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Leading learning and skills

# Disability Equality Scheme

December 2006

Of interest to everyone involved in improving  
skills and learning opportunities across England

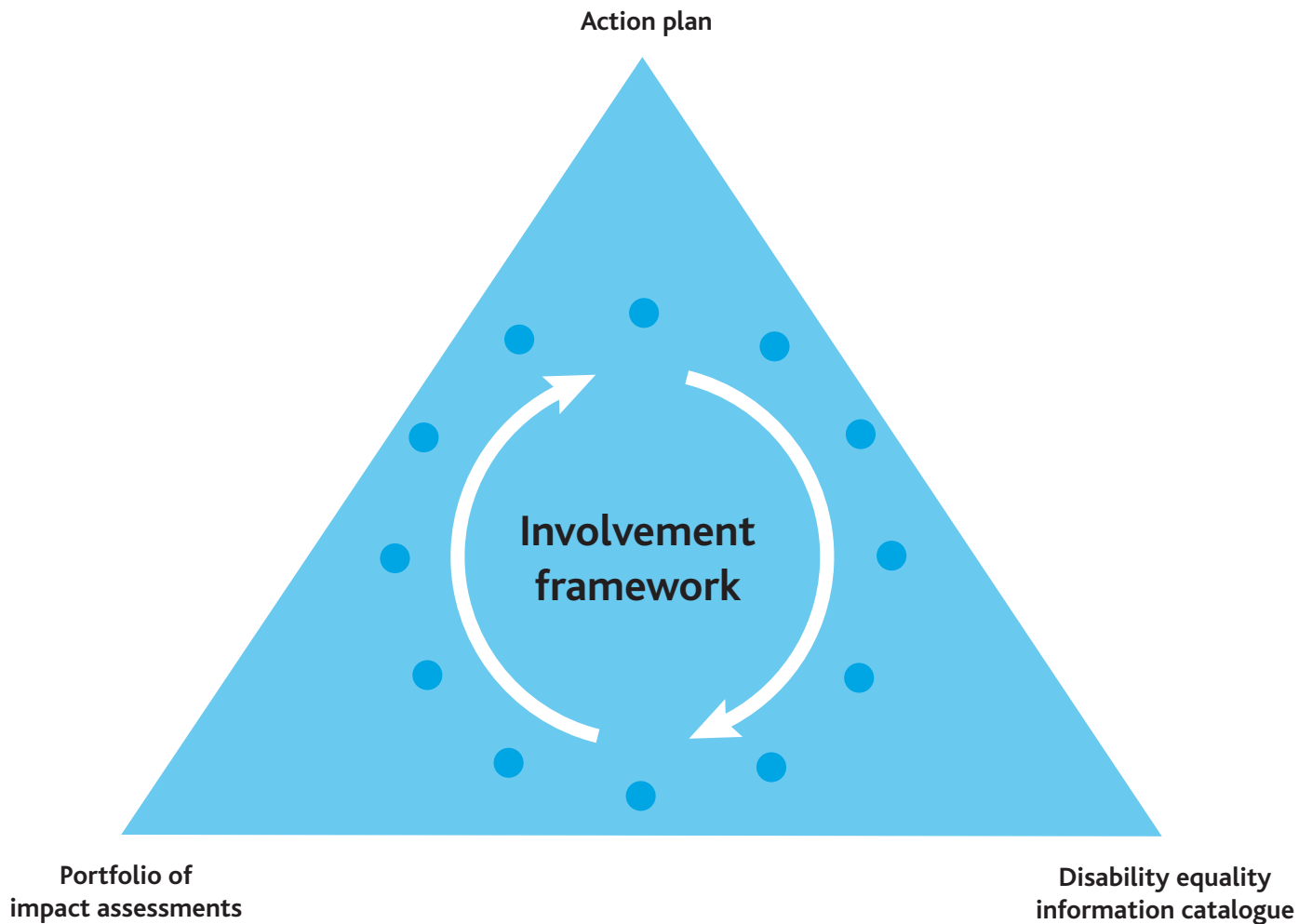


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## Acknowledgement

We would like to thank all the disabled people, both our staff and learners, for the time and commitment they contributed in helping us develop this scheme.



