Equality and Diversity Report 2017-18

Prepared for the Resources Committee June 2018

Purpose

This report is to feedback on the performance and delivery of Equality and Diversity in the College during the period from September 2017 and up to June 2018.

Background:

The College's Equality Policy is available on the website and can be accessed by all; together with the Equality Improvement Plan, which is reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the College is improving on its delivery of Equality and Diversity across the college and throughout the services it provides.

Summary of the Year

- Jisc (an organisation which focuses on providing digital solutions for education and research) carried out a snapshot survey of services provided by WSFC in terms of Accessibility and Inclusivity. They looked at the website, moodle and the electronic learning resources in the LRC. This was carried out firstly by accessing the website externally and then by a visit in February and looking at internal provision such as moodle and services offered through the LRC. A report has been produced by Jisc and this has been circulated amongst SMT, ILT and the Equality Group. A number of the suggestions and recommendations that the report made, are already in progress through the development of the WSFC website and other areas of e-learning. The report's recommendations were to more actively promote and make students aware of what was already available, for example, through the use of an AT toolbar.
- The focus on celebrating diversity within the College by helping to support the development of multi-faith groups has continued by encouraging students to make use of a designated room for the use of individual prayers and for meditation and to encourage student-led faith groups such as the CU. This would closely tie in with the promoting mutual tolerance and respect for other faiths as part of one of the British values.
  This has been achieved through:
- Key events for celebrating diversity have been placed on the calendar on gateway for staff awareness. Key events have been highlighted through displays in the LRC as well as on noticeboards. These included this year Women's Suffrage and a Hundred Years of the Right to Vote.

- A room is available for individual prayer and meditation, within the wing of the Science Block. This can be used at set times each day and there are washing facilities close by. It has been used by a number of students, particularly at times of key religious observance. A prayer mat is also available and is kept in the office of the Equality and Diversity co-ordinator.
- In addition, a room has been made available for students to use during Ramadan (May 14th– June 15t^h) so that they can go somewhere quiet without having to be with other students, who are eating or drinking, while they are fasting. This room (G20) will be the designated room for individual prayers during Ramadan. A small number of students have asked if they can run a fundraising event for charity after Ramadan has finished as part of their participation in Ramadan.
- The Equality Co-ordinator has been in contact with the Worcester Inter-Faith Forum and it is planned to liaise with this group for other speakers on different faiths. A display for Ramadan has been held during the period of Ramadan to celebrate this important festival in the Islamic faith and an information sheet about Ramadan has been placed on Gateway which sought to answer some of the more frequently asked questions about Ramadan. These events have been held in order to meet the target for the Equality Objective of developing better understanding between different faith groups and fostering better relationships between groups within the College.

Other areas which aim to support and celebrate equality and diversity for this year have included:

- The Equality Co-ordinator and a student from WSFC represented the College at the West Midlands Youth Conference against Hate Crime in March and participated in a live interview on BBC Radio Asian Network about the need to combat hate crime. The student was able to clearly express her views and was an excellent representative for the College in terms of Equality and Diversity.
- Four leaflets have been designed and made available for distribution for students. These leaflets on religion and faith *(attached)*, sexual orientation *(attached)*, gender re-assignment *(attached)* and sex and gender *(attached)*; state the College's commitment to equality and diversity and to ensuring that under 2010 Equality Act, students with protected characteristics can expect from the College and from college staff and fellow students to ensure that there is no discrimination.
- A number of small student-led support groups for groups of students who have or share protected characteristics such as faith, sexual orientation and ethnicity have been promoted. These have included: A LGBT group were the students were encouraged to run the group and to meet on an informal basis, a Polish speakers group and more recently for this last term, a student led group was formed for Filipino students.
- Feedback given by students was positive in that they felt safe in the college environment. The Equality Co-ordinator has been meeting with small student forum groups on a regular basis, over the last term, so that students can discuss any issues of concern for them with regard to Equality and Diversity and will then feedback to the Equality Group once this has been completed by the end of the summer term.

