ANNUAL REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE PUBLIC SECTOR EQUALITY DUTY

INTRODUCTION

The PSED requires public bodies to have *due regard* to the need to:

- **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
- **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

SUMMARY STATEMENT

We believe that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable. In recognition of the fact that they can take a variety of forms, depending on the group against whom they are directed, the college has a framework of procedures designed to ensure that discrimination does not take place and, in the event that it does, takes appropriate action.

The college has a published Equality Scheme, which sets out its vision and objectives in relation to equality and diversity and establishes the following principles:

- The college will seek to challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination.
- The college embraces diversity in all its aspects and aims to reflect, at every level, the community it serves.
- The college will treat all individuals with respect and dignity and seek to provide an environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation. The college will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure access.

The college employs staff directly and also through a wholly owned subsidiary, Vison Business Support Services (VBSS). Where possible, data has been provided throughout this document for each entity separately and as a whole.

ELIMINATING UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

The college operates a zero tolerance policy in relation to discrimination; we perceive this part of our equality duty to be a minimum standard that all employees, learners, contractors and visitors to the college will achieve.

We have a number of policies, procedures and processes in place to ensure that we have an understanding of the rights of individuals to study and work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination and that we have robust mechanisms in place for the reporting and acting on complaints of discrimination and harassment. These policies, procedures and processes include:

- Harassment and dignity at work policy
- Fair recruitment practices
- Fair recruitment and admissions processes for learners
- Mandatory training and development for all employees and partners to the college

Staff Resignations and Absence

Disability

	Disabled	Not Disabled	Unknown
Resignation (%)	5.9	8.5	14.6
% of staff with an absence (%)	10.1	9.0	1.2

There appears to be no evidence of discrimination here in relation to either resignation or absence.

Gender

	Male	Female
Resignation (%)	9.9	7.7
% of staff with an absence (%)	6.5	10.1

There are differences in the data here: females are less likely to resign than males but more likely to have an absence. The college will explore this data further to understand what it might do to address any inequalities.

Ethnicity

	White British/N Irish	Not White British/N Irish	Unknown
Resignation (%)	8.6	6.8	8.4
% of staff with an absence (%)	9.1	7.6	5.6

Members of staff with heritage that is not white British are less likely to resign or have an absence. On the face of it, this is positive, but the college will explore further whether there may be underlying inequalities.

Sexual Orientation

	Heterosexual	Gay	Lesbian	Bisexual	Unknown
Resignation (%)	9.1	7.3	0	0	6.7
% of staff with an absence (%)	8.5	10.4	1.3	6.1	10.5

There is overall difference in absence between staff members who identify as straight and those who identify with other sexual orientations. Those with other sexual orientations are less likely to resign. On the face of it, this is positive, but the college will seek to explore further whether there may be underlying inequalities.

Staff Capability Action, Grievances and Disciplinary Action

Since the start of the academic year 2020-21, there have been the following cases:

> 3 capability cases – 3 female, 1 non-white British, 0 disabled, 0 LGBTQ+
> 1 extended probation (1 in total) – 1 female, 0 non-white British, 0 disabled, 0 LGBTQ+
> 1 disciplinary – 1 female, 0 non-white British, 0 disabled, 0 LGBTQ+
> 0 grievances

Numbers here are very small so statistical inference is difficult. Nevertheless, the strong prevalence of females in these numbers makes this worthy of further examination by the college.

Learner Feedback

Feedback from learners suggests that the college is performing well in this regard. The exit survey, undertaken late in the summer term, gave the following results:

College encourages equality diversity & inclusion – 94.9% agreed
College deals with bullying issues well – 79.7% agreed (15.5% did not respond, suggesting they had not had cause to engage with bullying issues and had forgotten what we do)
College encourages respect for different backgrounds faiths & beliefs – 96.2% agreed

The induction or on-programme survey undertaken during the autumn term of 2020 gave the following results:

College encourages equality diversity & inclusion – 94.4% agreed
College deals with bullying issues well – 91.1% agreed (at this point only 5.4% did not respond, suggesting that the information received during induction was fresher in their minds at this point)
College encourages respect for different backgrounds faiths & beliefs – 94.2% agreed

Student Complaints

Similarly, there are no issues related to discrimination emerging from student complaints. As the table below sets out, overall complaints have reduced and the focus has moved to more practical issues related to the response to COVID-19 and away from human interactions.

