

Loreto College Single Equality Scheme

Last Review:	October 2014
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Next Review:	January 2022

Vision

Loreto College is centred in God, rooted in Christ and animated by the spirit of Mary Ward, the founder of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our vision is that it will be an educational community where each person has the experience of being loved and valued as a sacred individual created by a loving God; a community where students enjoy an enriching and liberating education that helps them grow into the fullness of life and empowers them to be men and women of courage who are alive to the needs of humanity and committed to making a better world.

Introduction

The College aims to be an educational community which gives expression to the core values of Mary Ward - freedom, justice, sincerity, truth, joy, excellence and internationality. These values are made visible through the work of the college, especially with regard to Equality and Diversity.

Loreto College has the highest expectations of personal, academic and professional excellence. The college will endeavour to act at all times with justice, compassion and respect for the dignity and worth of all members of the college community but in doing so it will act in accordance with its legal responsibilities and its primary duty of care to children and vulnerable adults for whom it is responsible.

Purpose of the Single Equality Scheme

Our Single Equality Scheme enables us to ensure that consistency is maintained in the monitoring and promotion of all elements of equality and diversity with the aim of working to:

- ensure equality of access and resources for all regardless of, for instance, gender, ethnic or national origin, physical, sensory or learning abilities, age, socio-economic status, religion, politics, sexuality, responsibility for dependents.
- provide an environment where every individual is recognized and valued so that racial, disability and sexual equality is promoted and individuals are free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any kind.
- manage policies, procedures and environment in ways that will seek to maintain every individual's dignity and rights.
- educate all our members for life and work in a multi-cultural society

- monitor and evaluate equality of opportunity
- comply with all current equalities and data protection legislation.

Our Commitment

The college celebrates and values the diversity brought to its student body and workforce by individuals, and believes that the college will benefit from engaging staff from a variety of racial, ethnic and national backgrounds, thus allowing it to meet the needs of a diverse student population within a multi-cultural society. The college will treat all employees and students with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a positive working and learning environment free from racial discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

The college will seek not only to eliminate discrimination, but also to create a working and learning environment based on positive relations between members of different racial groups. To this end, the college undertakes to provide training and support for staff, to consult with staff about their experience of the working environment, and to provide diverse images in any material which it produces for learners and staff. The aim is to create a positive inclusive ethos where issues of racism, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly, with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing racism and discrimination, to respecting diversity and difference, and to encourage good relations between people of different groups.

The college will work towards the elimination of racism whether direct or indirect, and will seek to ensure that individuals and communities have, as far as is possible, equal access to learning programmes and facilities.

Duties

The Equality Act 2010:

This Single Equality Scheme supports Loreto College's compliance with the principles and requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The Public Sector Equality Duty, (2011), covers 8 of the 9 'protected characteristics'. Being married or in a Civil Partnership is not a protected characteristic for FE institutions.

General Duty

The Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) – A public authority must in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited under the Act

- Advance¹ equality of opportunity between persons with or without a protected characteristic
- Foster good relations² between persons who have a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not

The college is committed to meeting the aims of anti-discrimination legislation, by

1. taking reasonable steps to remove any disadvantages experienced by those who share a relevant protected characteristic.
2. taking steps to meet the needs of those who share a protected characteristic.
3. encouraging those with a relevant protected characteristic to participate in activity where participation by such persons is disproportionately low.
4. meeting the needs of disabled people and taking reasonable steps to take account of impairments.

Specific Duty

1. The college needs to gather two kinds of equality information:
 - a) from engagement with interested people on their needs
 - b) from other data sources – internal, local and national
2. The college needs to use this information to analyse the effect of college policies and practices on people who share a relevant characteristic. This will be via the stated measures of success.
3. The college publishes information annually sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the three aims of the General Duty, including the above analysis and the information it was based on
4. Prepare and publish specific and measurable objectives for a four year cycle to further one or more of the aims, with details of
 - a) the engagement it undertook when developing its objectives and
 - b) how progress towards these objectives should be measured

Access to and Participation in Education at Loreto

Access to Qualifications

- The college will ensure that admission to its programmes of study will reflect the criteria as laid down in the introduction to this policy. Admission to courses is available to students who are able to achieve the required standard in their respective programme. For learners with high needs additional support requirements this is subject to funding approval from the EFA and Local Authority in which the students reside.
- Particular help and attention will be given to those who find access to education difficult.

¹ The term ‘advance’ replaces ‘promote’ – the intention is to move forward, to get somewhere and to achieve improved outcomes.

² ‘Foster good relations’ includes having due regard to tackle prejudice and promote understanding

- The spectrum of courses will, as far as is possible, reflect the needs of students, the local community and national requirements.
- New students will each be given a diary, personal tutor and an induction in their chosen programme of study.

Access to Learning

- The college will maintain a learning environment in which all students feel at ease and in which guidance, counselling and induction will be given without any form of discrimination.
- The college provides a barrier-free environment to student learning.
- The college will also ensure that the curriculum, its delivery and resources will be planned to maintain equality of opportunity for all its students. These will be free of any discriminatory assumptions, images, language and/or stereotyping.
- On placements, supervising staff will seek to ensure that the students have not been made subject to any discriminatory assumptions or practices and students will be encouraged to report any concerns they have.
- On admission, students will receive individual advice and guidance in order to ensure that due accreditation is given for prior learning or attainments as relevant to their particular programme of study.

Goals

- The college will continue to foster excellent relationships between all members of the community, enabling both students and staff to flourish. Such an environment will ensure that those individuals who share a relevant protected characteristic feel safe, secure and free from any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- The college will continue to promote issues of Equality and Diversity with both staff and students.
- The college will continue to monitor and address gaps between groups of learners on the basis of gender, ethnicity, disadvantaged status as well as prior achievement.
- The college will ensure that staff receive the required training to meet the needs of the designated groups within the Loreto Community.
- The college will continue to ensure that all facilities are fully accessible and that provision is made for students with learning differences and disabilities so that all students can access their studies and the college life.

These goals will be measured in accordance with the College Equality Objectives.