Our Disability Equality Scheme is supported by three key documents: our action plan, the disability information catalogue and the portfolio of impact assessments. Central to all is our involvement framework.

# Foreword

The further education (FE) system includes colleges, schools, independent providers, voluntary, community organisations and employers – everyone who provides learning to people over the age of 16. The system does not include people studying higher education courses at universities or elsewhere. The FE system serves over 6 million learners. The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and its partners and stakeholders face a major challenge in delivering the skills needed to make our country a world-class economy. We want young people and adults in England to have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world by 2010. In achieving this we will have an impact on both the economy and social cohesion.

That is why our Disability Equality Scheme is so important. It signals that we understand that, if we are to succeed, everyone must have the opportunity to realise their potential. We need to do more for disabled people. The number of disabled learners has steadily increased, but 40 per cent of disabled people still have no qualifications. Disabled people remain under-represented in the FE system and what is offered has not kept pace with their needs. We must ensure that education and training are truly inclusive. We want to support disabled people so that they can participate and succeed – so gaining the confidence and skills to play their full part in society and the economy.

We are committed to tackling disadvantage effectively, by using specific interventions, funding and planning policies. This is why we have launched our national strategy “Learning for Living and Work: Improving Education and Training Opportunities for People with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities”; it will deliver fundamental change over the period of this scheme. We will also ensure that local and regional plans have a clear direction so that provision is learner-centred and matches local needs and opportunities.

We will call colleges and other providers to account for how they are meeting the needs of disabled people, but we will also practise what we preach and set high standards for ourselves. We will demonstrate excellence as an organisation and as an employer, recognising and harnessing the talents that disabled people have to offer and enabling them to flourish. We will account through our annual report for what we do, ensuring that we are transparent about both our progress and the challenges we are tackling. And we will involve disabled learners and employees in developing, delivering and monitoring this scheme, understanding that their expertise and experience are essential to our success.



**Mark Haysom**  
LSC Chief Executive

# Introduction

- 1 This is the LSC's first Disability Equality Scheme. It describes how we will meet our statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination as set out in the Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005, and the Duty to Promote Disability Equality Statutory Code of Practice 2006. The scheme will be effective from 4 December 2006. From 1 April 2007, it will be fully incorporated, with any necessary updating, into our Single Equality Scheme, alongside our Race Equality and Gender Equality Schemes.

# Our vision and our commitment to equality and diversity

- 2 The LSC is responsible for the planning, funding and quality assurance of post-16 education and training. We fund colleges and other providers to deliver high-quality education and training to meet the needs of learners in accordance with the priorities and requirements of both the Government and the LSC.
- 3 From the outset, promoting equality and diversity has been at the heart of our responsibilities. The Learning and Skills Act 2000 imposes a duty "to encourage individuals to undergo post-16 education and training and to encourage employers to participate in the provision of post-16 education and training". The Act requires us to have "due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between people from different racial groups, between men and women, and between people with a disability and people without", and to report annually on how we have done this. In his original remit letter to us, the Secretary of State said "I expect the Council to build equality of opportunity into all its policies, programmes and actions" and emphasised the importance of raising levels of participation and achievement.
- 4 Our vision is that, by 2010, young people and adults in England will have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and be part of a truly competitive workforce. This vision can only be achieved if we reduce the gaps in achievement among people of all ages from backgrounds of low income or disadvantage. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity as an integral part of all that we do so that everyone has the opportunity to realise their potential.
- 5 Our commitment is therefore to be a champion of disability equality and an example of best practice as an organisation and an employer. We will:
  - comply with the law in promoting disability equality and, where possible, go further than the legal requirements;
  - reach out to those with low skills who are not currently involved in learning;
  - improve access to different types of learning;
  - improve learners' experience of the education and training they undertake;
  - ensure that learners succeed and can progress in a way that matches their abilities and aspirations;
  - be an organisation that harnesses the talents of all, and does not tolerate any form of discrimination or harassment.

6 In line with our values, we will be:

- bold – on behalf of individuals, employers and the learning and skills system;
- clear – about what success looks like and how it will be achieved;
- true – to our vision, in our relationships within the Council and with our partners;
- relentless – if something does not work as we had hoped, we will try another way.

