

PROGRESS AGAINST THE BRIDGWATER COLLEGE EQUALITY OBJECTIVE

UNDER-REPRESENTATION IN WORKFORCE PROFILE – DISABILITY

UPDATE: JANUARY 2016

Statement: 2012

The College has identified from workforce diversity profile analysis and the 2011 Census that employees from a particular protected characteristic group are under-represented within the College workforce. This currently does not reflect the local and regional community it serves.

Our Workforce Profile Equality Objective is:

- to continue to gather disability information from our staff workforce to ensure the data held is accurate and up-to-date (2.97% of staff had declared a disability as at Jan 2012)
- to increase the number of new recruits and existing staff, from the local and regional community by 4 percentage points over a 4 year period (April 2012 to March 2016) (from 2.97% to 7.83%)
- to help advance equality of opportunity between people with a disability and people without a disability (a protected characteristic)

Actions:

Therefore, in order to address this, the action plan might include:

- a) impact **assess** the College's recruitment policy and practices to help eliminate any potential discrimination that may currently exist for people with disabilities
- b) review **recruitment advertising** methods and use of publications to ensure a diverse range of communities are able to access and view job adverts to advance equality of opportunity for people with disabilities
- c) consider the addition of **a disability standard** to further improve our profile for people with disabilities
- d) investigate the possibility of **advertising** in specific disability publications, attending jobs fairs and hosting a promotional stand as positive action at the Job Centre
- e) **identify training initiatives** to raise awareness and tackle any potential prejudice for staff involved in recruitment and selection to help promote understanding of people with disabilities and their needs
- f) **consult** with existing employees who have a disability to identify what challenges or barriers prevent people with disabilities from applying to work at the College and identify any other measures the College could adopt to engage people with disabilities
- g) carry out **specific training for staff** on issues that arise to address matters related to people with disabilities, e.g. understanding the needs of people with different disabilities
- h) **engage** with relevant community groups to explore the needs of people with disabilities further. Use the gathered information to organise and hold recruitment fairs to encourage applications from that group to advance equality of opportunity

Pledge 2012:

We currently are an accredited user of the Positive About Disabled People (Two Ticks) Symbol but there is much more we feel we could and should do to promote equality of opportunity between people with disabilities and people without.

We pledge to continue the good work we have already undertaken and to progress the actions listed above to achieve our staff workforce focussed equality objective.

Progress Update on Workforce Profile Equality Objective: 2016

The progress on our Workforce Profile Equality Objective 3-years on is:

- to continue to gather disability information from our staff workforce to ensure the data held is accurate and up-to-date through a range of data collection methodologies and data cleansing processes
- to increase the number of new recruits and existing staff, from the local and regional community by 4 percentage points over a 4 year period

April 2012	2.97%	Starting measure (34 staff)
July 2013	4.57%	An increase of 1.6 percentage points (55 staff)
January 2015	2.88%	A decrease of 1.69 percentage points (37 staff)
July 2015	1.22%	A decrease of 1.66 percentage points (16)
March 2016	Target is 7.83%	Target measure – a further increase of 3.26 percentage points (assuming no decrease from July 2013 workforce profile position) (circa. 94 staff of 1200 staff workforce)

- to help advance equality of opportunity between people with a disability and people without a disability (a protected characteristic) through information sharing, focus groups and staff development and communications.

Progress Update on Actions: 2015

- a) impact **assess** the College's recruitment policy and practices to help eliminate any potential discrimination that may currently exist for people with disabilities

The Recruitment & Selection policy, practice and approach was reviewed in 2014-2015 as part of a Systems Thinking review and the development of an improved HR IT system. Applications for employment are now on-line, are easy to complete and further strengthens our aim to recruit without bias.

All job descriptions now require an objective assessment against a range of criteria from job applicants. This criteria is also recorded on the person specification and is marked as essential or desirable for the position. The criteria is challenged by the Recruitment Co-ordinator at a planning meeting with the manager.

- b) review **recruitment advertising** methods and use of publications to ensure a diverse range of communities are able to access and view job adverts to advance equality of opportunity for people with disabilities

The locations of recruitment advertising are regularly reviewed and a wide range of media, both print and online are used.

