

## Report A Progress report on mainstreaming the General Duty into FVC's functions

### Section 1 Commentary on overall progress

This report reviews the progress made by FVC from 2017-2019 to mainstream<sup>1</sup> equality.

FVC considers equality and inclusion an integral part of College life. In reviewing the College's overall progress in relation to mainstreaming equality, the assessment is **very positive**. Since 2017 the College has made significant progress in embedding equality considerations into key college strategies and plans and raising awareness of equality and inclusion through student and staff inductions, campaigns and events, curriculum subject learning and staff CPD.

The landscape has changed since 2017 through requirements on FVC from the Scottish Funding Council through the Regional Outcome Agreement process. Key developments include the creation of a 3-year Access and Inclusion Strategy 2017-20; a Gender Action plan 2017-20 and targets within the ROA itself to monitor and track progress of learners by age, gender, disability, ethnicity, SIMD area, care experienced status and other characteristics. This in effect, has put equality front and centre in core college business – negotiating with SFC the funding levels to deliver learning and teaching in the Forth Valley region.

It is a rather 'cluttered' landscape though and FVC must comply with the Equality Duty and other pieces of legislation such as the BSL Scotland Act, whilst balancing meeting SFC requirements as well as those of Education Scotland. However, there are areas of crossover – the groups of learners listed in outcome agreements correspond to the protected characteristic groups in the Equality Act. Whilst it is important to plan and have clear actions, the requirement to produce so many different strategies and plans for different groups, runs the risk of diluting what we need to do - take **action** to improve outcomes for particular groups. We are currently striving to gather evidence of progress; measure impact; consider whether targets are met and what's left to do, for a range of plans and strategies for different groups of staff and students **at the same time**. So while these requirements put us on the right track to mainstream equality, we still need to work on linking them; devolving responsibilities across college and having a clear line of sight to what we need to do and knowing when progress has been made.

Most emerging themes from 2017 have been addressed to a greater or lesser extent (please refer to Report B: Progress report on achievement of equality outcomes):

- there is evidence that EQIA process is more widely used than before; we must maintain and build on this
- most students report being able to identify and report hate incidents; an audit into the hate incident process in 2018 recommended no major actions
- the 3-year Gender Action Plan has identified specific subject areas to pilot new approaches to increase gender diversity. This requires more attention/ongoing maintenance – actions are still required to tackle gender imbalance
- overwhelmingly, the need for ongoing staff CPD in equality, diversity and inclusion remains a key requirement. Figures suggest that most staff complete the mandatory equality and diversity CPD online every 2 years but feedback suggests more is required, including face-to-face learning and development opportunities

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<sup>11</sup> Mainstreaming – equality considered in college functions so it's a routine part of day-to-day workings

- the Equality and Inclusion Development Group was created in 2018 with membership from a range of cross-college staff and FVSA. Sub-working groups are in operation covering a range of themes including inclusive curriculum; events; staff; services to students and socio-economic impacts (e.g., poverty)
- good examples of partnership working with external partners and FVSA on range of areas such as LGBTI activity
- work has started to examine the experience of BME students in college, with assistance from NUS Scotland. Student focus groups are currently underway – we will have data later in 2019
- still require to monitor attainment rates for disabled students and consider this in light of still-rising student disclosures around a range of needs including learning support and mental health

### Examples of equality mainstreaming

#### ○ **FVC Values**

The College's Values are integral to supporting the ongoing development of an inclusive culture. Key values relating to equality:

*Empowering*

*Respectful*

*Equitable*

*Inclusive*

#### ○ **FVC Strategic Plan 2017-22**

Strategic theme: Instilling an energy and passion for our people, celebrating success and innovation

Objective: We will ensure all College activities reflect the key principles of equality and diversity to achieve an inclusive organisation

We will do this by: fully integrated equality and diversity

Our strategic plan commitment is fully aligned with the requirement to mainstream the General Duty.

#### ○ **Employee Cultural Engagement Survey**

Staff surveyed in 2013, 2016 and 2019. 71% of employees responded to the 2019 survey up from 54% on the previous survey in 2016 so we have results from a more representative cross section of staff.