7 We will judge our success by:

- our progress in improving the participation and achievement of learners with learning difficulties or disabilities, and our success in implementing our “Learning for Living and Work” strategy;
- the commitment of colleges and other providers with whom we contract to building action for disability equality into their plans;
- the positive approach to disability equality among all our staff and their record in implementing this scheme;
- the views of learners on how well we and the system are doing.

# How we understand disability

- 8 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 provides that a person has a disability if she or he has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to day activities.
- 9 This scheme is based on the “social model” of disability: that people are disabled by negative attitudes and assumptions and by physical and social barriers rather than by their impairments or medical conditions. The achievement of equality of opportunity for disabled people therefore requires us to change the attitudes, policies, practices and actions that create such barriers. The development of this scheme and its action plan has been informed by this understanding.

# Disability equality: the current position

10 Our current position in relation to disability equality is as follows.

## **Our existing staff:**

- 3.4 per cent of our staff (108 employees) are disabled people;
- the percentage of our staff who are disabled is highest in our lower staff grades.

We intend to double the percentage of staff with disabilities or limiting illness to 6.8 per cent by 2010.

## **Our learners:**

- disabled people represent about 25 per cent of the population;
- disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no or lower qualifications;
- in 2004/05, 641,000 learners undertaking LSC-funded further education and training said that they had a learning difficulty or disability; they represented about 10 per cent of all our learners;
- nine out of ten learners with learning difficulties or disabilities were satisfied with their experience, three out of ten being "extremely satisfied".

We intend to improve the rate of self-declaration of disability and the quality of information available, through our Individual Learner Record.

# Our policy framework: our national priorities for learning and skills

- 11 We work according to the Government's policy for learning and skills as set out in its FE Strategy, most recently in "Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances" (2006). Each year, our grant letter from the Secretary of State sets out the Government's requirements and our Public Sector Agreement (PSA) targets. Our annual statement of priorities flows from these. We respond to our duties and demonstrate our commitment to promoting equality and diversity within this policy framework. We will identify and reach out specifically to those most in need of learning, in order to tackle disadvantage and under-achievement. Our key objectives are to:
- raise the quality and improve the choice of learning opportunities for all young people, to equip them with the skills for employment, for further or higher learning and for wider social and community engagement;
  - raise the skills of the nation, giving employers and individuals the skills they need to improve productivity, employability and social cohesion;
  - raise the performance of a world-class system that is responsive, provides choice and is valued and recognised for excellence;
  - raise our contribution to economic development locally and regionally through partnership working.
- 12 To develop the FE system into a world-class system we have set our "agenda for change". Its aims are to improve how colleges and other providers work with employers; to develop a culture of self-improvement; to streamline funding; to collect data better; to help them become better businesses; and to improve their reputation. Our "Framework for Excellence: a Comprehensive Performance Assessment Framework for the Further Education System" will develop a new standard during the lifespan of this scheme as our means of providing public information on the performance of all colleges and providers. It will have seven Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) covering responsiveness, effectiveness and finance.

# Our legal duty

13 Section 49A(1) of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 places a general duty on all public bodies, including the LSC, to have regard to a number of matters in carrying out their functions. We will take the steps set out below and those in our action plan, to meet our general duty in relation to our employees and to the services and functions we deliver. Our action plan (pages 18 to 22) sets out the way in which we will meet each of the duties placed upon us by the Act:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people – we will be pro-active and mainstream consideration of disability issues in our strategic thinking and our decision-making, so that disabled people are not disadvantaged and that their opportunities and outcomes are proportionate to, and comparable with, those of non-disabled people;
- eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act – we will prevent any less favourable treatment or victimisation of disabled people. We will also make reasonable adjustments in anticipation of our staff and expect providers to do so for the needs of their learners and staff;
- eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities – we will act to prevent direct abuse, comments or actions that make disabled people feel uncomfortable, intimidated or degraded;
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people – we will avoid negative language or images, challenge assumptions and celebrate the achievements of disabled people;

- encourage participation by disabled people in public life – we will seek to ensure that disabled people are represented on our Council and committees and can participate fully, and we will advise the Secretary of State accordingly;
- take steps to take account of people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than other people – we will offer the necessary support and make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers and disadvantages so that disabled people may have the same opportunities or outcomes as non-disabled people.

