Introduction

Single Equality Scheme 2018-20

This is Shrewsbury Colleges Group Single Equality Scheme (SES). The Scheme describes in one document how we intend to fulfil our statutory duties under existing equality legislation, how we promote equality of opportunity and reduce discrimination, and how we demonstrate our commitment to promoting respect, fairness, equality and diversity and valuing all our students. It builds on the work we have been doing on race, gender and disability and follows the guidelines of the Single Equality Act.

Our Single Equality Scheme (SES) responds to the new single public sector equality duty, which requires all public authorities to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

The SES involves students, staff, governors and stakeholders and we work in partnership with them to implement it.

We have involved equality groups in the development of this Scheme and will engage with students, staff and stakeholders to develop our Action Plan.

We will continue to analyse data, promote awareness of equality and British Values and address issues that we identify. We will continue to make our policies and procedures increasingly inclusive.

Shrewsbury Colleges Group's Equality and Diversity Statement

Shrewsbury Colleges Group values each member of the College community and recognises the contribution made to college life by students, staff, service users, visitors, partners and governors. The College will always seek to ensure that no member of the College Community will be subjected to discrimination, unfair treatment, or treated less favourably because of any protected characteristics such as age, disability, ethnicity or racial origin, gender, marital status, nationality, religious beliefs or sexual orientation.

There is a strong belief in nurturing the potential of individuals through tolerance, respect and education.

The College recognises the importance of having a fair and just environment and is actively working towards promoting diversity.

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The College will ensure that any alleged discrimination, harassment, bullying, unfair, or less favorable treatment is dealt with as quickly as possible, according to agreed procedures.

It is the responsibility of all members of the College Community to uphold equal opportunity principles and to ensure that the SES is implemented fully by making sure that they do not discriminate and that they positively challenge all forms of discrimination within the College and promote our policies within the wider external community.

To this end, all students, partners, governors, prospective students and any other outside agencies involved with the College will be informed of the College's commitment to equal opportunities and diversity.

Shrewsbury Colleges Group's Aims

This SES incorporates the policy and plans for addressing issues relating to the protected characteristics: Age, Disability, Gender, Gender Identity, Race, Religion or Belief, Marriage or Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity and Sexual Orientation to ensure that equality and diversity practices meet the new Single Public Sector Equality Duty.

The College promotes equality of opportunity and good relations throughout the College Community to eliminate discrimination and encourage inclusion and participation. Where necessary it takes positive action to address any imbalance or disadvantage.

Shrewsbury Colleges Groups commitment to Equality and Diversity is paramount and it strives to go beyond its legal duty in order to promote social cohesion.

Strategic Priorities

Our Vision

Shrewsbury Colleges Group, where every student makes outstanding progress.

Our Mission

Provide outstanding academic and vocational education and training for all 16-19 students and adults;
Be a local centre of excellence for higher education;
Be the college of choice.

Promoting the Single Equality Scheme

With regard to promoting the Colleges SES to staff, The College undertakes to:

- Tackle any form of discrimination on the grounds of race, disability, gender/transgender, age, religion or belief or sexual orientation
- Ensure that all policies and procedures are fully analysed and assessed for impact in order to incorporate the different needs of individuals
- Expand opportunities for all staff to attend training
- Provide a safe environment where everyone is treated fairly, with dignity and respect

With regard to promoting the Colleges SES to students, The College undertakes to:

- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all students
- Acknowledge the role of the curriculum in challenging and addressing discriminatory practice and discrimination
- Incorporate Equality Impact Assessments in the College Self-Assessment Report
- Monitor admissions and student progress in relation to demographics
- Obtain feedback and respond to it.

With regard to promoting the Colleges SES to employers, The College undertakes to:

- Ensure that they adopt the same commitment to equality and diversity as the College does
- Ensure that students enjoy the same positive experience wherever their place of study or work placement.

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With regard to promoting the Colleges SES to partners, the College undertakes to:

• Ensure that when purchasing products or services from external providers, equality and diversity is reflected in our tendering process.

