

Advancing Equality through Learner Voice

The following ideas were gathered at a FE Providers' Equality Network Event on 24th May 2012. Responses were gathered from a RESPECT CAFE with 8 discussion tables and don't necessarily reflect the thoughts of the author or publisher.

How do you listen to your students? What mechanisms do you have in place?

Student member on key college committees – meetings

Online Surveys

NCDC New College Diversity Club

1-2-1 tutorials Student governors

“Hunch” boxes

Student forum

Evaluations on lessons

Learner Forums

6 weekly reviews

Calderdale College – Learner Involvement Team / Open Door Service / 1-2-1 meetings / Empathy towards learners /

Counsellor available in student services/ Student Union / Course Reps / Student Governor Meetings / Tutorial Sessions

Learner Voice Officer/ Class Assessments/ Face to face Meetings/ Feedback/ Class Reps/ Student Council (SMT) /

Student Ambassador/ Student Union/ Surveys/ Lost Learners

Right Choice Review after 5 weeks of course - Exit Interviews

Reps on College Boards - Student Governors - Course Reps

VLE / Twitter/ Facebook/ Moodle

Visits – Assessors/ Quality Team

Let Them approach their course reps or someone from Student Union

Speak to someone in learner involvement team!!

Learning Development Advisors one to one meetings with learners!!

Learner shouts and learner whispers

Taking a tutor to one side and having a quiet chat with them

Learner voice – department level

FE Focus – cross college concerns which impact on students

Student Union – Elected Governors – Mechanism for college and dept level concerns

Course Based Student reps mechanism to feedback

Graduate mentors working with at risk students

TABLE 6 How can Equality and Diversity be promoted across your College estate? How do you display your learners work and contributions?

Tutorials/ Local Paper / Display for parents/ colleagues/ Magazine/ Newsletter/ Staff bulletins

Award Events/ Celebration Events/ E&D Calendar/ Pictures/ Film/ Facebook/ Twitter

Open Days/ Posters/ Photo Boards/ Lessons

Workshops by external agencies

Relevant work in classrooms

Appropriate access (Braille etc)

Videos – Colleges YOUTUBE Website official one

Poster Competition

E&D Champions / Forums/ Enrichment Activities

Video Screens in departments/ Photobooths

Popups/ announcements on home screen/ website

Many thanks to all contributors – Steve Kelly (stevekelly@upstarts.org)

Events to showcase work eg Productions, Fashion Show
Posters – Positive Role Models
Posters of students work around College
Students need to be made aware what equality is and this has to be explained
By developing campaigns and events for students
At present via posters and web page – However improvements could be social media etc

How do you embed Equality and Diversity and Inclusion into teaching and learning? How is it evidenced and more importantly demonstrated?

It needs to be real not forced
Moodle blogs/ Posters (E&D) / Keeping Portfolio of evidence
Self Assessment Report – OFSTED
ALS Support
Evidence – lesson plans showing differentiation – Lesson Observation – Feedback
Role Play
POST-IT Notes from students at end of lesson with their comment
E&D Tutorials / ILP's
Tutor may have to come out of comfort zone to change teaching methods
Learner focus meeting once a month
Loop System
Clear Powerpoints
Use the diversity of the group in discussion
Evidence through policies
Coloured handouts

How do your staff who do not teach at your College, contribute to advancing Equality and Diversity (If they don't know how could they?)

Extra curricular activity is driven by a team of non teaching staff
E&D champion is not a member of teaching staff
Get the non staff to get their hands dirty for example help give ideas and contribute to events
Refectory staff recognising religious festivals and events
Marketing team advertised events better
Student services support by offering A&G, Wellbeing, Finance etc – Careers Support –ALS – Exam support
Inclusive training days for all staff and students regardless of whether they teach
All College approach to challenging behaviour
Security Team – Safe Environment
Students Union – Taking student opinion forward
SMT Lead on culture of College
Reception staff – Quality of meet and greet
MIS – Gather data on success, retention and achievement
Learner Engagement Team – Lead on learner voice process – mentoring/ well being/ workshops/ Black And Minority ethnic support group/ Young Mums Group/ LGBT Groups
A shared conversation with all partners engaged – security/ teachers/ SMT/ Employers/ Parents
Staff to be aware and update their knowledge to feel comfortable
The One Festival – Themed/ Invite Community Organisations/ Open Day For All

What staff development do you and your colleagues need in this area? (Go beyond awareness sessions and the Equality Act, list titles of courses or contents)

Disability Training
DVD of local communities raising awareness of different faiths
Something like this event would be great
Services available for support for students – health/ mental health
Be more creative – Not just a boring powerpoint
Student Diversity Champions Easily identified by students (perhaps based in Student Union) trained to take issues forward when approached
Listening to what students think the main E&D issues are and responding to this
Training for Personal Tutors – Equality – Diversity
ALL staff to attend training together
NCFE Training – Sex Drugs Alcohol
Support for Students Awareness for Admin Teams
Training for support staff as well as academic staff

How can we ensure that Colleges are at the Heart of the Community? What can others learn from you? What do we need to do?

What we need to do – Get out and about/ Engage with Community Services/ Bring the community into the College
Be responsive to local needs
Put on provision within the Community – Go to them
Engage with stakeholders – parents/ carers – staff – local community groups – local employers – students
Get ambassadors involved in local businesses
Offering buildings for other groups to use
Open Days / Charity Events
Community Cohesion Budget – Research to see if you qualify
Festival Events – Invite Local Groups – Students Involved in Planning
Student Volunteering Programmes
Offering Courses for unemployed people
Take events into the centre of Chesterfield
Network with Primary and Secondary feeder schools at early age and explore career aspirations
Advertisement
Trading – Offering rooms for swap for taking on apprentices to do tasks such as painting etc
Get ambassadors involved in local businesses

If learners are really at the heart of what we do. How do they know it?

Tell them – Opportunities to converse Regular reviews and feedback Visual = posters = tv screens / txttools, Focus groups Tutorials. Newsletters
Student Conferences/ Staff Conferences/ Board of Governors/ Ambassadors/ Learner led activities/ Choices/ Surveys
Student rep groups from campus/ Message boards/ Student Newsletter
Mission Statement/ Showing Impact of Feedback Given – Reacting to feedback
Are changes based on current views – Proactive/ Responsive/ Timely
Students involved in telling the message = processes
Getting involved
Being told by tutors/ feedback Learner Survey
House Meeting (Residential)
On Student Activities / News local/ National
News + Notifications on email and facebook to inform students of what is going on