In doing so, we will be alert as to which of our functions are most relevant (having most significance for disabled people) and to proportionality (which functions have most impact on them).

14 We fund and contract with providers to deliver learning and training. As public bodies, colleges, local authorities and some other delivery partners have their own Disability Equality Schemes. Through the procurement process in our business cycle, we will:

- seek to ensure that these partners demonstrate compliance with statutory requirements in their self-assessment and delivery plans;
- provide support for them in doing this;
- collect information on their performance;
- ensure that our staff are equipped to manage and monitor these processes.

# Involvement of disabled people

- 15 We are committed to listening to learners to ensure that changes are made for their benefit. We will work with learners, including potential learners, and our staff in assessing progress and developing the scheme, by:
- creating a National Panel of Learners with Disabilities to be fully operational from 2007; this will be the key forum for involving learners in advising on policy and monitoring progress and achievement and it will be linked to our main National Learner Panel and the Equality and Diversity Committee;
  - involving service users in our national Task Group, which includes the LSC, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), the National Institute for Mental Health In England (NIMHE) and regional networks, in developing provision for learners with mental health difficulties;
  - working with the National Union of Students (NUS) Disabled Students' Committee to develop our understanding of barriers and how to overcome them;
  - consulting our staff on how they wish to be involved in influencing our policy and practice as an employer, and putting appropriate arrangements in place from 2007 which will feed into our National Employee Consultative Forum;
  - using our Involvement Framework to involve disabled people in advising on data needs, impact assessment, monitoring progress and achievement,
- and, where appropriate, undertaking parts of our action plan, with a commitment to plan involvement carefully and provide resources to cover their time, expenses and support needs;
- developing user involvement protocols for commissioning and monitoring services, as recommended by the report "Improving the Life Chances of Disabled People" (Strategy Unit, 2005, recommendation 4.2).
- 16 We have created an Involvement Framework which will be used throughout the LSC to enable disabled people to influence our thinking and decision-making. It describes the issues we will consider, responsibilities within the LSC, how involvement can be achieved by raising awareness, asking questions and discussion, and how reporting and recording will provide feedback and inform our actions. It contains guidance on reaching disabled people and on accessible communications and events. It is available on our website (at [http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/national/involvement\\_framework.pdf](http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/national/involvement_framework.pdf)). We would welcome further comments and suggestions.
- 17 We have already used the framework to involve a wide range of disabled people in discussing the initial topics for this scheme:
- impact assessments: whether the priorities we established from our initial screening were correct – so that the

- highest priority would proceed to impact assessments;
- barriers and unsatisfactory outcomes: experienced by both our staff and learners;
  - action plan: the actions that need highest priority;
  - involvement: advice on our Involvement Framework and forums.
- 18 We used the following means of involving disabled people:
- involvement with groups/individual disabled people: we worked directly with groups such as the Bournemouth Forum, the Essex Coalition of Disabled People and the Disabled Parents Network;
  - collaboration with partner organisations: individuals, organisations of disabled people, organisations for disabled people, and other agencies attended events organised with partner organisations such as Cornwall County Council and One NE (Regional Development Agency);
  - discussions with the NUS Disabled Students' Committee: this group provided valuable insight into the barriers faced by themselves and other disabled students which has informed the priorities of this scheme;
  - external electronic debate: through our "Talk to Des" campaign, launched by our Chairman, disabled people and others were encouraged, through press and other advertising, to submit views, ideas and suggestions to a dedicated email address ([des@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:des@lsc.gov.uk)), to take part in an online discussion forum and survey;
  - staff debate: a series of electronic briefings were provided to our staff to raise their awareness of the scheme. People were encouraged to share their
- experience of disability in relation to LSC employment and to send ideas and suggestions to a dedicated email address ([des@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:des@lsc.gov.uk)). Staff views were sought through the Public and Commercial Services (PCS) trade union and the National Employee Consultative Forum (NECF). Our informal disabled staff network used the intranet to contribute to our scheme. This culminated in an electronic survey.
- 19 The priorities for impact assessments which these processes identified are as follows.
- From learners:**
- reductions or limits on funding for adult learners (those aged over 19) can disproportionately affect disabled learners, who tend to be adults;
  - funding priority being given to younger learners (14–19-year-olds) tends not to favour disabled learners, who often continue or start key learning after the age of 19;
  - support for disabled learners can be difficult to obtain or insufficient to meet the disabled learner's needs;
  - existing targets for the participation and achievement of learners do not adequately promote and measure the participation and achievement of disabled learners;
  - classification of "Leisure" courses: some courses that are vital for disabled people (for example lip-reading) are classified as "Leisure" courses and are then unfunded;
  - Skills for Learning entry-level criteria: disabled learners may not have achieved the entry criteria required for proceeding to other learning.