College area	Number of complaints 19/20	Number of complaints 2018/19	Difference
Teaching and learning	30	52	-22
Advice and guidance	0	1	-1
Estates and facilities	5	1	+4
Apprenticeships and Employer engagement	2	8	-6
Exams	7	4	+3
Student behaviour and support	5	12	-7
Transport	40	20	+20
Attitude of staff	1	0	+1
Total	90	98	-8

Instances of discrimination or harassment are reported to the Corporation Board at every meeting, but there were no such instances in 2019-20. Complaints are reported to the Corporation Board twice per year. None of the complaints in 2019-20 were related to discrimination or harassment.

The college has robust and confidential mechanisms in place to enable staff and learners to report incidents of discrimination. Complaints against members of staff should are made to the college's HR team and about learners to the college's student support team. The confidentiality of the individual is carefully maintained and the individual is protected from any reprisals as a result of their complaint.

ADVANCING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

The achievement of this duty is enshrined within the college's mission:

To provide skills to enable all students, employer partners and our community to thrive.

The college works hard to ensure that each individual reaches their full potential regardless of their personal characteristics or socio-economic status.

The college makes all reasonable adjustments to its provision, teaching and learning resources, access and other publications to enable equal access for all individuals and groups.

Within the college's context, advancing equality of opportunity includes the following core foci:

- Ensuring our staff body is representative of the communities that we serve.
- Developing our partnerships with Portland College, Nottinghamshire County Council and the Inspire & Achieve Foundation to ensure that the college provides the most inclusive environment and experience that it can and, where it is unable to support a particular learner, it is able to secure appropriate alternative provision.
- Ensuring our young people are enabled to progress to higher education through the provision of locally accessible and relevant HE programmes.
- Ensuring that our college embraces diversity and difference and celebrates it at every available opportunity.
- Ensuring that equality and diversity is embedded within the college's curriculum offer, teaching and learning practice and core business processes.
- By promoting careers and courses to under-represented groups.

Representative nature of the staff body:

Ethnic origin

The populations of Mansfield and Ashfield combined are 94.7% white British. The college is predominantly (91%) white British across WNC and VBSS, which is a reflection of the local geographical area. From the table below, there is representation across the college of all ethnic categories.

Ethnic Origin	WNC	VBSS	Total
Any Other Ethnic Group	1	-	1
Asian or Asian British - Any other	1	1	2
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	1	2
Asian or Asian British – Chinese	1	-	1
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	2	4
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	3	5
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	-	1
Black or Black British – African	-	2	2
Black or Black British - Any other	1	1	2
Mixed - Any other Mixed background	2	1	3
Mixed - White and Asian	1	1	2
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	2	1	3
White - Any other White background	7	4	11
White - English/Welsh/Scottish/British	466	153	619
White – Irish	4	1	5
White - Other European	3	4	7
Unspecified	3	6	9

Gender

The college employs significantly more females than males. This, clearly, is not a direct representation of the communities it serves, but this is typical of further education colleges and the education sector as a whole. The balance between male and female staff has remained broadly static. As shown in the table below, there are significant gender imbalances in specific areas of the college. However, these all align with national trends.

Department	Female	Male	Grand Total
Catering	15	3	18
Communications, Engagement & Student Experience	137	25	162
Construction & Building services	4	30	34
Digital Transformation	40	21	61
Engineering & Motor Vehicle	2	32	34
English and Maths	27	2	29
Executive	5	4	9
Finance	12	2	14
HE, Academic, Digital, Creative & Professional Studies	60	48	108
Health & Safety	1	0	1
Health, Education & Service Industries	86	28	114
Housekeeping, Campus & Transport	27	10	37
Human Resources	8	1	9
IT, Estates & Learning Resources	14	26	40
Quality & Standards	**8**	**1**	**9**
	446	**233**	**679**

Disability

Disability	WNC	VBSS	Total
Yes	25	10	35
No	468	163	631
Unknown	5	7	12

National statistics suggest that 19% of working age adults report a disability. The college has approximately 6% of its workforce who declare a disability. This may be skewed because some of those in the wider population with a disability may be unable to work. However, the college will undertake work to understand what it might do to attract more disabled employees.

The college provides a positive, accessible and supported environment for those with disabilities, making adjustments where at all possible. There has also been a noticeable increase in openness amongst some staff with a disability, as they have experienced positive support and assistance with their needs and resources to assist with any adaptions required.