There were notable positive increases from 2016 in the feeling of mutual respect between staff at all levels with two thirds indicating a positive response. A further increase on the previous high percentage of 2016 is in the positive responses on staff being treated equally irrespective of their gender, age, ethnicity etc. This increased from 75% to 78%. Over 70% of staff agree or strongly agree that their manager cares for them as a person, again up on previous scoring. In addition, this is replicated in being treated with respect where agree and strongly agree scored 83%.

#### **I am treated with respect by my colleagues**

Strongly Agree	32.92%
Agree	50.62%
Neither Agree or Disagree	11.22%
Disagree	3.24%
Strongly disagree	2.00%

**There is a mutual respect between staff at all levels of the College**

Strongly Agree	21.97%
Agree	46.21%
Neither Agree or Disagree	18.69%
Disagree	10.86%
Strongly disagree	2.27%

**All staff are treated equally - irrespective of their gender, age, ethnicity, etc**

Strongly Agree	32.58%
Agree	46.21%
Neither Agree or Disagree	14.14%
Disagree	4.80%
Strongly disagree	2.27%

**My manager cares for me as a person**

Strongly Agree	38.73%
Agree	33.33%
Neither Agree or Disagree	21.57%
Disagree	3.43%
Strongly disagree	2.94%

**I am proud to be an employee of the College**

Strongly Agree	38.42%
Agree	44.02%
Neither Agree or Disagree	15.27%
Disagree	2.04%
Strongly disagree	0.25%

○ **People Strategy 2017-22**

The introduction of the People Strategy 2017-22 allowed focus on the areas of development and opportunities for staff to meet their potential. Within the five-year plan and overarching objectives was Health Wellbeing and Diversity. Focus and activity has included developing and hosting a Health and Wellbeing staff development day in February 2019; becoming signatories of the Forces Covenant and becoming a Carers Engaged Employer.

In working to meet the aims of this objective, improved monitoring both in recruitment and with employed staff has involved adding new categories including: caring responsibilities and ex-forces, reservists and spouses. Regular updates of equalities monitoring data are taken to ensure data accuracy.

A focus on staff development activities with the introduction of the People Strategy saw a specific post of Learning and Development Officer created. Emphasis on CPD activity including the introduction of a Training Need Analysis, allowed department focused activity to be planned and become more relevant to individual and department needs.

Online training meets current accessibility standards with page and text adjustment and audio assistance. In addition staff development can be accessed from a variety of locations, an individual's work station, LRC, IT Lab or remotely from home. Designated time has been

allocated by the college for all staff to undertake their CPD, for example a week in February is allotted to support staff focusing on relevant training and development as students and teaching staff are on holiday. For all such CPD staff including those working part time and those on Maternity are offered the opportunity to attend. However, the system does enable specific CPD to take place throughout the year to suit individuals and teams.

Not all CPD is available remotely or online and where relevant it is adapted to ensure consideration is given to those on maternity leave, adoption leave and those with flexible working patterns. Staff development is available to all employees regardless of contractual status or any protected characteristic. In addition where possible CPD is adapted to meet the individual's needs, i.e. whether they are partially sighted or dyslexic etc. All staff receive an induction and discuss CPD requirements with their line manager through their Performance Review and Development (PRD) meetings. Participation for lecturing staff for TQFE has been agreed at a national level and open to all equally. Individual needs are discussed at a personal level to ensure they are relevant to the needs of the individual.

CPD remains challenging due to the complexities and diversity of the subject area and College systems are not yet evolved enough to record the information in such a way to aid with extracting data and facts to support our position. Ongoing developments and improvements of the system mean that the College will be able to monitor the delivery and access to CPD per employee which will ensure there is data available to regarding the CPD of employees with protected characteristics. Actions to reduce unconscious bias include anonymization of applications for Leadership Training.

#### ○ **Corporate Parenting Plan 2017-20**

Guidance asks colleges to consider care experienced young people as if they had a protected characteristic under the Equality Act.

The College has seen a significant increase in the numbers of students disclosing as care experienced over the last three years, from 225 in 2015-2016 to 344 in 2017-2018, a 53% increase. This increased disclosure is very positive, as it helps the College to target specific support more effectively.