**From employees:**

- colleagues need more disability awareness training.

20 Issues which will be forwarded to other bodies to consider are:

- funding and employment priorities – Department for Education and Skills;
- transport costs – Department for Transport;
- guidelines and standards for continuous quality improvement to support the learning experience for disabled learners – the Quality Improvement Agency;
- disability awareness and support – providers.

# Information and impact assessment

- 21 The information available to us on equality of opportunity for disabled people, and how we gather it, is listed in Annex C. This information will be developed to cover all our function areas and each part of the Disability Equality Duty. We will seek to extend our information base by:
- improving the quality and accuracy of information on disability in the learner population;
  - data cleansing and refining our analysis of staff disability data;
  - ensuring that the reasons for choosing to declare a disability, or not, are understood;
  - collecting information on providers' compliance with their duty to promote disability equality, and on harassment, discrimination grievances and disciplinary action;
  - considering information requirements in conducting impact assessments and monitoring subsequent changes/progress in the action plan;
  - ensuring that our staff are trained in how information is collected and how to use it.
- and satisfaction in comparison with non-disabled people;
- investigate the reasons for any differences and identify improvements to narrow the gaps;
  - inform our impact assessments and initial assessments;
  - measure the effectiveness of our action plan and its priorities.
- 22 We will use our information base to enable us to:
- identify barriers;
  - identify differences in the opportunities available to disabled people for participation, achievement, progression
- 23 We will use our Impact Assessment Framework (set out at Annex B) to undertake impact assessments of our current and proposed activities. We will continue to develop this in the light of experience. Our aims will be to make sure that our decisions and activities do not disadvantage disabled people, and to identify how we can better promote equality of opportunity. Our business cycle will be the mechanism to ensure that the initial assessment and impact assessment processes are embedded into all strategic thinking in each function area. We will also review all changes and developments in our activities, and from 2007 all papers with a bearing on policy and that require decisions will include an equality and diversity impact assessment.

# Accountability

24 The LSC's National Council is ultimately accountable for ensuring that the LSC complies with its statutory duties. It has established an Equality and Diversity Committee to support the Council.

The Committee's remit is to:

- work to ensure that LSC programmes are equally focused among the groups that make up our society;
- promote individual empowerment so that everyone can enjoy equal opportunity and meaningful options in learning, training and work;
- work to bring about change to ensure that equality and diversity are mainstreamed.

The Committee will review the scheme annually; assess progress on the action plan and advise on the annual report of progress; and report to the Council.

25 The National Director of Learning, supported by our Director of Equality and Diversity, is accountable to the Chief Executive for the fulfilment of our Disability Equality Duty and the implementation of this scheme and its action plan. She will work with the National Directors for Skills, Resources, Strategy and Communications, and Human Resources, who will be responsible for implementation within their respective areas.

# Implementation and the action plan

- 26 The action plan sets out the outcomes we are seeking to achieve, so that we can fulfil our Disability Equality Duty to both our existing and potential employees and learners. The plan reflects the priorities for impact assessments and changes that have already been identified with the help of disabled people. Regular reviews will enable us to add any priorities that emerge from impact assessments, other developments or feedback.