Sexual orientation

Sexual Orientation	WNC	VBSS	Total
Bisexual	8	3	11
Gay / Lesbian	4	4	8
Heterosexual	441	164	605
Not responded	45	9	54

Staff Recruitment

Disability

Disability	No	Unknown	Yes	Total
Applicants	1203	1015	70	2288
Appointments	126		10	136
Rate	10.5%	0.0%	14.3%	5.9%

Around 6% of applicants declare a disability. As stated earlier, this is significantly lower than the proportion of the adult working population who declare a disability. The college will consider this statistic and seek to identify means by which it can become a more attractive potential employer for disabled people. The appointment rate for disabled applicants is high, but this is probably due to fewer of them declaring their disability at the application stage.

Gender

Gender	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
Applicants	828	447	1013	2288
Appointments	90	46		136
Rate	10.9%	10.3%	0.0%	5.9%

Applicants to job roles split broadly in line with existing post-holders. There is no significant difference between the genders in the appointment rate.

Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	Non-white British	Unknown	White – British/N. Irish	Total
Applicants	213	1013	1062	2288
Appointments	22		114	136
Rate	10.3%	0.0%	10.7%	5.9%

This table shows that the college is successful (relative to its demography) in attracting job applicants from non-white British heritage. There is no significant difference in the appointment rates between either category.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Bisexual	Gay	Straight	Other	Unkown	Grand Total
Applicants	39	34	1126	19	1070	2288
Appointments	5	3	122	3	3	136
Rate	12.8%	8.8%	10.8%	15.8%	0.3%	5.9%

Very small numbers in most categories make it difficult to draw firm conclusions from this data. However, it seems clear that there is no bias towards heterosexual applicants.

Staff Salaries

Disability

Disability	Yes	No	Unknown	Total
< £20k	12	234	2	248
£20k-£30k	8	172	4	184
Teaching staff £20k-£40k	9	151	3	163
£30k-40k	2	37	1	40
£40k-£60k	2	25	0	27
> £60k	1	5	0	6

Disabled staff are broadly proportionately represented at each salary band.

Gender

Gender	Female	Male	Total
< £20k	198	50	248
£20k-£30k	122	62	184
Teaching staff £20k-£40k	96	67	163
£30k-40k	15	25	40
£40k-£60k	15	12	27
> £60k	2	4	6

Females are proportionately over-represented at lower pay bands and under-represented at higher salary bands. The college will undertake further analysis and seek to identify actions to address this.

Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	Non-white British	White British/N. Irish	Unknown	Total
< £20k	20	225	3	248
£20k-£30k	8	172	4	184
Teaching staff £20k-£40k	18	142	3	163
£30k-40k	6	31	3	40
£40k-£60k	0	27	0	27
> £60k	0	6	0	6

Those with ethnicity that is not white British are absent from the highest levels of salary bands and over-represented at mid-level salary bands. The college will undertake further analysis and seek to identify actions to address this.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual Orientation	Bisexual	Gay	Heterosexual	Lesbian	Unkown	Grand Total
< £20k	2	1	177	2	66	248
£20k-£30k	6	4	144	0	30	**184**

Teaching staff £20k-£40k	4	2	129	1	27	163
£30k-40k	1	0	34	0	5	40
£40k-£60k	1	0	19	0	7	27
> £60k	0	0	6	0	0	6

Other than at the top level of the salary bands, those with sexual orientation other than heterosexual are broadly proportionately represented. At the top level, numbers are so small as to make this statistically insignificant.

Student Achievement

Disability

Achievement	Disabled	All Students
16-18	74.6	78.6
19+	82.5	82.7

Disabled students did less well than their peers in terms of achievement. The college is taking a number of significant actions to redress this imbalance.

Gender

Achievement	Female	Male	All Students
16-18	82.7	75.3	78.6
19+	85.8	78.7	82.7

Outcomes for both adult students 16-18 year olds are significantly better for females than males. This was largely due to some poor outcomes for males on long, lower-level courses. These areas have all been identified and are a focus of departmental level quality improvement plans.

Ethnicity

Achievement	Non White British	All Students
16-18	83.3	78.6
19+	79.6	82.7

Young, non-white students out-performed their white British peers in terms of achievement. However, the reverse was true for adults. This was due to poor performance on lower-level courses in a relatively small number of subjects. The college will undertake further analysis to identify any underlying inequalities and put in place appropriate actions to address these.

