



Gower College Swansea
Coleg Gŵyr Abertawe

Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024

Excellence and Fairness in Education and
Training for All

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Strategic Equality Plan
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Welcome to Gower College Swansea from the Principal and Chief Executive

Within Gower College Swansea we pride ourselves in being a truly inclusive institution that celebrates diversity across all areas of our business.

But with the College continuing to grow both in terms of the range of programmes that we offer and also in terms of the diversity of the learners that come to the College, we know that we have more to do to meet the challenges that comes with becoming a larger and even more diverse College.

The work needed to achieve the improvements needed is vast and in past years we feel that we may have spread our available resources too thinly in trying to cover too many areas and, as a result, made only small improvements in some key areas. And so this year we're trying a different approach in focussing on 5 discrete objectives which have been agreed as part of a wide consultation exercise involving staff, students, governors and key stakeholders from across the range of communities that we serve.

This new plan, we believe, gives us a greater clarity of purpose together with a real energy and momentum that will allow us to really move these key agendas forward – and we look before to working with you to achieve the targets that we have set and in so doing to remain being the inclusive institution that we need and want our College to be.

Mark Jones
Principal

Mark Jones

Mark Jones

// **Equality** is the **Soul** of Liberty, there is in fact, **No liberty** without it. //



The Law and our requirements

The Equality Act 2010 includes a public sector equality duty to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and others
- Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

This general duty covers the following protected characteristics:

- age
- disability
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- marriage and civil partnership (in respect of the duty to eliminate discrimination).

The Act explains that having due regard for advancing equality involves the following:

- Removing or minimising disadvantage experienced by people due to their protected characteristics;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
- Encouraging people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or other activities where their participation is disproportionately low

The Act describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Meeting the duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others, as long as this does not contravene other provisions within the Act.

'Equality' does not therefore simply mean treating everyone the same, it means understanding and tackling the different barriers to equal opportunities that different people face so that everyone has a fair chance to fulfil their potential.

The overall aim of the equality duty is to ensure that equality is mainstreamed into the college's work, and that this in turn should result in more appropriately delivered services and outcomes, taking into account individual's backgrounds.

The duty builds on the previous duties in respect of gender, race and disability. It represents a significant shift in approach from a legal framework, which relied on individual people making complaints of discrimination, to a context where the public sector becomes a proactive agent of change.

The Government and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) have made it clear that public bodies, including colleges of further education, must mainstream equality in both their internal and externally facing functions, and the duty provides a mechanism for tackling institutional discrimination in policies, practices and procedures.

Gower College is committed to these principles of mainstreaming equality and welcomes these legislative changes. We understand that mainstreaming equality issues will ensure that we deliver our aims in a more meaningful way, which will reach all groups in our community more effectively.

In April 2011 a Single Public Sector Equality Duty was implemented as part of the Equality Act 2010. In the same month the Welsh Government introduced regulations putting in place a series of specific duties to underpin the general duty.

These are:

- To publish equality objectives which are to be reviewed every 4 years;
- To publish a statement setting out the steps that it has taken or intends to take in order to fulfil each objective and the timescale to achieve;
- To monitor the progress and effectiveness of the steps taken;
- To identify, seek out and where appropriate, publish information that can be used to gauge whether the general duty is being met
- To carry out and publish impact assessments showing how its current and proposed policies and practices affect the organisation's ability to comply with the general duty;
- On an annual basis, collect and publish certain employee data by reference to protected characteristics
- To promote employee's understanding of the general and specific duties

" **Equality** should be the **chief** basis of the education of **youth** "





Key Challenges

The college has identified five key challenges that it will need to work hard to address over the coming four years.

- 1. Equality Monitoring Data** – There are still low participation levels amongst staff in providing a complete and up to date record of their equality data on the all about be me page, most notably in the following sections: Disability, Sexual Orientation and Religious Belief. The College has had limited participation from students for equality information and a new method of obtaining this data electronically is currently being developed
- 2. Diverse Recruitment.** With the new census being compiled in the coming years there is a strong belief that statistics of Bame individuals within the Swansea area will increase dramatically. In order to reflect the local ethnic demographic, the college will need to be increasingly innovative with its recruitment process.
- 3. Ageing Workforce** – Gower College has a strong number of employees that fall into the latter age groups. While this has many benefits to the college, we must also be mindful to the possibility of a stagnant workforce and attempt to create more job and progression opportunities for younger employees.
- 4. Cross College Inclusion and Engagement-** As Gower college is multi campus institution with a huge demographic of students, the college must continue to improve our methods of including all campuses in training and when hosting events.
- 5. Imbalance of flexible and part time working** - Our imbalance of male and females on part time contracts remains one of the college's key challenges in addressing the gender pay gap. Gower college is committed to promoting and encouraging flexible working for **ALL** our employees.

Consultation

When preparing this Strategic Equality Plan consultation was undertaken with the following:

1. College Staff Members
2. College Learners
3. Partner Organisations
4. The Student Union
5. The Local Community

" Diversity and inclusion are about giving value to **every** human being, no matter our **differences.** "



Strategic Equality Objectives

Going forward, we have identified five 'core' strategic objectives that we believe will make the college a fairer, more inclusive and representative organisation.

