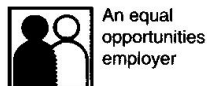


# Central College



## Disability Equality Annual Report December 2008



## Foreword by the Principal

During session 2007/2008, Central College has undergone a significant change process. This process has allowed us, as Team Central, to refocus on our mission, vision and values for the College. Our shared mission, **Changing lives.....shaping futures**, is an inclusive statement which reflects our commitment to provide all learners and staff with equal opportunity to help them fulfill their potential by removing barriers.

My vision for Central College is to become a World Centre of Excellence, a top class quality college and a best in class partner for Economic & Cultural Development and Social Inclusion remains. This can only be achieved by embracing the diverse range of staff, learners and visitors in its community and involving disabled people in the process.

Through our Corporate Values, we recognise the importance of respecting all learners and their individual needs and backgrounds. Indeed, the diversity of our learner population in terms of ethnicity, age, disability, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation and social background is welcomed and supported.

This document aims to reflect the progress made by the College towards achieving the aims as set out in the Action Plan contained within the Disability Equality Scheme. It will also highlight difficulties that the College has encountered in trying to fulfil its actions and how it aims to address these.

As a result of the Equality Bill which was announced during the Queen's speech on 3<sup>rd</sup> December, Central College is now moving towards developing a Single Equality Scheme. The Scheme will act as a framework for compliance with our statutory obligations to promote race, disability and gender and will also cover age, religion or belief and sexual orientation. I believe that a combined Scheme will enhance our ability to communicate and manage our equality commitments and action planning. This Scheme will also help us to move towards mainstreaming equality and diversity by combining the College's work in one document.

P.G.K Little

Principal & Chief Executive

## Where are we now?

This annual report aims to highlight the significant progress which has been made to promote disability equality and to eliminate discrimination and harassment of disabled people since the publication of the Annual Report, December 2007.

Progress has been made in the following areas:

1. A dedicated Equality & Diversity section has been developed on the College website. This section not only offers information on the College's own publications and schemes', it also provides links to external organisations covering all six equality strands. This section will continue to be updated in line with legislative changes.
2. Policies continue to be prioritised for impact assessment. Results will be published on the Equality & Diversity section of the College website.
3. Positive About Disabled People audit was undertaken in March 2008. The College successfully retained recognition and can continue to use the logo on all literature.
4. The College continues to promote disability equality and to promote disclosure through the continued use of its Additional Support Needs guide. The guide highlights the support which is available, including assistive technology. The guide contains detailed information regarding Needs Assessments, Disabled Students Allowance and Confidentiality. The section on confidentiality was included to highlight to disabled learners that information will only be passed on with their consent which it is hoped will encourage more disabled people to disclose information regarding their disability. Since its' publication, there has been a 43% increase in the number of learners declaring a disability and a 60% increase in the number of learners requiring extended learning support.
5. An employee data monitoring exercise was conducted between April and June 2008. As a result of this exercise a number of staff disclosed an existing disability as defined by DDA. This resulted in disclosure figures amongst staff



rising from 1.57% to ~~4.414.9~~%. This increase has been due to improved awareness raising of the supportive measures that are available and that have been, and will continue to be made available to staff.

6. Through supportive return to work interviews a number of staff members have been identified as requiring additional supportive measures which have been implemented through phased return to work programmes. Employees have also been provided with significant adjustments and supportive measures under the Access to Work programme.
7. Enhanced use of pre-emptive measures such as occupational health referrals and other initiatives, highlighted in paragraphs 8 and 9, have helped to reduce the affects of ailments and reduce absenteeism. These measures continue to be monitored on a regular basis to ensure they remain effective and additional /alternative support initiatives are continually being sought through consultation with staff.
8. Learners and Staff from the School of Hair and Holistic Therapies offer a range of treatments to staff and learners including, hot stone therapy, massage, reflexology and aromatherapy to promote positive mental health and wellbeing. Staff can also access a personal fitness trainer, with Sports students from the School of Beauty, Sports & Health, providing this service which benefits staff and helps students achieve one of their course units.
9. Central College has signed up to the Healthy Working Lives Initiative and will be working towards the bronze award during the next reporting period. Although this is primarily aimed at staff, learners will also have access to events and materials.
10. A Disability Statement continues to be included in a dedicated Equality section within the College prospectus.

