



## Equality and Diversity: Annual Report - 2007-2008

### Introduction

Hopwood Hall College has a strong commitment to ensure that everyone within the college community is treated equally, within an ethos of mutual trust and respect. Almost 1 in 4 of our learners comes from a minority group which represents the Borough's profile as it is predicted to be in 2020. We are striving to create an homogenous organisation where everyone's contribution is valued equally and people feel empowered and motivated to achieve. We will promote equality and actively celebrate diversity. We want everyone to be respected and as an organisation we welcome diversity. Each year the College holds a 'Celebrating Diversity' event. This is a cross college event with external speakers and performers and participation from most areas of the College.

The first Equality and Diversity scheme was published in December 2006 and incorporated 3 specific sections on race, disability and gender in addition to a general statement covering all equality and diversity legislation. The scheme spans a 3 year cycle. Action is set for each year and progress reported on annually.

During 08-09 a new Single Equality Scheme will be written in line with recommended practice. This will be more specific in terms of outlining how we meet the legal requirements in respect of race, gender including gender identity, disability, age, sexuality and religion and belief and how we ensure that our policies, procedures and practices do not impact negatively on the above areas.

### Race Equality report

The College has a mixed student population with representatives from 21 different nationalities, the four main ethnic groups being White, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Chinese. Student recruitment of BME students exceeded that of the local area in 2007-08.

All ages % ethnic group in college		All ages % ethnic group in Rochdale (2001 census data)	
Bangladeshi	2.6%	Bangladeshi	1.3%
Pakistani	14.5%	Pakistani	7.7%
Chinese	0.6%	Chinese	0.4%
White	71.6%	White	86.1%

Data is collected on success by ethnicity which shows that overall, of the four largest groups all the BME groups succeed at a level greater than the % as a whole for that level of qualification. The weakest group are white British learners whose success rate is below the average. This is the case for all levels and all ages, with the exception of 19+ at level 3, where the problem has been identified as being one of retention of white British learners. A greater degree of analysis is required and in 2008-09 a report will be available by curriculum area giving more detailed analysis.

In response to the data identifying low success of specific groups the college has sought new ways of supporting students outside the formal academic structures. From September 2008 pastoral workers and learning participation officers will be recruited and will work across the college

providing encouragement and support within curriculum areas and role models for young learners. In particular they are aiming to increase retention.

Although students of ethnic groups other than white achieve well a greater analysis is required by curriculum area and by age. A calendar of data reporting is to be established with regular reports into CSMT.

In 2007-08 the 'Face of Hopwood' was introduced. This was a marketing campaign using real students of Hopwood Hall to show the diversity of our students.

During 2007-08 there were a significant number of International students in the college. They were supported by the International office and were able to access additional EFL provision. Many lived on campus and social events were organised to assist their integration. The number of International students will reduce significantly in 2008-09 as we no longer actively market abroad although International students are still able to enrol if they apply and support is still available.

The College has received training on Hate Crime reporting and is ready to implement the scheme from September 2008. This gives students and staff the ability to report any hate crime that they have experienced or witnessed with the support of trained staff.

### **Disability Equality Report**

Disability issues are part of the agenda of the Equality and Diversity group but a separate Disability Equality group has been established to ensure that disability issues are fully addressed and wider consultation is sought. The group is made up of staff and external members who represent local disability groups. Students are also invited. The group meets 4 times per year prior to the main Equality and Diversity group who receive the minutes.

The inclusion of external members has ensured that the College has feedback from those who may not be students but who may wish to be and the College has made adaptations as a result. The procedure for equipment loan has been revised so that equipment is ready for use at the start of term. The induction on disability issues for new staff has also been revised. We are grateful to members of this group for offering to test aspects of college provision and as a result additional parking bays have now been identified together with a bay for a mini bus used by those with disabilities. Information on the website is reported as being good and very accessible but information in the prospectus has been amended and a new brochure for support is being developed.

Staff development for staff who may have a student with disabilities in their group is good. Where applicable students themselves assist with this training which is delivered promptly at the beginning of the term. Additional support staff are kept updated through regular specialist staff training. Staff who have disabilities give feedback that they are well supported and monitoring arrangements have been instigated in personnel in order to track applicants through application, interview and recruitment.

Students with disabilities receive support where applicable and their success rate is above that of students without support and has improved from 2006-07. For example students with dyslexia have a success rate of 79% compared with a success rate of 76% for those without a learning difficulty. This reflects the highly skilled support that is available to a wide variety of learners once they are in college.

Independent disability/accessibility reports are to be sought in 2008-09 in light of the planned new building. These will be shared with the disability equality group who will be involved and consulted at each stage of the design.

During 07-08 two new appointments were made for Assistant Director for Students and Learning Support Manager and these staff will have a direct impact on further developments and implementation of the equality and diversity scheme.

### **Gender Equality Report**

The College analyses enrolments by gender and curriculum areas take steps to improve the gender ratio where necessary and to present positive role models in marketing materials. Further analysis of success by gender is required in 2008-09 so that more explicit measures can be taken.

Gender legislation is now inclusive of transgender people and it is proposed that the harassment and bullying policy be reviewed to explicitly include recognition of harassment that may occur towards transgender, gay and lesbian staff and students.

### **Staff Development**

The college continues to hold the positive about disability logo and there is assessment and support for staff with a disability or who become disabled in employment. An article has been published in Newslink and on the Intranet advising staff on facilities and services that are available for them and this has resulted in an increase in the uptake of Access at Work benefits.

It is mandatory for all new staff to take a module on equality and diversity as part of their induction programme. This will be reviewed in 2008-09 to include reference to sexual orientation using the 'visible and valued' DVD resource. It is proposed that early in 2008-09 existing staff receive an update on recent legislation prior to further training modules being introduced. Teacher Education students have a focus on key issues around Equality and Diversity and how to incorporate these into teaching and learning. Specialist staff development is put in place for all teachers who have a student with particular learning difficulties in their class e.g for staff who have a deaf student joining their group a deaf awareness session is put in place together with strategies for assisting the student's learning.

### **Impact assessments**

All managers have undertaken 2 training sessions on completing impact assessments. Progress on completion of impact assessments has been slow and it is a priority for the college to ensure that all policies and procedures identified as high risk have been completed and action taken in respect of their findings. Initial documentation has been refined and there is now a clearer more appropriate document. The completed impact assessments are monitored through the Equality and Diversity Steering group with reports going to the College Senior Management team.

### **Community Cohesion**

The College promotes social cohesion and is working with other Borough organisations to ensure that Rochdale remains a place where social cohesion is maintained. The College has hosted several borough wide events held over the summer by the Rochdale Youth Community Cohesion group aimed at improving community cohesion between young people. From September 2008 we will become more active as the College becomes a member of the newly established community

cohesion group. The College is also exploring the establishment of a multi faith chaplaincy in 2008-09 to serve the diverse spiritual needs of the college community.

**Key Priorities for 2008-09**

- **That the College complete all high priority impact assessments and addresses any resulting action.**
- **That a Single Equality Scheme be produced that highlights and strengthens all six equality strands.**
- **That there is a much greater degree of analysis of existing data so that positive action can be taken together with collection of new data.**