The five strategic objectives are:

1. **DIVERSE RECRUITMENT**– To improve our recruitment levels and promotional opportunities for staff who are underrepresented as BAME, LGBTQ+, Disabled
2. **INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT** – To be an inclusive employer that promotes a welcoming and supporting environment for all our staff and learners
3. **DATA MONITORING** – To improve our data collection and monitoring
4. **TRAINING AND AWARENESS**– To continue to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues amongst staff and learners
5. **GENDER PAY GAP** - To close our gender pay gap



Strategic Equality Objective 1

To improve our recruitment levels and promotional opportunities for staff who are underrepresented as BAME, LGBTQ +, Disabled

Why? - Having a diverse learner community and staff workforce that is representative of our local community, we will support the advancement and equality of opportunity for everyone

The college will take action by undertaking the following steps:

A much improved equality presence on website with a dedicated page on Equality and Diversity.

Work with Better Jobs and Better Futures department, with regards to promoting and advertising college vacancies

To work with specific organisations to help us achieve our objective. E.g. Eyst, Glitter, Disability confident, Race Equality Wales and our local community groups

Advertising the Equality and Human Rights Commission 'working forward' logo on our recruitment page
Holding an annual LGBTQ+ celebration day

Develop and introduce a mentoring scheme for BAME staff
Produce a BAME progression report and track yearly

//
There's
Nothing
complicated
about
Equality //

Strategic Equality Objective 2

To be an inclusive employer and community for all our staff and learners

Why? - Providing a welcoming and supportive environment which meets the needs of everyone, advances equality of opportunity

The college will take action by undertaking the following steps:

Becoming a diversity champion employer with 'Stonewall'

Becoming a 'Disability Committed' organisation

Consulting on Identifying and implementing a staff LGBTQ+ network

Broaden representation on the Equality and Diversity team, including a Student Representative from FE and Work based Learning Holding an annual LGBTQ+ celebration day

Develop and Implement staff training on targeted campaigns. Produce a BAME progression report and track yearly.

Increase and enhance our digital accessibility

To work towards an Accessibility survey for each campus, utilising focus groups from ILS.





Strategic Equality objective 3

To improve our data collection and monitoring

Why? - By understanding the demographics of our staff and learners we can provide the right support and services, develop policies and assess impact to ensure fairness and equality for those with protected characteristics.

The college will take action by undertaking the following steps:

Draft a statement explaining what we use the information collected for and its importance.

Include this statement on our Job adverts, Staff Portal/dedicated website page.

“Pop ups” to encourage staff to complete their all about me page. Interesting facts/quiz on the staff portal to be implemented Bi termly.

Produce a termly monitoring report on All About Me data capture to assess increase.

Dedicated page with information about our data to be developed on staff portal. Provide a glossary of LGBTQ+ terms and promote on portal.

Strategic Equality Objective 4

To continue to raise awareness of equality and diversity issues amongst staff and learners

Why? - Improving awareness of equality and diversity issues amongst staff and learners fosters good relations between people and supports the advancement of equality of opportunity

The college will take action by undertaking the following steps:



To be an inclusive employer and community for all our staff and learners

Continue arranging annual equality and diversity campaigns across the college

Increased diversity and equality presence on the website as well as increasing our social media presence.

Reviewing the current equality and diversity training for staff and deliver innovative training through the staff development programme, e.g. invite to deliver training

Regular dissemination of reports amongst staff and learners.

”

We are **ALL** entitled to live **Free** and **Equal**. ”

Strategic Equality Objective 5

To close our gender pay gap

Why? Closing our gender pay gap advances equality of opportunity for women to help us become an employer of choice

The college will take action by undertaking the following steps:

Producing and publishing an annual gender pay report

Produce data in line with the gender pay report

Producing a gender pay gap action plan

Track internal progression by gender and pay grade



How the College collects Equality Data

Internal Employee Data

All employees have an “all about me” page which holds all of their equality data. This information can be amended and updated at any time.

This information will be reported and published annually within the Equality and Diversity report.

Recruitment/applicant Equality Data

All applicants are provided with an equality monitoring form to fill out on application, Human Resources have recently updated the equality questionnaire in an attempt to improve data monitoring.

This information will be reported and published annually within the Equality and Diversity report.

Student Data profile

MIS are responsible for Student Data Collection. A new system is currently being developed as a means to improve our data monitoring amongst the student body.

This information is reported on and published annually within the Equality and Diversity report

How we publish our Equality Information

Gower College produces an Equality and diversity report that is published annually.

This report is reviewed and approved by the Equality and Diversity committee.

The college reviews and reports on progression for its equality objectives annually – this information is reviewed and approved by the Equality and Diversity committee.

The information is published on our staff intranet and website as well as promoted using our internal communication strategy to ensure staff and learners have easy access to the information.

Arrangements for monitoring objectives The Equality and diversity committee meet (however many times per year) we review progress on the objectives at these meetings.

Progress will be documented and published in the College’s Equality and Diversity Annual Report which is then published on the College web pages by April of each year.

Action Plans

Please see our Equality Objectives on College website for a further information in regards to impact,.



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