In 2018 the College secured funding from the Robertson Trust to begin a mentoring project called Time4Me. The project aims to improve retention and success rates of young people transitioning to College who face additional barriers to fulfilling their potential.

The project is aimed at young people who are care experienced, have caring responsibilities and/or reside in areas of multiple deprivation. To date, 32 mentors have been recruited and trained and 18 mentoring matches made.

#### ○ **FVC Evaluative Report and Enhancement Plan 2017-18**

In our report to Education Scotland we are asked to consider and comment on wellbeing, equality and inclusion; equity, attainment and achievement and services to support learning amongst many others. The report provides a wide range of commentary and evidence to demonstrate how we do this, some examples:

- 2017-2018, a total of 608 students had Personal Learning and Support Plans with arrangements to support their specific learning needs
- 11% of FVC activity was delivered to students from the most deprived 10% postcode areas
- 37% of FVC activity to students on STEM courses; 20% increase in number of females enrolled on STEM subjects

- 19% of FVC activity to students with a declared disability and overall enrolments from students with a disability increased by 13%.
- BME enrolments increased in 2017-18 by 32% to 639
- significant increase in students identifying that they are carers from 392 in 2015-2016 to 472 in 2017-2018, a 20% increase. Differential in student success for carers and those who are not carers has dropped from 6% in 2016-2017, to 2% in 2017
- analysis of student success by protected characteristics indicates that Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) students on FE programmes; students with a declared disability on HE programmes; and students identifying as gay perform less well than the overall student population. Curriculum Managers and teams have carried out detailed analysis, down to individual student level, of the reasons for these students failing to achieve. This analysis has confirmed that the reasons were not related to their protected characteristic.

### **Ongoing areas of development to further mainstream equality**

The overall reflection of our progress at this mid-way point has helped us identify the following main points for future action:

- Ensure the Strategic theme for FVC to have 'fully integrated equality and diversity' is clearly linked to curriculum area and service team operational planning and evidence gathered
- Work to streamline and link all existing plans and strategies relating to equality. Consider development of a matrix of data, linking quantitative and qualitative information to groups with protected characteristics, to measure action/impact
- Review reporting processes for equality information – cascade responsibilities across College, consider who understands and can demonstrate if progress has been made?
- In line with the People Strategy, work with the Learning Development Officer to create and implement a cross-college EDI CPD plan for staff
- Track care experienced learners fully, responding and intervening timeously and appropriately, focusing on retention and attainment; deliver fully on the College's Corporate Parenting Plan by 2020
- effective rollout Triple S system
- ensure curriculum teams continue to analyse equality PIs at individual student level in order to ensure all groups of students are supported to succeed
- deliver and implement Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy for FVC

## Section 2 Employee Information – employees protected characteristics

### Recruitment

FVC recruitment system - Myjobscotland (MJS) - meets our obligations under public sector requirements and is used by Scottish Government, Local Authorities and Emergency Services amongst other Government bodies. FVC has recorded equality information from the system over the past 2 years (see below) based on the protected characteristics of applicants who have provided this information.

MJS ensures a fair and transparent process of recruitment for the College by providing a system that captures equality information through the recruitment process as well as anonymising applications and removing any reference to the protected characteristics. This is being advanced to include new monitoring categories including Carers and Forces personnel. Interview panels have a gender balance where possible and the college is a member of the Disability Confident scheme guaranteeing an offer of interview to those with a declared disability who meet the basic role criteria.

In addition, to encourage applications our Pay and Benefits page is being updated to reflect what is on offer to prospective staff highlighting our commitment to being a flexible and inclusive employer. Also comprehensive travel options have been added to encourage applications from those not familiar with the Forth Valley area and concerned about a daily commute.

Age Band	2016/17		2017/18	
	Applications	% Hired	Applications	% Hired
16-24	6.68%	5.15%	6.05%	3.17%
25-34	26.18%	35.05%	26.97%	32.54%
35-44	27.87%	21.65%	26.64%	21.43%
45-54	23.89%	22.68%	22.76%	23.81%
55-64	10.05%	10.31%	10.72%	12.70%
65+	0.67%	2.06%	0.39%	0.79%
Prefer not to say	4.66%	3.09%	6.47%	5.56%

Low levels of applications for 16-24 is indicative of the highly specialised vacancies on offer. The College is a living wage employer and pay is based on job evaluation results, irrespective of age.