This SES will be available to all staff on InfoPoint and will be promoted by The Board and Senior Leadership Team. The SES will be published on the College website and copies made available at College receptions.

The promotion of the SES and the accompanying Action Plan will be monitored and details of its progress will be reported to:

• College Governors
• Clerk to the Board
• All Staff
• New staff during induction
• All students
• Senior Leadership Team
• Other stakeholders

The Local Context

The population of Shropshire is 306,129 (2011 Census). Central Shropshire has a population of 96,500 (Mid-year Population Estimates 2010). Over two thirds of the area's population live in Shrewsbury, Shropshire's main county town. According to the 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation, out of the 149 counties in England, Shropshire ranks at 101.

Shropshire has an estimated working-age population of 223,892. Of those, 29% are economically inactive, 11% of which have declared that this is due to long-term sickness or disability (2011 Census).

4% of the area's population are from ethnic minority groups (2011 Census).

Figures from the 2011 Census show that overall unemployment in Shropshire at that time was 3%.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 is a nationally recognised measure of deprivation at the small area (Super Output Area - SOA) level. It measures deprivation in its broadest sense by assessing indicators relating to income, employment, health and disability, education, skills and training, barriers to housing and services, crime and the living environment. There are 193 Super Output Areas (SOAs) in Shropshire.

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There are 193 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Shropshire.

In terms of average rank, Shropshire ranks 107th out of 152 Upper-tier Local Authorities in England (a rank of 1 being considered the most deprived Upper-tier Local Authority).

All of the 9 LSOAs that fall within the 20% most deprived in England are located within urban areas of Shropshire.

One LSOA falls within the 10% most deprived in England, it is located within Harlescott electoral division in Shrewsbury.

The five overall highest ranked areas in Shropshire are located within the electoral divisions of Harlescott (Shrewsbury), Monkmoor (Shrewsbury), Ludlow East (Ludlow), Oswestry South (Oswestry) and Meole/Bayston Hill, Column and Sutton (the LSOA crosses two electoral divisions in the wider Shrewsbury area).

In addition to using the Index of Multiple Deprivation the College uses Free School Meals (FSM) to identify potential barriers so that support and resources are targeted towards those most in need.

How Does Shrewsbury Colleges Groups Promote Equality and Diversity?

- For employer based training, there is a system in place to vet employers prior to commencement of training, which includes equality and diversity. On-going monitoring, either through re assessment of the employer or through the review process, ensures college standards are adhered to and learners' needs met. This takes the form of observations and questioning during the review process.

- The College has a robust application process for recruitment to ensure that equality in employment is secure. Monitoring applicant data has been in place for a number of years, which considers gender, sexuality, race, disability, ethnic origin and religion.

- Teachers will take notice of the individual learning strategies for students who have been assessed. It is essential that teachers and tutors work with the relevant areas, where appropriate, to provide materials, information, advice and study aids to meet the individual needs of students.

- Annual lesson observations are conducted that include assessing the extent of integrating Equality and Diversity into the curriculum. These highlight areas of good practice and areas where practice could be improved. In response to this the College's Learning Coaches provide support and training to those areas where practice could be improved.

- Equality and diversity training is mandatory for all staff with regular refreshers and training available to ensure our focus on this subject is maintained. There has been a lot of work to involve the Governors who now attend and complete the training.

- The College has amended its lesson planning and schemes of work documentation to ensure that equality, diversity and British Values themes are considered at the planning stage and throughout. Learning coaches work within curriculum areas to identify opportunities to develop embedding opportunities.

- The E & D Committee encourages curriculum areas to conduct regular impact assessments where they consider issues such as rooming, resources and accessibility and then identify strategies to address any inadequacies. This forms part of the Committee's action plan.

- The College is an approved UK NARIK Centre

- Each curriculum area takes it in turn to send tutors and students to the Equality & Diversity Committee to allow for a wide range of viewpoints to be considered.

