

# Equality and Diversity



## Our Ethos

Promoting equality is not the same as treating people equally. At Craven College we believe it is about treating one another with respect and dignity.

Celebrating diversity is important to the college, we treat people as individuals, welcome differences – creating a culture of inclusiveness.

## Our Commitment

- To advance and promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between diverse groups within the college and our wider community
- To eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation

## Safeguarding

Craven College will ensure that:

- You learn and work safely in a safe environment
- You are protected from abuse by others



# Case Study

Category Winner - Effectively Reflecting The Community You Serve

Provider name: Craven College

Provider type: FE College

Provider overview: Medium Sized Rural General FE College with diverse provision, spans 11 sites, employs 850 staff

Submission: Utilisation of LSIS and LSC guidance to create an audit tool for staff teams to measure the impact of their work

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**Outline of E&D-related challenge(s) or obstacle(s) faced and why they needed to be addressed:**

As a rural college, with niche & diverse provision, spread over 11 sites with 70% of the staff team part time and term time only, cascading any initiative provides a challenge. The drivers behind this initiative included the need to prepare for the implementation of the Equality Bill in October 2010 and to ensure that good practice was inherent in all teams irrespective of job role and location.

The challenge was to ensure that all members of staff were aware of their individual responsibilities to measure the impact of their work to ensure good practice. Moving the mind-set of the staff teams from one in which good practice was taking place to one in which good practice still took place but was measured, adapted and differentiated according to the needs of the learners. As part of this process the Principal took the lead role in making this a strategic priority and is advised by the Equality Manager and the Equality and Diversity advisory committee, which has representatives from all of the 34 teams within the college.



**Groundwork, planning and interventions put in place to tackle highlighted issues :**

We undertook an audit of where we were in terms of embedding E&D into our practice. This was completed in September 2009 by the E&D Manager and the Staff Development Manager and an action plan drawn up. We prioritised Sexual Orientation and Faith & Belief and the need to measure impact.

The decision was taken to explore different methods of delivery in order to meet a range of staff needs, to create a more interactive, discussion based approach. The first step was to measure the impact and level of embedding across college. We felt that LSIS/LSC guidance (2009) was an effective and useful document, however was out-facing and onerous for most staff to access.

The good practice and action points were lifted to create a set of audit tools, which were specifically targeted to ensure that the roles and responsibilities of all the discrete teams were highlighted. A training day in February 2010 provided the platform to allow individual teams, with support, to work on their action plan. These action plans are now used to inform the self-assessment process and will form some of the basis for our consultation for the Single Equality action plan. We identified the need for training in awareness of Sexual Orientation, Faith & Belief and Transgender. A roadshow to raise awareness was delivered to all teams at a time that suited. On evaluation, to achieve further embedding, the E&D team would deliver a pre-prepared session to their own teams.

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**Impact the provider has achieved - quantifiable, distance travelled, how the good practice has benefited a range of stakeholders:**

The greatest impact has been the standardised delivery and experience received by 850 staff across 11 sites, and a consistent experience from the student perspective. One of the outcomes of this was a student volunteering, unprompted, to represent LGTB issues on the learner council. Staff report that they feel more confident in the discussion of issues, planning practice, use of correct terminology and compliance with the law.

The interventions have raised the profile of E&D across the college. Staff have requested materials used to share with their own learners as part of curriculum enrichment.

A further impact has been in terms of increased community cohesion and participation. An example of this is a member of staff who, along with students, has become a member of a local Asian community group who are taking actions to visibly increase interaction between different ethnic backgrounds and faiths, e.g. walking together into the town centre and sitting together in a cafe.

Organisationally, the focus of the curriculum performance has been raised, managers report termly through a performance review to demonstrate, among other areas, progress on E&D action plans, to ensure they are kept live, current and up-to-date. In the past we have rated our E&D practice as good. Now we believe that E&D is at the heart of policy and practice within the college. As a result of the audits we are further embedding our impact assessment beyond policy and procedure to include practice, structural change and curriculum.

**How partnership working and/or knowledge sharing have enhanced performance and impact:**

The organisational impact of this series of interventions has not only met the requirements of the Single Equality bill but also has brought the college closer together as a community. This community of practice will always be a challenge due to the 11 sites making up the college, as well as the part time nature of the staff.

Within this intervention all staff have been involved, from the reception teams to the estates teams, student services and teaching staff. Through this initiative we have broken down a significant part of the old culture and introduced a new one. This process has aided the changing of a culture that was inherent within the college, where "all staff" sometimes was perceived as just teaching staff.

Staff have become more aware of the challenges facing students and teams across the college and appreciate the challenges within each others roles and responsibilities. The decision to train E&D advisory team has cemented the teams role as a "local champion" through the delivery of training to their teams, thus raising the profile and responsibility for E&D across the college, as well as communicating a very clear message that E&D matters to us all.

## Lessons learned through the outlined activity and further related development plans:

A key lesson learned through the process was the confirmation that staff need to be taken on a journey rather than be force-fed initiatives. To embed one issue firmly before moving on has allowed teams to digest, develop and evaluate their own practice along the way.

The audit has broken down some staff perceptions that E&D is the responsibility of the manager or the advisory team. E&D is now firmly placed within the mindset of all staff.

For the future, any new job descriptions will have a general E&D statement, as they do now, but also specific requirements for E&D responsibilities within each role.

Within the introduction of the Equality Bill 2010 we will train the advisory committee to update staff on their responsibilities under the bill and carry out training into gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnerships, pregnancy and maternity and procurement. In 2008, 180 members of staff completed the NCFE Equality & Diversity Level 2 qualification. The initiative this year has built on that and led to more staff wishing to complete the qualification. This demonstrates the positive and proactive way in which the college views Equality and Diversity.

## Useful resources:

- ✓ LSIS/LSC Guidance "Equality and diversity in self assessment (2009)
- ✓ Visible and Valued - LSIS sexual orientation awareness
- ✓ BC websites relating to Faith and Belief
- ✓ SMSC Report LSIS (2010)

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Project funded by The Learning & Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

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