Gender	2016/17		2017/18	
	Applications	% Hired	Applications	% Hired
Female	61.61%	61.86%	59.28%	61.90%
Male	33.47%	35.05%	34.54%	32.54%
Other	0.20%	0%	0.07%	0%
Prefer not to say	4.72%	3.09%	6.11%	5.56%

With focus nationally on women in STEM, the low levels of applications for posts and even lower numbers of successful men appointed is notable. This is mainly due to gender role segregation and interview panels are required to have a gender balance where possible.

<b>Ethnicity/Race</b>	2016/17		2017/18	
	Applications	% Hired	Applications	% Hired
<b>White Other</b>	17.07%	11.34%	18.88%	19.05%
<b>White Scottish</b>	72.06%	83.51%	70.26%	74.60%
<b>Other</b>	6.68%	2.06%	5.33%	1.59%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	4.18%	3.09%	5.33%	4.76%

<b>Religion/Belief</b>	2016/17		2017/18	
	Applications	% Hired	Applications	% Hired
<b>Christianity</b>	37.85%	41.24%	33.88%	40.48%
<b>None</b>	47.03%	47.42%	48.75%	43.65%
<b>Other</b>	2.83%	0%	2.70%	0%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	12.28%	11.34%	14.67%	15.87%

<b>Sexual Orientation</b>	2016/17		2017/18	
	Applications	% Hired	Applications	% Hired
<b>Gay/Bisexual</b>	3.10%	3.09%	3.55%	2.38%
<b>Heterosexual/Straight</b>	88.19%	89.69%	86.05%	83.33%
<b>Other</b>	0.47%	0%	0.33%	0%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	8.23%	7.22%	10.07%	14.29%

<b>Disabled</b>	2016/17		2017/18	
	Applications	% Hired	Applications	% Hired
<b>No</b>	89.00%	89.69%	87.83%	91.27%
<b>Yes</b>	8.91%	6.19%	9.47%	5.56%
<b>Prefer not to say</b>	2.09%	4.12%	2.70%	3.17%

As an employer we have 16% of staff declaring a disability highlighting versus a low disclosure at application stage highlighting the need to reassure applicants of our inclusive stance. To improve disclosure of disability, information available to prospective employees has been updated and improved on our recruitment website and demonstrates the support and commitment to candidates and employees.

### Section 3 FVC Governing body information

Gender split for non-executive Board members – there are a maximum of 12 non-executive posts

Year	2014/15		2015/16		2016/17		2017/18		2018/19*	
Gender	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Sector	32%	68%	32%	68%	39%	61%	39%	61%	40%	60%
FVC	42%	58%	50%	50%	50%	50%	54%	46%	45%	55%

\* This data is for the current year as at March 2019 and is subject to possible change.

The data shows a 50/50 male/female split was achieved between 2015-2017. This has changed in the last 2 years due to the resignation of one female member due to work commitments so the figure is likely to fluctuate due to factors such as this.

#### *Increasing Board of Management Diversity*

Forth Valley College is committed to increasing the diversity of our Board Membership. Whilst our performance against gender targets remains strong, we are aware that there is a need to increase the diversity of Board Members to reflect Forth Valley's demographics, which shows nearly 2% of the population, are from an ethnic minority background. We are also acutely aware that there are no Board of Management members with a declared disability.

Our adverts have, for some time, expressly stated "As an organisation that strongly reflects our local communities, we are seeking a diverse range of individuals with the skills and experience to enhance the activities and accountabilities of our Board. We would especially welcome applications from women and ethnic minorities."

We advertise widely, using both online and local publications to reach a wide proportion of the Forth Valley and surrounding population. Moving forward, we will also engage with key local stakeholders and third party organisations in an effort to ensure the opportunities are highlighted to ethnic minorities and individuals with other protected characteristics such as disability.