# Reporting and review

27 We will report annually on progress as part of our annual report, fulfilling our statutory obligation to report to the Secretary of State. From 2006 this report, complemented by a progress report detailing the impact of the LSC's work, has been published alongside our annual statement of priorities. We intend to improve our corporate reporting of equality and diversity matters, using our website to provide more detailed information on progress on the action plans. We will involve disabled people to ensure that such information is accessible.

We will review the Single Equality Scheme (into which this scheme will be incorporated) each year and update action plans and targets on an interim basis. There will be a full review and revision at the end of the Disability Equality Scheme's three-year cycle. Disabled people will be involved at each stage, with a clear role in supporting us and holding us to account for action.

# Action plan

The Disability Equality Duty requires the LSC to:

1. promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and others;
2. eliminate unlawful disability discrimination;
3. eliminate disability-related harassment;
4. promote positive attitudes towards disabled people;
5. encourage participation of disabled people in public life;
6. take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others.

We will undertake the following actions to meet these duties.

Meets duty	Topic	Accountable	Outcome	Deadline
<b>Involvement</b>				
1,2,4,6	National Panel of Learners with Disabilities	Director of Young People's Learning	Panel in place and operating	June 2007
1,2,4,6	Regional Involvement Programme	Director of Equality and Diversity	Delivery of a national programme to support the development of sustainable involvement of disabled people	July 2007
1,2,4,6	Involvement Framework and capacity building for involvement	Director of Equality and Diversity	Function areas across LSC provide reports of involvement activities and participants; disabled people involved in process on continuing basis	From Jan 2007
			Number of disabled people involved increased by 100%	Dec 2009
1,2,4,6	LSC/NIACE/NIMHE task group and regional networks for learners with mental health difficulties	Director of Young People's Learning	Learners with mental health difficulties involved in building capacity of the system	Ongoing

<b>Meets duty</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1,2,4,6	"Learning for Living and Work" evaluation	Director of Young People's Learning	Evaluation commissioned	2009
1,2,4,6	Staff with disabilities	Director of Human Resources	Network or alternative set up in response to staff views	April 2007
1,2,4	Accessible information/ websites/surveys	Director of Communications	Policy reviewed, updated and operational	June 2007
1,2,4,6	Regional action plans	Director of Learning	Regional action plans reflect local opportunities and needs – the result of ongoing involvement of disabled people	Dec 2007
<b>Reporting</b>				
2,3,6	Protocol for monitoring	Director of Equality and Diversity	Protocol in use across LSC	June 2007
1,2,3,4,5,6	Annual report	Director of Learning	Progress report on disability equality included in accessible annual report and progress report	Yearly
1,2,3,4,5,6	Review and update disability dimension of the Single Equality Scheme	Director of Equality and Diversity	Annual review and update of action plan New Single Equality Scheme	Yearly May 2010
<b>Promoting positive attitudes</b>				
1,4,6	Review existing marketing and promotional material	Head of National Marketing	All promotional and recruitment material includes positive representation of disabled people Record of positive press releases	Dec 2007 Ongoing
<b>Encouraging participation of disabled people in public life</b>				
1,2,3,4,5,6	Committee membership	Chairman	Membership of councils and committees includes 15% disabled people	Dec 2007

Meets duty	Topic	Accountable	Outcome	Deadline
<b>Funding and procurement (business cycle)</b>				
1,2,6	Business cycle	Director of Planning and Performance	Baseline data for participation/retention/achievement, needs analysis and areas for action identified in regional commissioning plans	Yearly
1,2,3,4,5,6	Delivery partners' development plans	Director of Planning and Performance	Development plans supported by self-assessment meet requirements of commissioning plans and show compliance with disability equality requirements	Yearly
1,2,4,6	"Learning for Living and Work: Improving Education and Training Opportunities for People with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities"	Director of Young People's Learning	See action plan and outcomes in the strategy	2010
1,2,4,6	"Improving Services for Adults with Mental Health Difficulties"	Director of Young People's Learning	Action plan for future development; regional networks to support providers	2008
1,2,6	Capital funding	Director of Resources	Conditions for capital funding strengthened, thus raising disability access standards	July 2007
1,2,6	Contracting/tendering	Director of Resources	Contracts require a strong and demonstrated commitment to disability equality	July 2007