- A European Languages event was held in the LRC on European Languages Day in September – promoting a number of different European languages spoken and taught in the College. It sought to raise awareness of the number of different languages spoken in the College and also to make welcome and help with integration of a number of International students who had just started to study at WSFC for the academic year.
- Students have had the opportunity to gain qualifications in their native languages at AS or A2 as in previous years in which a very small number of students have been entered for Modern Language exams at AS and A2 in their first languages.
- Evening Class students continue to make use of the access to resources in the LRC and to use the computers as well, which has ensured part-time students have parity with other students. The LRC is open till 7pm on a Wednesday evening when a range of evening classes takes place.
- Links with Student Services through the activities that they promote and with the work by the counsellors in supporting students with mental health and well- being; have previously included Anti-bullying week and Mental Health Awareness. There have also been closer links between the Art department and Student Services with displays of art work related to the themes that Student Services have been promoting to raise general awareness and a better understanding, all of which will have helped with promoting diversity.
- The Student Council have organised a number of fundraising events within College which have helped to foster good relations and to link with different groups.
- Information regarding the location of a non-gender specific toilet in the College has been shared via tutors with students so that students, who are transitioning, are aware where the toilet is located.
- Changes in the menu choices available in the refectory: as result of feedback given by Asian students –has meant that halal meat is offered in a number of dishes. These continue to be available this year for students on the hot food menu; such as curry, pasta and southern fried chicken, as well as a cold filling for sandwiches.

Equality and Diversity training

- The staff training pack on the Equality Act was reviewed. It is available for new staff to complete as part of their induction. Copies of the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and the Equality Improvement Action Plan are also available.
- An on-line training programme for Equality and Diversity is available for all staff through the Foundation Online Support. This training is free and provides equality and diversity training modules for staff, both teaching and support. It also has specific modules on a range of issues and is easily accessible. New staff members have been asked to complete the mandatory module.
- Other training for Equality and Diversity is available for staff, who may have difficulty in accessing the on-line training, has been organised by Emma Bridges, the acting Learning Support manager, and is based on a discussion based theme. All staff have equal access to Equality and Diversity training.

- The guide for Exam Office staff and Invigilators with regard to the Equality Act (2010) and the need to make reasonable adjustments and Exam Access Arrangements was revised and is available for all staff who are involved with examinations and invigilation.
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Equality Group

The Equality Objectives were published so that they are available to all. These continue to be the objectives for this year and are to be reviewed by the Equality Group yearly. A small number of displays relating to celebrating religious festivals have been held and it is planned to hold a fourth before the end of Ramadan. It is hoped that having established a link with the Inter-Faith Forum- more events can be held.

The group reviewed the format for the Equality Impact Assessments. A small working party meets outside of the main group's meeting times so that the EIA can be considered in light of the policy that has been reviewed and any changes made to the policy. The EIA group will assess any potential impact these may have. As a result of training on EIAs – a recommendation from the Equality Group was made that an amendment should be added to the EIA to show that parties, who hold a protected characteristic and for whom a change in the policy may have a potential impact, should be consulted.

Equality and Diversity within the teaching and tutorial programmes

- Following on from the Prevent training and the requirement to ensure that this is embedded in the learning- work on developing resources for teaching about Prevent and linking this to the teaching of Fundamental British Values has been done in the tutorial programme and will also be developed further within subject areas.
- The pastoral programme requires all tutors to cover the same themes. These will include ensuring the students have an understanding and awareness of Equal Opportunities, tackling discrimination, and safeguarding as part of equality and diversity. The tutorial programme also covers rights and responsibilities and raising awareness of cyber and internet bullying. These themes have been covered within the tutorial programme and closely link to the Government's promotion of British Values and Prevent.
- Other topics relating to equality and diversity which are covered in the tutorial programme are Black History Month and Martin Luther Day as well as Prevent.

Themes relating to equality and diversity, including issues that relate to Prevent and British Values have been part of departmental schemes of work but this will need to be reviewed and expanded in the light of the change of syllabi

Departments are asked to carry out an Equality and Diversity audit within each subject area on a yearly basis and this information has been used to inform practice within departments. An audit for Equality and Diversity with specific reference to learning and teaching resources was carried out in July last year and asked departments to consider their use of teaching and learning resources in terms of Equality and Diversity and to consider if any of these resources showed bias, whether conscious or unconscious. The audits were returned by most departments and showed that to a greater extent, most subjects were using a range of resources to reflect equality and diversity within their subject areas. It is intended to ask departments to review learning resources in light of the requirements of the new specifications and to provide an example of a resource that has successfully embedded E&D as part of this year's Equality and Diversity Audit.

Staff training for meeting individual students' needs
Staff training on meeting and supporting students has continued to be a focus for development .Information on the different specific learning difficulties that students may have as well as the types of support, which may be required in order to meet these individual needs continues to be available through the Learning Support department.

Learning Support department

- The team continues to offer learning support to students on an individual basis through one-to-one support as well as some in-class support. A new initiative of running in drop-in workshops has seen an increase in take up by students, who have had access to learning support and guidance from learning support staff as well as preparation for exams through revision strategies.
- The programme of Supported study provides opportunities to develop study skills as well as providing an opportunity for additional work to support and enhance learning that has already taken place in the classroom.
- Dyslexia workshops have provided an opportunity to develop learning strategies that will help students, with dyslexia, to cope and meet the demands of their courses.
- Assessments for access arrangements for examinations are carried out within the department.