- Members of staff from the college agency plan for, and communicate, a range of Equality, Diversity and British values topics for student tutorials. They also play a key role in the production of an Equality & Diversity calendar, which features key events, celebrations and activities being held by our students.

- Each curriculum area has Student Reps who represent their peers. These are managed by the Student Union Executive which is made up of five Officers from across The Colleges Group. They attend operational meetings where they can voice the views and suggestions of their peers and see how they can influence and drive forward strategies that raise awareness, break down barriers and ensure all students, including those with protected characteristics, have a positive experience whilst at college.

- Additional Learning Support staff provide training and support for tutors and students. They deliver guidance and advice about using assistive software, making adaptations to materials and a range of other strategies that can support students.

- The College has well-established procedures for monitoring the performance of Equality & Diversity. All stages of the College's self-assessment process require the inclusion of Equality & Diversity analysis. Reports to SLT and ALT identify the performance of under-represented groups and make recommendations at curriculum level. This is also monitored through the Equality & Diversity link governor at Board.

- The College has only small numbers of students from different ethnic minority backgrounds though it is higher than the community overall. It therefore tracks them closely early on to identify potential problems and take appropriate action where required.

- The Equality & Diversity Action Plan constantly evolves and is informed by the results of the impact assessments, learning walks, outcomes, student feedback,

policy changes and amendments to legislation. The Group Vice Principal for Quality and Curriculum monitors the progress of individual "minority" students and has the responsibility for ensuring that Equality & Diversity actions are included in the College QuIP. The College Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible for monitoring actions and reviewing policies, and these have to be approved by the College Academic Leadership Team (ALT) and Governors.

- Tutorial sessions have Equality, Diversity and British Values integrated within the planning to ensure that all students experience aspects that may be outside of their immediate environment and knowledge.

- Students based with employers are protected from harassment, bullying or discrimination through careful assessment, monitoring and questioning during regular reviews.

Student surveys consistently show no significant differences between groups, however our most recent induction survey (October 2017) suggests, from the students who responded, that:-

- 25% of students who declared either a learning difficulty or a disability disagreed that they came to college because it was recommended.

- 26% of students who disagreed with the statement "I know the kind of support I can get from Student Services" declared either a learning difficulty or a disability

- Of the students who stated they did not understand what they could do after their course finished, 41% declared a learning difficulty or disability.

Staff Profile

Shrewsbury Colleges Group employs approximately 550 full and part-time staff. The College does not have a very diverse workforce but is nonetheless committed to promoting equality to all its employees. The College also has a number of policies and procedures in place to support its equality initiatives. Each revised version of the SES goes to the College Academic Leadership Team (ALT) for agreement before being released to staff and uploaded to the website.

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Monitoring

The College currently monitors its workforce by ethnicity, gender, disability, age religion/belief and sexuality in terms of staff profile and turnover, absence, applications for vacancies and success at interview. The Annual Workforce Monitoring Report is available on the College website. A comparison of staff with students has been a recent addition to this.

An analysis of staff, governor and student profiles has been completed this year to compare how they reflect the local community. Student ethnicity is above average.

Training

The College has a training programme that ensures all staff, including governors, are trained in equality and diversity. The College has a Moodle page where staff can access information and resources to support this. The Moodle site includes an online training module and post-course quiz. Once the quiz has been completed successfully, a certificate of completion is sent to the member of staff. Bespoke training is provided for staff, in particular teachers who are identified as requiring improvement during the observation process, in this area. This approach has proved successful in supporting staff to improve their confidence and ability to embed equality and diversity in their teaching and learning.

The College Lead for Equality and Diversity has completed the CMI Level 7 Management Award in Equality and Diversity and chairs the committee meetings.

The College currently provides online Equality Essentials training to all front line staff and Governors to ensure that they are aware of appropriate procedures to accommodate people with specific needs. Where additional support is deemed necessary support is provided by College Learning Coaches. Managers and staff who contribute towards staff selection are also provided with training and guidance in order to ensure compliance in relation to equality and diversity.

