than formal learning settings.
- 17.4 Annually, TBG helps over 30,000 participants in the UK progress into employment or further learning. The contribution in skills and work-based learning is also considerable, with over 15,000 young people and adults achieving a qualification each year. Employer engagement is seen by TBG to be one of its key strengths, provided through a responsive and flexible service for over 800 employers. TBG works in partnerships to deliver its services, with local authorities and several other providers, including colleges and the voluntary sector.
- 17.5 As part of its equality and diversity statement (see website) TBG notes that “... certain disadvantaged groups may encounter particular difficulties in employment and learning opportunities and our aim is to reduce and eradicate these difficulties... Equality and Diversity is about enjoying differences whatever they are and providing equal opportunities to all.”
- 17.6 At the time of its Ofsted inspection in 2010, TBG had 1,555 learners on the (then) Entry to Employment programme and 746 apprentices. There were 1,353 adults on Train to Gain. At inspection, Equality and Diversity was judged as Outstanding. Inspectors noted in the section headed “what learners like”, that they liked “the guidance they receive from TBG in discovering their true vocation and changing their lives”.

Main Successes in EDI

17.7 Following an earlier inspection, TBG decided to re-position the leadership of E&D under an operational director, to drive up standards in the service provided at local centres. A task group was formed with managerial inputs at all levels, leading to recommendations for improvement. Equality champions were established at each centre. This was seen as highly effective in benefiting learners. One product was an annual calendar covering a variety of EDI topics.

Successes include⁵³:

- the promotion of equality of opportunity is outstanding at TBG;
- TBG has embedded equality and diversity in all aspects of its culture, reinforcing its curriculum through the excellent exploration of a programme of monthly topics;
- governance of EDI works through the Chief Executive's accountability at TBG, then on to the Rehab Board;
- standardised EDI indicators are considered and acted upon monthly by senior management;
- these are set for each programme on an input (eg, participation target) and output (action to be taken) basis;
- each local centre has KPIs for E&D, with weekly reviews, and addresses variances on a monthly basis;
- TBG has a strong record of accomplishment in E&D and a highly successful culture of social inclusion;
- TBG has closed the achievement gap amongst specific groups of learners;
- for example, it has successfully closed the achievement gap for Bangladeshi apprentices throughout the past three years;
- learners with a learning disability and/or difficulty are achieving their qualifications at a rate of some ten percentage points above the rest of the groups;
- TBG has developed very strong links with partners, stakeholders and employers. It has particularly good local partnership links that have a positive impact on learners. Partners include a women's group, via the YWCA, and a voluntary sector group (Treejumpers), supporting preparation for uniformed services;
- TBG assists smaller provider partners in developing the right EDI systems and procedures and expects high standards in this area;
- as an example, Ofsted judged that TBG has chosen its subcontractors in Kent very carefully and together they have done some highly effective work to develop the potential of some of their most disadvantaged learners;
- assessors are skilled at meeting the individual needs of learners very well;

- TBG uses its management information systems well to improve the way it meets the needs of learners and employers. The data are accurate and timely and focus on topics such as: retention; attendance; leavers; achievement of qualifications and success rates across all programmes and levels based on age, gender, disability, and ethnicity;
- TBG makes particularly good use of data to identify any differences in achievement;
- TBG attracts minority ethnic groups in high numbers, both as staff and learners;
- the company is excellent at celebrating success and diversity;
- learners' achievements and personal successes are very well promoted throughout the provider;
- TBG has developed the role of regional representatives, who promote and monitor equality and diversity very well to employers;
- learners' and employer forums are highly effective. Learners views come through their centres and are also heard by visiting "programme development advisers", for action and central feedback;
- within the learner survey there is a question regarding whether treatment has been fair whilst on the course, with very high levels of positive response;
- there is an effective on-line learner feedback system; where changes are made, these are notified to learners through posters in each site stating "You said ...we did";
- an effective Learner Handbook is utilised, which includes a copy of the annual calendar which has as a topic "Contributing to the Community";
- in 2010, E2E learners at different centres around the country corresponded with each other and shared experience, contributing to a wider awareness of cultures and communities;
- the introduction of the e-NVQ electronic portfolio system with substantial investment has allowed most learners, employers, and assessors to gather, submit and promptly review a broad variety of evidence to progress more rapidly;
- staffing of local centres reflects the communities served well;
- the Staff Handbook promotes EDI effectively;
- staff reviews include the question: What have you done to improve your, and your learners, awareness of equality and diversity?;
- all marketing materials reflect good EDI practice;
- TBG provides good value for money. Significant investment of resources, a learner-centred strategy and a stronger focus on outcomes have increased the emphasis on improving success rates;
- the new chief executive officer has refocused, revitalised, and refreshed the vision and mission of the company; and
- the annual E&D Report is publicised on the intranet.