Use of the services provided by Student Services in terms of Gender and Ethnicity : Table 1

Academic Year	Male	Female
2017-18	301	340

Ethnicity	Count	%
White - British	457	71.3%
White – Any other White background	24	3.7%
White-Irish	1	0.2%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic group – White and Black Caribbean	5	0.8%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic group – White and Asian	3	0.5%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic group – Other	2	0.3%
Arab	1	0.2%
Asian/Asian British - Indian	8	1.2%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	31	4.8%
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	4	0.6%
Asian/Asian British - Chinese	5	0.8%
Asian/Asian British - Any other Asian background	8	1.2%
Black/Black British - African	3	0.5%
Black/Black British - Caribbean	3	0.5%
Other	2	0.3%
Not Known/Provided	78	12.2%

The figures from Table 1 would suggest that students from different ethnic groups are making good use of the range of services when compared to Table 2, which gives the breakdown of total number of college students by Ethnicity and Gender. If the number of students from

each ethnic group, who are recorded as having used Student Services, is calculated against the total number of students from each ethnic group- it can be seen that in terms of percentages that:

44.8% of Asian students, 54% of Black British, 24.3% of Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups and 37.3 % of White students are accessing these services. It may have been expected that given the much larger number of White students in the college that the number of students from this group would have been greater in terms of percentage and that this group and those with Mixed Multiple backgrounds may need to be further encouraged to access the services.

In terms of gender; the figures would suggest that male students are making more use of student services when the number of male students, who are recorded as having made use of Student Services are compared to the total number of male students as this amounts to 43%. In comparison to the female students, who have made use of Student Services out of the total number of female students which amounts to 36.4%.

Breakdown of college students by Ethnicity and Gender: Table 2

Ethnicity	15/16	%	16/17	%
Arab	1	0.1%	1	0.1%
Asian/Asian British - Any other Asian background	21	1.2%	26	1.6%
Asian/Asian British - Bangladeshi	15	0.9%	13	0.8%
Asian/Asian British - Chinese	8	0.5%	9	0.6%
Asian/Asian British - Indian	20	1.1%	18	1.1%
Asian/Asian British - Pakistani	56	3.2%	59	3.6%
Black/Black British - African	7	0.4%	3	0.2%
Black/Black British - Any other Black background	1	0.1%	2	0.1%
Black/Black British - Caribbean	9	0.5%	6	0.4%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic group - Other	8	0.5%	7	0.4%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic group - White and Asian	13	0.7%	14	0.9%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic group - White and Black African	4	0.2%	9	0.6%
Mixed/Multiple ethnic group - White and Black Caribbean	19	1.1%	11	0.7%
White - Any other White background	55	3.1%	66	4.0%

White - British	1369	77.7%	1214	74.4%
White - Irish	2	0.1%	5	0.3%
Other	3	0.2%	5	0.3%
Not Known/Provided	150	8.5%	163	10.0%

Gender	15/16	%	16/17	%
Female	962	54.6%	934	57.3%
Male	799	45.4%	697	42.7%

Provided by Student Services

A more detailed breakdown of how Student Services has been used over the last year was not available at the time this report was being written, as it is in the process of being compiled but will be included in next year's report.

Links with the wider community and to other partners

The Equality Co-ordinator has continued to make links with other organisations to do with faith such as the Inter-faith Forum. It is also hoped that closer links can be built between the local mosque that many Muslim students would attend and the College.

Equality and Diversity: narrowing the gap between groups of students

Strategies that are in place have continued to work effectively and have helped to raise retention and achievement for all students. These include the wide range of support through the learning support department, such as Supported Study, the running of drop-in workshops as well as individual learning support.   Many departments offer additional subject-based workshops to support students' learning such as Mathematics, Geography and Geology.

In terms of achievement:

The data indicates that the majority of ethnic groups were at or above their specific success rate benchmarks, but that BME students did not make the same progress towards high grades as White students. Although BME students have success rates that match those for White students at A' level they are below those for White students at AS level.

Overall students with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress in line with College averages, and above specific benchmarks, although a minority made less progress than the College average. Progress will continue to be monitored for these groups and for other groups with mixed ethnicity backgrounds at Levels 2 and 3 who are performing below the College average and national benchmarks.