Shrewsbury Colleges Group's Policies and Procedures

The College has an Equality Suite that reflects the following Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage & Civil Partnership
- Race

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- Religion or Belief
- Sex/Gender
- Sexual Orientation

A separate policy for Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Parental Leave is also available.

The College has the following policies, reports and statements in place for both students and staff:

- Single Equality Scheme (SES)
- Equality and Diversity Action Plan
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion College Position Statement
- Equality and Diversity Committee Terms of Reference
- Annual Workforce Equality Monitoring Report
- Equality and Diversity Statement
- Disability Statement
- College's Vision, Mission and Top Objectives

These are reviewed and updated regularly and are available on SharePoint and/or the College website.

Inclusion and Community Cohesion

- The College will not tolerate any form of unfair discrimination or harassment based on an individual's race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, religion belief or disability. The College will investigate and address incidents of this nature.

- The College has an Equality and Diversity calendar, which details a number of activities that celebrate diversity, British values, and commemorates a range of events, festivals and significant dates. Many of these are student led activities.

- The College works closely with outside agencies, particularly with members of the FRESh Equality Forum. Members of the Committee attend the forum so that the College can maintain links within the community and access information and updates about local issues that relate to transgender and LBGTQ.

- The tutorial programme includes Equality & Diversity activities that link to the calendar and provides time for group discussion and the sharing of experience.

- The e-safety policy and the Student Zone on Moodle inform students how to keep safe online and to deal with negative issues such as cyber-bullying. The College encourages staff and students to become 'e-responsible' by enjoying the benefits of new technologies whilst making them aware of, and managing, potential

risks. Awareness of this is being raised by the "Digital Life" campaign, which encompasses eSafety, Social Media, Online Presence, Safety Awareness and Technical Security. Staff and students can access resources on Moodle via links from the Student and Staff Zone.

- The College has two members of staff trained in the Prevent initiative; by disseminating their knowledge it is helping colleagues to recognise and deal with signs of extremism. It is also mandatory for all staff and Governors to complete training to support this.

- At London Road campus lifts provide accessibility for all main areas. At the English Bridge campus lifts and access platforms provide accessibility to all main areas other than the basement area. At the Welsh Bridge campus lifts and platform elevators provide access to the main teaching areas. Accessible parking spaces are available on all campuses.

Fitness to Study

The College aims to support students' learning and academic achievements and will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to enable students to access their course of study that is considered to be appropriate to their disability, learning difficulty or physical and mental ill-health. It may also apply when a student's condition compromises their safety or the safety of others whilst participating in a work placement or other off site activity.

The College provides a range of services through The Agency to support students during the application and enrolment process and their time at the college, for example:

- The Counselling Service/ Health and Wellbeing Services

- Student Support

- Careers and Employability Team

- Welfare/ Safeguarding Team

The College recognises that each case will be different and may require liaison with the student, parents or carers and internal and external agencies in order to reach a decision. The following are examples of when it is appropriate to consider reasonable adjustments:

- Where students are affected by conditions that require long periods of absence and treatment

- Where participation in an assessment or other course related activity would jeopardise the long-term health and wellbeing of the student due to an existing medical condition.

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- Where there are doubts from staff over a student's fitness to study in the college and/or within their placement because of an existing medical condition.

- Where the ability to study is deemed by the college to be neither manageable nor achievable in relation to specific tasks or activities because of an existing condition. It may be necessary to consider awarding body criteria and the ability to study in order to complete assessments/ assignments.

- When there is disruption to teaching, learning and support of other students not otherwise covered by the Disciplinary Policy and Procedures or where unreasonable demands are being made on staff or students.

- Where there is a risk to self and others because of an existing condition.

The agreement reached in each case will differ according to the circumstances and the advice received from medical practitioners and other external experts.