17.8 TBG supports several charity and community projects, identified locally, where staff have worked together with learners to achieve a common goal. Representatives of the projects contribute to events at centres. For example, in Tower Hamlets learners are supporting a recycling project within their local community very effectively.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

17.9 These include:

- Use initial assessment information more effectively to set more detailed key objectives and use these better to review progress.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning by planning sessions better, to meet the individual needs of learners and by ensuring all lessons develop and practise literacy, language and numeracy skills.

Note: both these points are examples of relevant improvements underway in the area of teaching and learning

- Ensure the standard of self-assessment generally meets that of the best practice at local centres.
- Continue to target KPIs for E&D variances at each local centre on a monthly basis, for action.
- Re-define EDIMs at local centre level related to any under-representation in learning, retention and success.
- Address fully the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

17.10 TBG has identified the following risk to the continuing development of good EDI practice. Changes to the funding for ESOL has affected a number of TBG centres, which will no longer be able to offer this type of provision. It was previously funded through TBG's FE franchise arrangements.

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18. West Nottinghamshire College

“Leadership is at every level”

Asha Khemka, Principal.

Context

- 18.1 West Nottinghamshire College (WNC) is a large general FE college with one main campus in Mansfield and a further ten sites within the Mansfield and Ashfield area. The college also works within more than 100 other local community venues.
- 18.2 The college primarily serves the districts of Mansfield and Ashfield and the M1 corridor linking Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, a predominantly urban area which includes new business development along the Mansfield and Ashfield Regeneration Route but also districts of significant deprivation. Some 6.8% of learners are of minority ethnic heritage, compared with 4% of people from such backgrounds in the local community.
- 18.3 The college provides courses in all sector subject areas for some 20,000 learners each year. Some 80% of these are adults and nearly two thirds are male. Most learners aged 16 to 18 follow full-time courses and most adult learners follow part-time courses. The college currently has 4,000 full-time learners.
- 18.4 The college’s vision is ‘a dynamic college for aspiring communities’ and its mission is: ‘Learners at the heart of excellence’. As well as achieving the Training Quality Standard for its employer engagement, the college has won a number of awards for its work in recent years. These include four Beacon awards, one being the LSIS Beacon award for providing outstanding teaching and learning; a star rating two years running in the 2009 and 2010 Best Companies accreditation scheme, which recognise organisations that show high levels of employee engagement; and a rating as the UK’s 14th best place to work in the public sector, by The Sunday Times. The college has been re-accredited as an Investor in People (IiP) at the Gold standard.
- 18.5 At its last full inspection in 2008 WNC received grades of outstanding for all areas inspected. At that time, equality and diversity was a contributory grade for leadership and management; this was also judged outstanding. Subsequently, the college received two Ofsted visits in 2009. One was part of a subject survey of good practice in promoting equality. In summary, the report of that visit noted that: “In an area of low educational and employment aspiration, the college is outstandingly successful at attracting learners with a curriculum imaginatively designed to meet their needs”.
- 18.6 The second Ofsted visit in 2009 was part of a Thematic Survey Programme on Social Responsibility and Community Cohesion. One of several strengths mentioned in the inspector’s note of the visit was “the particularly effective work with vulnerable and hard to reach learners”. At that time the college was building a distinctive service for young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), the Ashfield Centre, This unique Centre runs specially-tailored vocational programmes alongside a holistic support service to meet the social and educational needs of young people that are not in work or education, or lack the confidence to access the college’s mainstream provision.

Over 250 learners have progressed through the Centre to either further education or employment. In 2008, the college's Principal along with other professionals from education and business, founded the Inspire and Achieve Foundation⁵⁴, a charitable trust with one clear aim: to raise the aspirations and achievements of disadvantaged young people - making a real difference to their lives. The Foundation works closely with the Centre to provide support and resources.