- In 2016-17 the majority of ethnic groups were at or above their expected success rate benchmarks, but that BME students did not make the same progress towards high grades as White students; although within the BME group, the Asian students achieved the best and also when compared to the White group, at AS level with a 3.1 difference.
- 6 Dimensions data indicates that overall BME students had a success rate in line with that for White students at A' level but with a difference of 3.8 between White students and Asian students. However, Asian, Chinese and Black students achieved better than their White counterparts. Some BME groups such as Asian Bangladeshi and Mixed White and Black Caribbean, however, achieved lower than their expected achievement.

- 6 Dimensions date from 2016-17 indicates that Female students continue to achieve better than male students at both AS and A' level.
- Support is provided for students with disabilities (High Needs) in order to help them achieve their full potential.

- Overall students with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress in line with College averages, and above specific benchmarks, although a minority made less progress than the College average. From Six Dimensions data 2016-17 indicated that students with dyslexia performed below expected.

    Other groups of students who have been identified as needing support:
- RONI (Risk of NEET Indicator) although RONI students have had a success rate below the College average, this has improved due to the result of monitoring and intervention by pastoral staff and Heads of Departments. The College has been more able to support RONI students as the data was made available earlier at the start of the academic year and this has seen an improvement in achievement.

This would suggest that the gap between some ethnic groups in terms of achievement has narrowed and in some cases has improved to the extent that achievement has been better than expected. However, for some BME groups – the lower than expected achievement would indicate that these students would gain from making full use of the support services that the College has available for learning.

Looked after Children (LAC)

- There are 4 Looked after Children (LAC) in College this year. Sara Payne, the Learning Support Manager*, is the key link between the College and the external agencies for ensuring that appropriate support is in place. * As Sara Payne is currently on maternity leave, Emma Bridges, the acting Learning Support Manager has currently responsibility for LAC.

Feedback from Student questionnaires with regard to equality of opportunity
Results from the student questionnaire to the question: 'My teacher treats everyone fairly'

95% agreed or strongly agreed.   5% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Gender breakdown of the responses gives:

Females: 94.8% agreed or strongly agreed   6.2% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

 Males: 95.28% agreed or strongly agreed   4.72% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Areas for development:

These include:

- Identifying ways of creating a supportive culture so that the collection of data from employees on protected characteristics, which is of a confidential and sensitive nature, could be encouraged.
- Embedding equality and diversity through the development of themed weeks across the college.
- Development of teaching and learning resources for equality and diversity which would be available through moodle.
- Identify training resources for raising awareness about gender transition.
- Explore strategies to encourage representation in Student Council by students from all sections of the learning community.
- Arrange additional talks to promote awareness of different faiths and monitor participation.
- More staff development on supporting students with individual needs; such as specific learning difficulties, with regard to dyslexia or being on the autistic spectrum.
- Raising awareness of supporting students who are transgender and who may be or are transitioning
- Working in conjunction with Student Services to explore ways to increase participation among BME students of the counselling services.

Relevant Strategic Aim

This report covers:

- strategic aim 1 to embed equality and diversity in the curriculum
- strategic aim 3 to respect equality and diversity in employment policies
- strategic aim 4 to ensure a safe and supportive learning environment

Achievement of Equality and Diversity targets for 2017-18

Report reference	Action point	Person responsible	Completion	Check
7	Equality Audit	RJS SG	June 2017	Yes
4 15/12/16	Publishing Equality and Diversity leaflets	SG/RJS	September 2017	Yes
5 18/1/2018	Jisc survey on Accessibility and Inclusivity	SG/RJS	December 2017 and in- February 2018	yes
6. 18/1/18	Raising awareness of E&D	SG/RJS	On-going	
5. 19/4/2018	Raising awareness of Transgender	SG/RJS	July 2018	
3/3/2018	Holding student forum groups on E&D	SG	July 2018	
7/6/2018	Equality Audit	RJS/SG	July 2018	

Implications for learners

All new staff members are given training in equality and diversity issues. Equal opportunities strategies are integrated into schemes of work. Achievement and retention are monitored for all groups of students by the Quality group and HoDs. The teaching and learning group focus on areas related to improving achievement. Tutors give guidance on issues of bullying, harassment and equal opportunity to all tutees. Equality of opportunity is promoted through use of publicity materials, the open access of the College and through internal monitoring systems. The Equality and Diversity group has links with Student Services and Student Council and is developing external links with other providers.

Staff Equality Monitoring Data

As this is available on the College website and can be accessed- it has not been included here to be printed as part of the report.

Equality Improvement Action Plan is available and can be accessed via the Repository and is therefore not printed as part of this report.