

Wakefield Adult and Community Education Service

POLICY FOR EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION

1 CONTEXT

Equality Policy Statements of Family Services and Wakefield Metropolitan District Council in respect of employment and service delivery, provide the underpinning principles and policies that contextualize this Service Policy. The Adult and Community Education Service (ACES) is also committed to actively promoting the principles of the single Equality Act (2006) which underpins the legislative framework for ensuring that services are inclusive, provide for equality, and celebrate diversity.¹

This Service policy addresses in particular equal opportunities in **service delivery** by applying the principles of Metropolitan District Council and Family Services² policies to the Adult and Community Education Service. The service strives to create an environment in which equality of opportunity and value is an accepted norm and is respected by all learners as well as staff. Where an individual learner's behaviour or attitudes is in conflict with or undermines this aspect of the service's ethos, this will be challenged, and may result in that individual's participation being terminated.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

The ACES is committed to ensuring that all members of the community have equal access to its programmes and an equal chance to succeed within them.

Qualities such as gender, race, age, disabled status or previous educational experience should not affect people's capacity to benefit from adult education.

In order for all members of the community to benefit equally, active steps must be taken to counteract the effects of structural disadvantage in society.

All ACES policies and procedures will be assessed for the potential impact on minority groups. (See Appendix 4)

1 For guide to equality legislation see *Family Services Equality and Diversity Strategy 2007-9 Appendix 1*

2 See Appendix 1

2.4 Equality Diversity and Inclusion Policy.doc

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3. EQUALITY IMPACT MEASURES AND PLANNING FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Adult and Community Education Service works within the framework of the Family Services Equality Strategy and action plan towards meeting the equality standards for local government³. It also works to support the delivery of the Learning and Skills Council's single equality scheme, and the LSC's regional equality and diversity impact measures (EDIMs), in particular with respect to adult learners⁴.

The service annually measures its equality impacts in terms of participation levels, and retention, achievement and success rates by

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Disabled status
- Learning Disability
- Age
- Fee remission status (indicator of deprivation)

The results are published annually in the service's Self Assessment Report, and inform the service Quality Improvement Action Plan, published to the LSC, and to Family Services as the Service Improvement Team Plan.

The aim is that adult participation levels reflect as a minimum the local population structure, and with an emphasis on investment into the more deprived areas of the district, and learners with no, few or low qualifications (below level 2).

In terms of success, the service aims to improve success rates for all, and with particular emphasis on striving to ensure that all categories of learners meet the current service bench-mark.

4. SERVICE STRATEGIES FOR EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

4.1. ACCESS

The ACES will take steps to ensure the equal access of all members of the community to its programmes.

4.1.1. Curriculum

The service seeks to provide a wide curriculum offer including

- vocational programmes to develop skills, and strengthen opportunities for

³ See Appendix 2 for summary objectives

⁴ See Appendix 3

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learners to participate in the changing economy of the district

- key foundation skills – in English, Maths and ICT
- cultural and life-enriching learning opportunities to promote creativity and well-being
- curriculum to engage new and non-learners, for example family learning; citizenship; bilingual skills development; non-vocational tasters and informal learning opportunities

4.1.2. Location, class times and modes of delivery

A broad and balanced curriculum will be provided across the district as far as possible with the intention that no-one needs to travel more than 3 miles to find the class of their choice subject to a sufficient level of demand.

Provision for adults will be made in a range of appropriate locations including local communities, employer premises, extended schools, children's centres and settings.

Daytime programmes will be scheduled to take account of the needs of parents with school-age children and half-terms will be observed where appropriate.

We will seek creative solutions to new working patterns to promote access, including working with employers to provide suitable patterns and modes of delivery for skills development linked to work.

The service will continue to develop web-based materials through Wakefield ACES On-line⁵

Every effort will be made to anticipate and accommodate students with specific individual needs in the class of their choice.

4.1.3. Fees

The service will operate a full fee remission policy for people on means-tested benefits, and their dependants. The LSC's fee remission policy for particular learners or curriculum (eg skills for life) will be applied.

The principle that LSC funding support should be targeted on those most in need will inform decisions on fees policies. The service will where possible enter commissioning rounds in partnership with others in order to bring additional resource to the district to support the access of disadvantaged populations to free or low-cost learning provision. Likely target populations could include:

⁵ The ACES virtual learning environment for e-learning support
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- areas of high unemployment / low pay / low participation / worklessness
- people with no, few and low qualifications, and who do not have a full level 2 qualification
- traditionally non-participant groups
- unwaged, unemployed and part-time workers
- black and minority ethnic communities

4.1.4. Information, Advice and guidance

The Service seeks to meet the Matrix standards for information and advice, and encourages centres and partners to seek Matrix accreditation.