11. Guidance interviews with On Course Tutors are prioritised for disabled learners in receipt of Extended Learning Support. Guidance meetings also cover discussion on the effectiveness of support strategies and study aids as well as progress in essential skills.
12. Learner Services & Support continue to gather information from questionnaires which are sent to disabled learners. The limitations of the information currently gathered have been recognised and the Equalities Co-ordinator has begun to collect information from disabled learners during the review process.
13. The Learner Progress and Achievement Board continues to meet each block to discuss retention, achievement and progression. Learners in receipt of extended learning support are prioritised. Staff who are involved in implementing support arrangements and/or delivering support for disabled learners are invited to attend meetings, ensuring an holistic approach between support and academic staff.
14. The College continues to attend various Open Days specifically aimed at encouraging disabled people to consider attending College. Staff who were involved in providing support to disabled learners were present to ensure prospective learners had access to as much detailed information as possible.
15. Due to the continuing increase in the number of learners who have a diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome, the Service Level Agreement between the College and the National Autistic Society (NAS) remains in place. Under the terms of this agreement, a member of the NAS is based in College two days per week to provide support to learners with Asperger Syndrome. For session 2008/09, the College also requested that NAS delivered monthly information sessions for staff as part of the Service Level Agreement.

16. During session 2007/08, there was a 110% increase in the number of learners disclosing mental health difficulties and a 71% increase in the number requiring extended learning support. As a direct result of this, the College worked with 'See Me Scotland' to challenge the stigma and discrimination of mental ill health and showed it's commitment by signing the 'See Me' pledge.

**see me** ● ● ● ●

**LET'S STOP THE STIGMA OF MENTAL ILL HEALTH**  
**[www.seemescotland.org](http://www.seemescotland.org)**

17. The Assistant Principal (Policy & Planning) and the Equalities Co-ordinator have met with Executive members of Central College Students Association (CCSA) and Equality Forward to discuss learner engagement in relation to equalities issues. Further meetings to be arranged.
18. An article was placed in Autumn 2008 Edition of the Scottish Further Education Unit (SFEU) publication, Broadcast. The article entitled, 'Culture, Partnerships & Pledges' the aim of this was to highlight to the sector the commitment of the College towards equality and to celebrate the diversity of the College community.
19. The training and development of staff has also been a key priority and several events have been arranged including an 'Equalities' themed week to ensure that staff are well informed and up to date with developments. Equality Impact Assessment was also a key theme for our staff conference.

Training and development topics have included: deaf awareness; assistive technology; Asperger Syndrome/High Functioning Autism; Supporting Mental Health & Wellbeing; Disability Etiquette; Reducing Barriers: Access & Inclusion; Making Learning Accessible; Encouraging Inclusive Practice, delivered by Briite.

## DISABILITY EQUALITY ACTION PLAN (LEARNERS) – PROGRESS DURING FIRST YEAR

| No.        | Key task   | Progress to Date   | Difficulties/Actions   | Date of Next Review |
|------------|--|--|--|---------------------|
| <b>1</b>   | <b>Involvement</b>   |  |  |                     |
| <b>1.1</b> | Assistive technology provision, procedures and ELS   | <p>Assistive Technology training was offered to all staff during a planned staff development week.</p> <p>The use of assistive technology was further promoted during a staff conference where workshops were delivered to both academic and support staff on the benefits of the Inspiration and Texthelp packages.</p> <p>A guidance and support course was developed using Blackboard which all learners are enrolled on. This promotes the use of assistive technology through interactive guides.</p> | <p>The workshops delivered during the staff conference were well received and all staff who attended could see the benefits of the software and how it could be incorporated/support lesson planning.</p> <p>All learners are aware of the benefits of assistive technology and not just those with a disability or additional support need.</p> | June 2009           |
| <b>1.2</b> | Establish an Access, Inclusion, Equalities and Diversity (AIED) committee which reports to the SMT. Committee to include disabled staff, learners and other interested parties | The AIED Committee meetings were on hold throughout the restructure period. The role, remit and membership of the group is being reviewed and meetings are due to commence early 2009.   | Although there has not been regular meeting of the group, the Equalities Co-ordinator has been supported by the Senior Management Team and regular updates have continued to be made available to the Board.   | June 2009           |
| <b>1.3</b> | The AIED group to prioritise policies and procedures for impact assessment   | <p>Significant progress has been made in this area and a toolkit has been developed and disseminated to the One Management Team. All Managers are required to impact assess all policies, procedures and processes which they have ownership for against all equality strands.</p> <p>Results to be passed to the Equalities Co-ordinator.</p>   | <p>The Equalities Co-ordinator will collate and publish results of all impact assessments.</p> <p>Progress will be monitored by the AIED committee.</p>  | December 2009       |