Obtaining and using data

Staff profile data is compared to the local population data as it becomes available and additions made to the action plan as necessary. The results of both staff and student surveys and questionnaires inform decision making and are appraised by the Group Vice Principal for Quality & Curriculum and shared with the Equality & Diversity Committee, Academic Leadership Team, Senior Leadership Team and Governors.

a) Involvement of Equality and Diversity groups

It is considered essential to gather a range of qualitative data. Student forums and learning walks provide learner voice opportunities. Students are also encouraged to make comments anonymously via the College Student Services post box. Staff views are collected through a survey. The Student Perception of College Surveys are analysed by equality groups and any inequalities are discussed at the committee and actions agreed and added to the Action Plan.

b) Student Forums

A number of College information gathering events are held in an attempt to elicit views of our students from non-gender stereotypical courses, ethnic minorities and disabilities. The Student Union Executive meet three times a year as a whole group to monitor actions and progress of issues raised in Course Rep Forums.

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c) Reports & Surveys

Student reports and surveys are routinely analysed by protected characteristics to ensure levels of satisfaction are appropriate or where improvements are still required. Survey results are also used to detect achievement gaps and help the College react appropriately to address them.

In the last End of Year Student Survey 2017 it was noted that students with a disability were not confirming the offer of work placement opportunity in line with the rest of the college student body. A cross check was made with the work placement department to ascertain if students with a disability were not gaining placements. This was not the case. All students, who requested a placement with a declared disability were given a work placement opportunity. Therefore the promotion of work placement opportunities amongst this group of students may be the issue so this will form a new action.

d) Self-assessment

The self-assessment process is used to collect data that informs our Equality and Diversity Action Plan to address any achievement gaps. This continues with agreement from the Senior Leadership Team and Governors.

Equality Impact Assessments

Impact Assessments are completed for all college policies, new processes and procedures to ensure Equality & Diversity issues are considered and taken into account. Impact assessments consider disability, gender and race. Previous records are held on InfoPoint and all future records will be shared with staff on the new Equality & Diversity Moodle site on Staff Zone.

Regular monitoring of existing policies and procedures takes place and appropriate amendments are made and published as required.

Implementing the Single Equality Scheme

a) Accountability

The College Governors are legally responsible for promoting equal opportunities and diversity, eliminating unlawful discrimination, implementing the public sector duties and ensuring that effective policies and procedures are in place to continuously improve the quality of equal opportunities throughout the College. The Governors should ensure they have an awareness of all relevant legislation, that membership of the Board reflects the wider community, that the strategic plan includes a commitment to equality and diversity

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and that they receive and respond to equal opportunities monitoring data.

The Principal is responsible to the College Board for ensuring that equality and diversity is continuously promoted and comprehensively implemented in all aspects of the College's operation.

The Equality and Diversity Committee is responsible for promoting, monitoring and reviewing the Equality Policies, and for evaluating their effectiveness. It is also responsible for promoting, reviewing and monitoring the development of equality and diversity activity across the College.

The Committee is chaired by a Curriculum Leader and Lead for Equality & Diversity, and is attended by the Group Vice Principal Quality & Curriculum; link Governor; Teaching and Learning and Support services and representation by students across the curriculum. The group is responsible for:

- Reviewing equality and diversity related strategies, policies, procedures and initiatives, and to advise and make recommendations to the Senior Leadership Team as necessary;

- Monitoring the performance of the College with regard to its equality and diversity related objectives and statutory obligations;

- Considering equality and diversity matters and to recommend suitable actions;

- Receive views and recommendations from student union / student forums or other groups

- Promoting a working and learning environment that values diversity, promotes inclusion, and is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all students, staff, visitors, service users, partners and stakeholders

- Development and implementation of the Equality & Diversity Strategy in accordance with relevant legislation

- Policy and guidance development and implementation including impact assessments

- Ensuring that effective consultation and involvement is carried out with key stakeholders with respect to all relevant strategies, policies, practices and procedures

- Provision of an effective data monitoring, analysis and publishing process that supports the equality and diversity agenda

- Provision of advice, support and guidance to managers, students and staff and related partners regarding equality and diversity matters

- Design and delivery of training initiatives to support the promotion and implementation of the equality and diversity agenda

- Producing Terms of Reference and Position Statements

This group will meet at least once a term and usually every half term.