Social Class

Achievement	Disadvantage	Looked After	All Students
16-18	73.4	71.3	78.6
19+	88.9	100.0	82.7

Adult students from disadvantaged backgrounds out-performed their less disadvantaged peers in terms of achievement. However, the reverse was true for younger students (16-18). This was due to poor performance on lower-level courses in engineering, motor vehicle and construction. The college is taking action to redress this imbalance.

Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The college's response to supporting learners with a disability in lockdown has been recognised through a national case study as an exemplar of best practice. The college continued support for SEND learners throughout lockdown. Support workers were able to log on to Teams and support students remotely. In some cases, this meant that learners were more willing to request support as they were not having to ask for it in front of their peers. Sessions for supported learners were recorded so that they could review them again. For visually impaired learners and learners who may have issues with processing information, this proved incredibly helpful and encouraged, in many cases, independent note-taking, which helped learners to commit and recall learning to long-term memory. For our BSL users, support workers overlaid the session with BSL so that students were still able to access and contribute fully to their lesson. In many cases, the college saw the engagement of learners improve; for some, attendance in sessions improved significantly. Some students have fed back that the removal of anxiety around attending a large college that lockdown inevitably brought meant they felt more comfortable and able to contribute to whole class discussion. For learners with a physical disability, some of the stresses around not having to get ready for college meant that they were far less fatigued more able to make a full contribution.

Some quotes:

"As his Mum, it is my greatest wish that A is contented and stable in his development and wellbeing, so I cannot praise you and your colleagues enough for creating such a supportive, caring and inclusive learning environment for A to thrive in. We can only hope you are all involved with A's course next year, it would be very reassuring to know there are familiar faces taking care of him."

"Support throughout the two years of me being at college has enabled me to be my best self, and not just regarding my work but personally too. I do truly believe that my relationship with support has been a huge factor in who I am now. Support motivates me, helps me organise myself and gives me a pep talk when I'm feeling down. I am going to miss support and college. It has been an amazing two years and I wouldn't change this for the world.'

'Support over the year has been really good, always had the resources adapted before the lessons and given to me in advance if need them. The support has also allowed me to be more independent during lessons. Support remotely has also carried on being really good I always have a member of support staff checking in and seeing if I need anything and updating me on work and sending over adaptations where needed.'

Student Progression to Higher Education

302 students progressed to higher education in 2020, using the Universities Central Admissions System (UCAS). Of these, 29 (9.6%) were of non-white British ethnicity, 192 (63.6%) were female, and 31 (10.3%) had a declared disability. The college publishes an annual Access and Participation Plan, which identifies areas where those with protected characteristics perform less well than their peers and sets out actions to address these.

FOSTERING GOOD RELATIONS

The college will proactively promote equality and diversity. It will ensure that our learners and staff have an understanding and appreciation of the diversity and difference that goes to make up the society in which we live and work. The college will achieve this part of its equality duty by:

- Ensuring that a celebration of diversity is embedded within teaching and learning and our cross-college events and activities;
- Providing resources on the college's intranet and enable understanding and therefore help to foster good relations;
- Working in partnership with other organisations and individuals to ensure that our learners and staff are exposed to diversity and difference; and
- Work within our local community to support community cohesion.

Tutorial

The college's tutorial programme includes focus around key awareness raising months such as black history month, LGBT+ month, and women's history month, with students encouraged to explore issues and produce materials. It also deals with issues around behaviour, respect and tolerance. Materials are circulated to tutors for use, which help students form an opinion based on fact rather than what they may or may not have read on social media. In many vocational areas, cultural and diversity aspects of industry are embedded and form a fundamental part of teaching and learning. Resources and materials have been provided for staff around issues such as Black Lives Matter so that they can ensure that tutorial sessions with students are relevant and drawing on issues within the news that have appeal for young people.

Accessibility

The college's website contains an accessibility statement, which sets out our position and plans to ensure that college publications of all types are accessible to everyone.

Partnerships

The college has a range of partnerships which help ensure that students are exposed to difference and diversity. Many of these are enacted through the tutorial programme as described above, but the students' union and curriculum departments also engage productively with charities and community groups to widen the experience of students in ways which are relevant to their wider studies. Key amongst these are Nottinghamshire Police, Portland College, and NHS trusts. The college also has a very strong strategic partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council, which is built upon mutual support and constructive challenge, and which helps to provide appropriate and flexible support to disadvantaged learners of all backgrounds.