Main Successes in EDI

18.7 These include⁵⁵:

- although many learners join the college with low aspirations, achievement and standards are outstanding on courses at all levels and for learners of all ages;
- the college provides an outstanding range of courses which are well matched to the needs of individual learners;
- the college's response to educational and social inclusion is imaginative and highly effective;
- care, guidance and support arrangements are outstanding;
- the college's outstanding commitment to equality and diversity is reflected in all aspects of college life (this was found to be a key strength at the last full Ofsted inspection);
- success is widely promoted and celebrated and the many attractive displays of work throughout the college provide a good demonstration of how much learners enjoy their work, as well as being a source of inspiration to others;
- provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is excellent. These learners are well integrated into college life;
- WNC has an imaginative and highly effective response to community needs. The college plays a significant role in improving the skills base in the community;
- guidance and support are outstanding;
- the views of learners are taken extremely seriously by college managers and there are numerous good opportunities for their voices to be heard;
- the college analyses the performance of different groups of learners rigorously and ensures that any issues are dealt with in detail in its development planning;
- governors are extremely supportive of the college and provide a good level of challenge to managers and hold the college to account for its performance;
- WNC has particularly strong partnerships with other providers and welfare agencies, which enable the college to serve its communities extremely well; and
- learners have strong involvement in a broad range of activities, which enhances their learning, broadens their horizons and engages them in making a positive contribution.

54 See, for example: www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6038176. For several WNC case studies relevant to equality see also: www.youtube.com/user/westnottscollge.

55 Material judgements here are taken from the Ofsted reports.

The college has also identified

18.8 These include:

- the great importance of values: respect for individual differences is the key to good practice;
- avoidance of a “tick-box” culture. Policies and procedures matter (and all have gone through EIAs) but ways of working and interacting are the most important factors. For that reason, the current Ofsted limiting grade for E&D is seen as not particularly important. Consultation and engagement help embed good practice;
- the “Big Society” concept has value in promoting achievement across all types of learner and in engaging non-learners; it’s about taking and enabling responsibility;
- the college encourages disclosure of learning difficulties and /or disabilities and this has significantly increased declared needs;
- there are no current achievement gaps for learners based on ethnicity and only minor pre- and post-19 age differences;
- the Students’ Union runs a volunteers programme including a Volunteers Abroad scheme, enabling students to do voluntary work in Ghana;
- equality and diversity are effectively promoted by means of events and similar activities throughout the year;
- college KPIs are in place for E&D measures and are assessed against benchmarks. In all cases the college meets or exceed these benchmarks;
- an effective CPD programme works to embed EDI at all levels; and
- an intranet site promoting EDI was launched in 2011 and includes an E&D Toolkit, a large range of teaching and learning support materials, events notifications and similar information.

Main Areas for Development in EDI

18.9 These include:

- fully-appropriate KPIs are to be developed in setting and measuring objectives for EDI annually; these need updating each year;
- ensuring best practice in EDI is embedded consistently across all programmes of learning;
- data and management information for EDI indicators are in need of continuous improvement. Most recently, categories of ESOL learners have been refined;
- related to the above, a consistent reporting system demonstrating performance against college KPIs is to be improved further;
- areas of under-representation remain in traditional curriculum areas, notably through gender stereotyping, and although improvements are evident these issues will continue to be addressed;
- WNC will continue to reduce the number of “unknowns” in the disability status category;

- WNC will continue to put pay equality high on the agenda through a job evaluation programme; and
- further training is to be provided in carrying out E&D impact assessments.

18.10 The college has identified, as a risk to its continuing enhancement of EDI the withdrawal of EMAs. This is being addressed by seeking employer sponsorship for individual named learners.

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19. Acknowledgments and Contacts

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In respect of its culture and values, LSIS aims to be a high-performing organisation with a passion for learning and a dedication to being led by the needs of the sector. It is committed to promoting inclusivity – as an exemplar resource and catalyst for equality and diversity across the sector.

The Young People’s Learning Agency (YPLA) is committed to Championing Young People’s Learning and to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. Working with partners the YPLA supports commissioning decisions for provision of learning to all young people by promoting their needs.

EMFEC wholeheartedly supports equality of outcome, believing that individuals should be treated with fairness and respect and empowered to have choice and control. The diversity of individuals is acknowledged and personal characteristics such as background, culture, personality and work-style are respected, in addition to the characteristics protected under equality legislation such as race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation and religion and belief.

Disability equality policy

LSIS is committed to promoting equality for disabled people and we strive to ensure that all our communication and learning materials are available in various formats including large font, audio or braille.

Please contact us at enquiries@lsis.org.uk or 024 7662 7953 quoting the document reference number to request an alternative format.

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