| No. | Key task   | Progress to Date   | Difficulties/Actions  | Review of progress |
|-----|--|--|---|--------------------|
| 1.4 | Liaise with Information Services & Learning Technology to set up on-line forum to work in conjunction with Focus groups. | Other approaches for involvement are currently being considered. At present, the Review meetings have been identified as a key time to engage with disabled learners.  | Review meetings are only scheduled for disabled learners in receipt on extended learning support. Therefore the views of disabled learners who do not require support are not gathered.   | June 2009          |
| 1.5 | External audit of current procedures in relation to The Learner Experience- Student Support                              | <p>The Learner Experience – Student Support continues to be subject to external audits as set out by the Audit Committee.</p> <p>The recent introduction of functions completing Self Evaluation Reports also provides another opportunity for staff directly involved in supporting learners to reflect on the service.</p> | <p>Disabled stakeholders are not directly involved in this process.</p> <p>The Assistant Principal (Quality &amp; Performance) will address this through the audit committee and it is recommended that our internal auditors (Deloitte) seek feedback from disabled learners and stakeholders.</p> | December 2009      |
| 1.6 | Meet with CCSA Disability Officer to maximise Disabled Learner involvement   | CCSA President and Executive members with an equality remit, met with the Assistant Principal (Policy & Planning), Equalities Co-ordinator and a representative from Equality Forward to ensure equalities issues are fully understood and addressed by the CCSA.  | CCSA to invite Equalities Co-ordinator to attend meeting with class representatives   | June 2009          |
| 1.7 | Participate in SFEU Access & Inclusion Forum   | The Equalities Co-ordinator continues to participate in this Forum   | Relevant information is reported to the AIED Committee.   | December 2009      |

| No.      | Key task  | Progress to Date   | Difficulties/Actions   | Review of progress |
|----------|---|--|--|--------------------|
| 1.8      | Liaise with relevant external organisations to gather information   | The Equalities Co-ordinator has met with various organisations including Brite; Lead Scotland; National Deaf Children's Society; Able Magazine, Glasgow Disability Alliance and Equality Forward.  | It can be difficult to attend all meetings and conferences.  | December 2009      |
| 1.9      | Promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons in all college literature pertaining to the learner e.g. prospectus/disability statement/student diary et al. | The Learning For All brand has been widely promoted within the College, appearing in Posters throughout the College, Prospectus and Additional Support Guide. It will continue to be used to promote equality for all.   | Liaise with the Head of Events, Alumni and Marketing to ensure it is included in all relevant materials.   | March 2009         |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Impact Assessment</b>  |  |  |                    |
| 2.1      | Review of all college policies and procedures   | Significant progress has been made in this area and a toolkit has been developed and disseminated to the One Management Team. All Managers are required to impact assess all policies which they have ownership of against all equality strands.<br><br>Results to be passed to the Equalities Co-ordinator. | The Equalities Co-ordinator will collate and publish results of all impact assessments.<br><br>Progress will be monitored by the AIED Committee. | December 2009      |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Gathering Information</b>  |  |  |                    |
| 3.1      | Collect information relating to disabled learners: - applications for courses/modules/subjects; - conversion rates; - retention rates.                            | Information continues to be gathered.  | Detailed figures will be published in the Single Equality Scheme which will cover Disability, Race, Gender and Age.                              | June 2009          |