Our approach is not to use recruitment/employment agencies but to recruit ourselves for all roles.

We place our vacant roles on Job Centre Plus. We also post all jobs online and use social media such as Bridgwater College Jobs Facebook and Twitter to advertise our vacant roles.

In 2014, we launched a set of College Values and these are integrated into our vacancies.

- c) consider the addition of a **disability standard** to further improve our profile for people with disabilities

We have maintained the Positive About Disabled People logo once again in 2015, but have not obtained any further disability standards.

In December 2014, we participated in the Investors in Diversity Award and obtained Stage 1. We now proudly display this logo in addition to our other symbols, standards and logos.

- d) investigate the possibility of **advertising** in specific disability publications, attending jobs fairs and hosting a promotional stand as positive action at the Job Centre

In October 2015 and again in January 2016, we hosted a stall at the College Open Evening for jobs. We met some potential staff, some of whom had disabilities and needs. We will hold a further stall at the College Open Evenings in March and throughout the year.

In March 2016, we will advertise again in the Rehabilitation to Work publication which includes targeted advertising to people with disabilities and people seeking to return to work.

- e) **identify training initiatives** to raise awareness and tackle any potential prejudice for staff involved in recruitment and selection to help promote understanding of people with disabilities and their needs

In October 2013, we launched a series of eLearning programmes for all staff. Our Equality & Diversity in Practice eLearning course has been completed by a total of 1081 staff to date.

All new staff are targeted to complete the course within 6 months of joining the College. As the months turn into years, we expect staff to refresh their learning by re-taking the eLearning courses every 3 years and attending follow up training sessions.

We discuss disability (and other protected characteristics) during the induction period and at all stages of employment. We do this in many ways including during interviews, during initial employment meeting and also during staff team events.

Teaching and training staff also discuss equality, diversity and disability with their students and share knowledge of the topic.

- f) **consult** with existing employees who have a disability to identify what challenges or barriers prevent people with disabilities from applying to work at the College and identify any other measures the College could adopt to engage people with disabilities

We ask all staff with a declared disability if they wish to discuss any aspect of their employment with HR, at least once per year. We also ask staff at appraisal about any additional support needs or amendments to working practice that will support them at work.

In addition, we raise this as a question to the Equality of Learning Committee and the Diversity Committee on a regular basis, as part of our discussions.

- g) carry out **specific training for staff** on issues that arise to address matters related to people with disabilities, e.g. understanding the needs of people with different disabilities

In December 2014 we launched three further eLearning courses which relate to equality & diversity in different ways. The courses link to our relevant College policies on equality and diversity, disability and dignity at work. Since the launch of these courses the following numbers of staff have completed their learning to date:

Dignity at Work	Communicating with Care	Recruitment and Selection Essentials
678	690	276

We have included a range of Learning Support Training for the 2015-2016 academic year and this includes:

- Autistic spectrum
- Managing Student Behaviour (MAPPA)
- Mental Health Awareness
- Techniques to Support Dyslexics
- Software to Help Dyslexics – Assistive Technologies

We also run Customer Service training sessions for staff and these include equality & diversity and disability as part of their course content.

- h) **engage** with relevant community groups to explore the needs of people with disabilities further. Use the gathered information to organise and hold recruitment fairs to encourage applications from that group to advance equality of opportunity

The HR Manager and the Senior HR Adviser met with representatives from Job Centre Plus Positive About Disabled People team to review our commitments to the Standard and to identify further improvements.

We are proud to hold the Standard and display it on recruitment literature, the website and recruitment documentation.

Pledge 2015/16:

We pledge to continue to enhance our work and progress as far as possible, equality for all, through being “**An inclusive organisation**”.

We see equality as a cornerstone of working practice at Bridgwater College and have embedding equality and diversity into our core values. Our College Values set our how we work and behave. We are:

- Passionate and excited about learning
- Highly responsive to learner, employer and community needs
- Always aspiring to the highest standards
- Professional and enterprising
- Innovative and creative
- Friendly and welcoming
- **An inclusive organisation**