4.1.5. Outreach and development

From time to time, the service will put resources into outreach or community development programmes in order to access and support non-participant target populations.

4.2. PARTICIPATION

The Adult and Community Education Service will take steps to ensure that all participants are supported to achieve the level of attainment of which they are capable.

4.2.1. Curriculum and classroom management

Curriculum content and teaching and learning methods will promote an inclusive and participative ethos that values the qualities individuals bring to the programme, and celebrates diversity.

Every effort will be made to ensure that discriminatory behaviour whether deliberate or inadvertent finds no place in the programmes delivered by the Service.

Where appropriate, specific programmes will be developed to meet the needs of target populations.

4.2.2. Student Support

The Service will promote measures that support the participation of target groups.

For example as far as possible:

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- targeted specified day-time provision in key centres will have crèche support or access to subsidized places in neighbourhood nurseries, subject to funding constraints
- key centres will have learner support through basic skills programmes.
- a supportive adult-friendly environment will be promoted in all centres.
- positive use will be made of hardship funds; assistive technologies and learner support, within funding constraints, to support learner participation and success.

4.2.3. Appropriateness of provision

In certain circumstances it is recognised that the specific behaviour of individuals are such that the Service is unable to accommodate them. Where this happens the Service will ensure that the individuals concerned understand the position and that wherever possible they receive advice about suitable alternatives. The requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act (1995) and SENDA (2001) will be observed where this applies.

4.2.4. Progression

Progression to further skills development, higher levels of learning and into work is an important measure of impact for learners who have, or develop those aspirations for themselves through their learning journey.

The Service will seek to ensure, through appropriate information, advice and guidance, and other mechanisms, that barriers to progression are identified and reduced or removed wherever possible.

The service will also track the progress of learners through a variety of mechanisms, and seek to improve its knowledge of short and longer-term learner outcomes, so that it can better support continued learner success.

Current mechanisms include

- Tracking of all 'First Steps' learners to their next step
- Tracking of all full level 2/3 learners with a six-month review after completion
- An annual follow-up study of a structured sample of learners

5.0. DEVELOPMENT, MONITORING AND REMEDIAL ACTION

The Adult and Community Education Service will take steps to ensure that access, participation and success are monitored, and emerging issues affecting

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equality are identified and addressed through remedial action.

5.1. Data collection and evaluation

Data will be collected on entry, participation, withdrawal, achievement and progression of individuals, and analysed in order to assess service impact on learners.

Aggregated results will be published and analysed annually in the service's self-assessment report.

Action-plans with targets are produced to address areas that require remedial action in the light of the analysis.

From time to time specific needs analysis or other focused research projects will be undertaken to identify weaknesses and inform action.

5.2. Staff Training and development

A core programme of training dealing with race and disability discrimination is available to all staff and partners.

Partner providers are expected to comply with the law and good practice, and this is reflected in the service level agreement with partners.

Tutors are provided with summary guidance in the tutor handbook.

See also staff development policy.

5.3. Complaints

Complaints are recorded and an annual analysis made to check whether there are differential rates for different sectors of the community.

See complaints policy about how to make a complaint.

5.4. Action

The results of monitoring will be used to inform action-plans and targets for improvement in terms of the access, participation and success of target groups in appropriate curriculum offers.

6.0. CONSULTATION

The Adult and Community Education Service will consult with representatives of disadvantaged groups about provision relevant to their needs.

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6.1. Key Mechanisms

The ACES Governors membership includes key stakeholders such as community and learner involvement, and representation from the South Asian Community Liaison forum.

Learners are consulted through learner satisfaction surveys and learner focus groups.

In addition, the Service will consult communities through mechanisms established from time to time by the Council, and also seek meetings where relevant with representative community organisations in areas or with groups where development needs are identified.

7.0 OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

7.1 The Disability Equality Strategy is under development.

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Appendix I

Family Services Equalities Statement

Family Services is committed to equality in its service to the public, whether or not the service is directly provided by us or contracted out to an independent organisation.

- We aim to provide high quality services, making sure that each is easily accessible. We will improve what we do by continuing to consult with service users and their communities about equalities issues.
- We will make every effort in creating and publicising equality of opportunity in order to ensure that services are accessible and fair to everyone. Every person has the right to be treated fairly, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, disability, age culture, religion, nationality or caring responsibilities.
- The people who deliver our services will recognise diversity and demonstrate our approach in their day-to-day work. They will ensure that everyone is treated fairly, recognising special needs and understanding differences. Their behaviour will reach Council standards of conduct and they will deliver services according to Council policies and procedures.
- We will follow Government and Council rules, which aim to make sure that everyone is treated with equity. We will work with other people and organisations to encourage fair treatment of all. We will collect information, which will help us plan and develop services to meet the special needs of all members of the community.
- We will ensure that there is an open and fair approach in the recruitment and selection of the people who provide our services, and in the way in which they are treated. We will support them fully in dealing with sexual, racial or other harassment in providing a positive working environment for those from minority ethnic communities or who have special needs.
- If you feel that this equalities policy has not been applied during your contact with Family Services, or those who act on our behalf, please tell us, by writing to the Customer Relations Manager, Family Services, 8 St Johns North, Wakefield, WF1 3QA