The Colleges' Group Human Resources Department is responsible for promoting, monitoring and the implementation of all aspects of the College's policies relating to the recruitment, employment and retention of staff.

All Managers of the College are responsible for promoting equality and diversity, for improving the performance of their individual curriculum or support area, and for ensuring that effective monitoring and review systems are in place. All employees of the College have a responsibility for implementing this SES Policy and promoting equal opportunities in all aspects of their work.

b) Embedding equality into quality assurance

It is recognised that equality and diversity issues should not be seen as marginal to the core business of the College, but should be embedded in the strategic planning and quality assurance processes. Work will be undertaken to further embed equality and diversity into the lesson observation process, the self-assessment process, and the planning process. It will also be increasingly explicit in performance management processes e.g. performance reviews and management competences.

The Equality & Diversity Committee's Priorities for 2018-20

Priority 1: To provide frequent and effective training to ensure a good understanding and awareness of Equality, Diversity and British Values.

Priority 2: To ensure Impact Assessments take place for all new policies, procedures, plans and processes

Priority 3: To integrate Equality & Diversity in the curriculum, work placements and training

Priority 4: To review buildings and grounds to ensure they remain accessible and to highlight and promote Equality & Diversity issues in new developments i.e. The HE building and old i.e. lift issues at English and Welsh Bridge campuses.

Priority 5: To promote and raise awareness of cultural customs and values amongst students and staff

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Priority 6: To continue to collect and monitor data that allows the College to identify areas of weakness and to take action to address them

Priority 7: To promote and raise awareness of British Values and the PREVENT strategy

Priority 8: To extend prayer facilities across the group so they are available on each campus

Monitoring, Reporting, Reviewing and Updating

This SES covers the period 2018-20. However, the Action Plan will be revised to include timescales and responsibility managers, and will be reviewed regularly. It is proposed that both the SES and Action Plan will be presented to Governors each year with details of progress and/or areas for concern.

Briefings on various aspects of the progress of the SES will also be given to the SLT and ALT during the year.

Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs)

These are used to inform the setting of targets and the measurement of our progress in achieving them, the College will collect and analyse the following information by equality groups:

For students

- Profile of students
- Applications, success and failure rates of admission to programmes
- Retention rates
- Achievement rates
- Disciplinary action
- Complaints by learners and their response
- Satisfaction surveys

For employees

- Profiles of employees by type of contract
- Recruitment and selection by application, short listing to interview and appointment
- Promotion application and success rates
- Disciplinary proceedings
- Grievances

Completion of this, in conjunction with the College Self-Assessment Report (SAR), will inform our equality objectives which will be set and reviewed annually on the Equality & Diversity Action Plan.

Complaints or Appeals

Complaints relating to Equality and Diversity and the SES will initially be handled at course level or by the Student Union Executives and then through the usual Complaints or Grievance Procedures. Students can use the Complaints Form to communicate their complaint. In the case of serious complaints relating to equalities, the Curriculum Leader/Lead for Equality & Diversity may be appointed as the Investigating Officer. Prior to entering the formal process, complainants can speak to a colleague or a member of Student Services, or to a member of the Equality and Diversity Committee.

Publishing the College Single Equality Scheme

The College will make the Scheme as widely available as possible, not only to staff and students through InfoPoint and Moodle but also to external partners and other stakeholders via the website. It will also be made available in hard copy to any interested parties.

We have an Action Plan, which is updated regularly and is available on request and on the College website.

We can also provide data showing our achievement rates by ethnicity, disability and gender and disadvantaged area. Please contact Chris Pemberton on 01743 342348 chrisp@shrewsbury.ac.uk or Teresa Griffiths 01743 342363 teresag@shrewsbury.ac.uk

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