<b>Meets duty</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
<b>LSC as an employer</b>				
1,2,3,4,6	Disability benchmark	Director of Human Resources	Achievement demonstrates best practice	Feb 2007
1,2,3,4	Staff profile	Director of Human Resources	Percentage of staff with disabilities or limiting illness doubled to 6.8%	2010
<b>Training</b>				
1,2,3,4	Initial staff training programme in disability awareness, compliance, developing potential and relevant skills	Director of Human Resources	All staff trained, disability issues embedded into all future generic training  Staff show positive approach to employee management as measured in staff attitude survey	June 2007  2008
1,4	Train staff in managing and monitoring providers' performance	Director of Learning	Performance information enables improvement targets to be set and supports "Learning for Living and Work"	2007 onwards
1,2,3,4,6	Delivery partners: provider support programme and "Learning for Living and Work"	Director of Young People's Learning	Support tools provided Fully qualified workforce	2007 2010
<b>Information and impact assessment</b>				
1,2,4	Protocol for commissioning services/research	Director of Equality and Diversity	Protocol in use across LSC	June 2007
1,2,3,4,5	Disability equality information catalogue	Director of Equality and Diversity	Current, accurate catalogue in place providing basis for identifying areas for attention, impact assessment and action	June 2008
1,2,6	Employee profile and experience monitoring	Director of Human Resources	Annual report enabling strategies for workforce development	Yearly from 2007

<b>Meets duty</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
1	Employee and learner data – self-declaration	Directors of Learning, Human Resources	100% accuracy of staff data Annual improvement for learners; new model of recording in place	2008 2009
1,4	FE system workforce composition	Director of Equality and Diversity	Through Lifelong Learning UK, data is collected from all providers and analysed to set improvement targets	Yearly
1,2,4	Impact assessment methodology and criteria	Director of Equality and Diversity	Applied to all new/changes to policies and practices	June 2007
1,2,4,6	Rolling programme of impact assessment implemented	Director of Equality and Diversity	Assessments completed in accordance with priority list	Dec 2009

# Annex A:

## Functions and policy areas

Organisational area	Description	Functions
<b>Human Resources</b>	<b>Human Resources</b> provides support for the whole of the LSC, giving advice and guidance about policies and procedures, and guidance for our employees. Human Resources takes a positive approach to following best practice and making the LSC a good place to work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruitment</li> <li>Employment pay and conditions</li> <li>Training</li> <li>Human resource policies – development, implementation, monitoring</li> </ul>
<b>Learning</b>	<b>The Learning Group's</b> role is to make sure that people get the learning they need to be ready for work and/or to be involved in more learning. We do this by developing ideas and products that make it easier to take part in learning, help people be more successful in learning, and improve the way that learning is delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Young people's learning</li> <li>Policy and innovation</li> <li>Lifelong learning</li> <li>Improving and evaluating quality</li> <li>Equality and diversity</li> <li>Learner support</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	<b>The Resources Group</b> secures and manages financial, information and business processes and property resources needed by the LSC to achieve its objectives; provides a range of professional services to support LSC staff in carrying out their jobs; works directly with external stakeholders to improve efficiency, effectiveness and value for money in the education and training sector; and delivers high-quality data and performance management tools to support enhanced performance and enable better, value for money, procurement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information</li> <li>Finance</li> <li>Corporate property and facilities</li> <li>Funding policy and strategy</li> </ul>

Organisational area	Description	Functions
<b>Skills</b>	<p><b>The Skills Group's</b> central purpose is to increase employer engagement in learning and skills training. We want to engage businesses in the benefits of investing in their workforce and so stimulate demand from them for training that will improve competitiveness and enable individuals to progress in employment.</p> <p>Working with the Government and other partners, we do this by developing and implementing national skills strategies, policies and products that employers and individuals value.</p>	<p>Employers</p> <p>Employment</p> <p>Skills Strategy Unit</p> <p>National Employer Service</p>
<b>Strategy and Communications</b>	<p><b>The Strategy and Communications Group</b> has two main functions. Firstly, it leads on the development of the LSC's overall strategy – informing and influencing key political partners and ensuring that government priorities are not only reflected in the LSC's own plans but also communicated clearly, internally and externally. Secondly, it works to identify future social, economic and political challenges and, in order to address these, engages internal and external stakeholders in the development of LSC strategy and plans. This work is done in partnership with the executive and non-executive councils and committees, and in accordance with all legal requirements.</p>	<p>Legal</p> <p>Research</p> <p>Chief Executive's support team</p> <p>Planning and performance</p>

# Annex B:

# Our approach to impact assessment

We will use the following framework for assessing the impact for our policies, procedures and practices.