| <b>No.</b> | <b>Key task</b>   | <b>Progress to Date</b>  | <b>Difficulties/Actions</b>  | <b>Review of progress</b> |
|------------|---|--|--|---------------------------|
| <b>3.2</b> | Collect information relating to:<br>- course transfers<br>- learner Outcomes<br>- work placements<br>- harassment relating to disability    | Information continues to be gathered.  | Gaps have been identified in the way information is currently gathered. Equalities Co-ordinator to work with IS&LT to resolve.                                       | December 2009             |
| <b>3.3</b> | Strengthen links with schools and other agencies to improve the passing of relevant information at transition points.                       | It was hoped that the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 would help address this issue when it was implemented however, this has not been the case.   | Equalities Co-ordinator and the Head of Centre Access, Inclusion & Cultural Diversity to implement draft policy with specified groups and review on progress.        | June 2010                 |
| <b>3.4</b> | Review existing feedback mechanisms to allow identification of satisfaction rates amongst people with a disability.                         | Satisfaction rates amongst people with a disability are gathered using questionnaires, the output of focus groups and also by gathering information from the ELS review process.   | Learner satisfaction questionnaires are also completed by all learners each block, however, disabled learners are not identified. This is currently being addressed. | December 2009             |
| <b>3.6</b> | Develop additional specific feedback mechanisms for students, staff and visitors with a disability to report on satisfaction with services. | HR department and Equalities Co-ordinator to carry out an equalities survey to all staff, learners and external stakeholders to gain feedback on any advantages/disadvantages experienced in their dealings with the College.<br><br>Survey will also appear on the College website. | HR department and Equalities Co-ordinator will liaise with the Access, Inclusion, Equality & Diversity Committee prior to the survey being carried out.              | May 2009                  |

| No.      | Key task   | Progress to Date  | Difficulties/Actions  | Review of progress |
|----------|--|---|---|--------------------|
| <b>4</b> | <b>Using Information</b>   |   |   |                    |
| 4.1      | All monitoring data relating to the performance of disabled learners will be analysed by the Access, Inclusion, Equality & Diversity Committee and its conclusions and recommendations taken to the relevant College staff and Committees. | Ongoing   | The Access, Inclusion, Equality & Diversity group continues to meet to discuss these issues with reports being submitted to the Senior Management Team and other relevant College committees. | June 2010          |
| 4.2      | Review the Action Plan annually and review priorities in the light of information gathered.  | Completed   | Single Equalities Scheme to be published.   | June 2009          |
| 4.3      | Share information with relevant organisations where this will be of benefit to them, and particularly where it will improve transition arrangements for people with a disability.  | Partnership working with the National Autistic Society, Universities, Careers Scotland and Schools along with pre-entry guidance ensures a smooth transition process. |   | June 2010          |
| 4.4      | Ensure that the information gathered and its implications are used to shape the next Disability Equality Scheme.   | Information gathered is discussed with the AIED Committee.  | Disability Annual Report will be incorporated in the Single Equality Scheme and its Annual Reports.   | June 2010          |

| No.      | Key task  | Progress to Date  | Difficulties/Actions                                      | Review of progress |
|----------|---|---|---|--------------------|
| <b>5</b> | <b>Implementation</b>   |   |   |                    |
| 5.1      | Secure and deliver staff training and development opportunities.  | Staff development opportunities are made available throughout the year and key themes highlighted during our twice yearly Staff Conference.<br><br>See main text for further information on training delivered. | None identified.  | Annually           |
| 5.2      | Prepare the Annual Report for consideration by the Board of Management, and, if necessary in the light of experience, amend the Action Plan for subsequent years. | Continual process which is undertaken by the Access, Inclusion, Equalities & Diversity Committee.   | None identified.  | Annually           |
| 5.3      | In accordance with agreed priorities, engage external expertise to audit existing services and advise on developments and improvements.                           | Audits continue to be carried out in accordance with the Audit Committee schedule.  | Audit Reports available on request                        | December 2010      |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Reporting</b>  |   |   |                    |
| 6.1      | Publish the Disability Equality Scheme internally on ENQUIRER and on the College web site.  | Dedicated Equality & Diversity Section available on College website where all equality schemes and annual reports are published.  | Future schemes will continue to be published.             | December 2010      |
| 6.2      | Publish an Annual Report in Autumn and at the same time up-date the Action plan and appendices as appropriate.  | Ongoing   | Annual Report completed. Action Plan updated. Equalities. | December 2010      |

| No.      | Key task  | Progress to Date | Difficulties/Actions | Review of progress |
|----------|---|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>7</b> | <b>2010 – 2012 Scheme</b>   |                  |                      |                    |
| 7.1      | All monitoring information, conclusions, actions, minutes of meetings and annual reports will be retained to inform the development of Single Equality Scheme 2009 – 2012.  | Ongoing          |                      | June 2009          |
| 7.2      | Relevant national reports and guidance will be circulated to the Board of Management, Senior Management Team, Academic Board, and the Access, Inclusion, Equality and Diversity Committee. and others as appropriate. | As appropriate   | Circulation          | Ongoing            |