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Appendix 2

Family Services Equality Action Plan 2007-9 Summary of Objectives

Objective 1: All teams within Family Services meet equality diversity and community cohesion requirements, including the Equality Standard for local government at level 3

Objective 2: Service users / potential users have fair and equal access to services that the directorate provides, and in accordance with eligibility criteria

Objective 3: All services will actively co-ordinate and capture equality data relating to their users, to inform their service planning

Objective 4: To achieve a workforce that is representative of Wakefield District

Objective 5: Services will ensure effective training for employees to increase their competence to meet service needs in equality diversity and cohesion matters

Objective 6: All services will develop processes to effectively consult and engage service users to ensure that equality and diversity is reflected in their planning and service delivery

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Appendix 3

LSC Yorkshire and Humber EDIMs 2008-9

PSA target	Evidence	EDIM
<p>All young people to reach age 19 ready for skilled employment or higher education. Increase the proportion of 19 year olds who achieve at least level 2 by a further 2 percentage points between 2006 and 2008.</p> <p>Increase the proportion achieving at level 3</p>	<p>Academically males achieve at a lower level than females of the same age. For 16-18 year olds in 2005/6 the gap between male and female success rates was 3 percentage points.</p> <p>Black and Black British Caribbean success and retention rates are the lowest of all ethnic groups in Y&H</p>	<p>Raise the success rates of males aged 16-18 at level 2 and 3.</p> <p>Raise the success rates of Black and Black British Caribbean at level 2 for both genders</p>
<p>Increase the success rate for completing Apprenticeships to 59% by 2007/8</p>	<p>Some minority ethnic groups achieve lower success rates than the regional average particularly Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black learners.</p> <p>Currently ethnic minority groups make up 6% of the total learners in Apprenticeships in Y&H. Population estimates from Yorkshire Futures puts the ethnic minority population in the region at 8%</p>	<p>Raise the success rates in apprenticeships of Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black learners.</p> <p>Increase the take-up of apprenticeships from the ethnic minority groups.</p>
<p>Tackle the adult skills gap.</p> <p>Improve the basic skills of 2.25 million adults between 2001 and 2010 with a milestone of 1.5 million in 2007.</p> <p>Reduce by at least 40% the number of adults in the workforce who lack an NVQ at level 2 or equivalent qualification by 2010.</p>	<p>Adult learners with a declared disability have lower success rates at level 2 than those without. In FE this is currently a one percentage point gap.</p>	<p>Continue to close the gap in adult success rates at full level 2 between those with a declared disability and learners without a disability.</p>
	<p>Many learners do not declare whether they have a disability or not. This currently stands at 12% in FE.</p>	<p>Providers to encourage disclosure at enrolment</p>

Wakefield Adult and Community Education Service**Appendix 4****Equality, Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion
Development and Review of policy and procedures: impact assessment**

Overall question: What contribution does (enter name of document⁶) make to meeting equality standards?

This review template should be completed

- When documents are developed
- When documents are reviewed

To ensure compliance with the statutory duties of the Equalities Act.

If as a result of this review, further development work needs to be carried out, this should be undertaken before the document proceeds to the next stage

Where documents are submitted for formal approval to (eg) FS DMT, a copy of the completed template should be submitted with the document.

[Answers should be specific, and between 50-100 words]

Document name
Commissioned by
Date of Impact Review
<p>Question 1</p> <p>Version 1: How does (the document) actively promote equality, diversity, inclusion and cohesion?</p> <p>Version 2: Does (the document) actively promote EDIC? If yes, state how; if no, what amendments can be made so that it does?</p>
<p>Question 2</p> <p>Are there any aspects that undermine Equalities? If so, how could the document be strengthened into contributing to EDIC?</p>
<p>Question 3</p> <p>If (the document) were fully implemented, what equalities impact(s) would be experienced?</p>
<p>Question 4</p> <p>What mechanisms are there for measuring and reporting these impacts, and subsequent remedial action-planning (eg What data capture? What BVPI does this contribute to?)</p>
<p>Question 5</p> <p>What are the arrangements for the monitoring and review of (this document) and its impacts</p>

Name of reviewer	Date
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⁶ 'Document' means any public or internal statement of purpose, strategy, policy, procedure, information service, publicity or training.