- 1 **Preparation:**
  - identify each of our function areas (see Annex A) and the staff leads who will be responsible for the impact assessment;
  - identify the existing policies and practices which underpin those functions.
- 2 **Initial assessment:**
  - conduct a high-level review of the relevance of each policy and practice to disabled people and our Disability Equality Duty;
  - consider whether the policy or practice has high or low relevance to disabled people and our Disability Equality Duty. We shall decide if the policy or practice is:
    - major in terms of scale or significance for our activities;
    - minor but we have clear indications that it is likely to have a major impact on disabled people. Extremely negative impact on a few disabled people will have high relevance and prompt a full impact assessment;
  - where a policy is highly relevant, a full impact assessment is likely to be needed. Where relevance is low, we shall record the reasons why a full impact assessment is considered unnecessary. In such instances, we shall also record any changes made, even though a full impact assessment was not done;
- 3 **Impact assessment:**
  - before we make final decisions as to whether an impact assessment is needed, we shall test our initial assessment with disabled people – employees or learners as appropriate. They will also be involved in setting the priorities for impact assessments for each function area and helping us to refine the criteria that we use for this review process;
  - the resulting list of priority impact assessments is, and will continue to be, included in our detailed or operational action plan;
  - transfer any issues outside our remit to the relevant public body.

- use the general duties in respect of disability as a checklist for each policy or practice, for example if we have missed opportunities such as promoting more positive attitudes towards disabled people;
  - identify changes, improvements and other actions that can be taken to reduce the negative impact or achieve more positive impact. Involvement of disabled people can help find solutions;
  - consider alternative policies that might better promote equality for disabled people;
  - assess whether changes, improvements and other actions are reasonable in terms of practicality, resources, and so on;
  - identify areas that will require further review of potential adverse effect.
- 4 **Outcomes:**
- decide what changes are to be made and include these in the action plan;
  - if we decide not to make a change because it would not be reasonable or practicable, we will record the reasons. We will still look at whether there are alternative means of achieving the desired outcomes;
  - refer any issues outside our remit to the relevant public body;
  - take action to obtain any additional information in order to monitor progress and better inform other impact assessments.
- 5 **Publish outcomes of impact assessment:**
- provide feedback to disabled people involved in assessment;
  - create a portfolio of policies and practices by function area with the results of the initial assessments, impact assessments, changes and referrals;
  - update catalogue of information relevant to disability equality.
- 6 **Ongoing activity:**
- monitor progress of impact assessment programme and action plan;
  - monitor progress of changes through action plan;
  - reconsider criteria used for initial assessment with the involvement of disabled people;
  - report outcomes and progress in annual reports;
  - review impact assessment process and include any changes in annual reports and next Disability Equality Scheme.

# Annex C:

# Disability equality information catalogue

- 1 This section describes the arrangements we use to gather information on the effects of our policies and practices on equality of opportunity for disabled people, and the information that we hold. We will develop this over the lifetime of the scheme.
- 2 To gather information we will:
  - identify the functions of the LSC (Annex A);
  - identify existing internal and external relevant information, and that which can easily be added;
  - involve disabled people in identifying and prioritising any gaps;
  - review the information and identify any areas that are not clear;
  - take action to fill gaps or gain clearer information;
  - record and report evidence;
  - analyse evidence and involve disabled people in deciding actions and targets to improve equality of opportunity;
  - include those actions as the action plan is updated and in future schemes.
- 3 The following information relating to learners is available to us:
  - generic information to provide a context for our performance: the proportions of disabled people both nationally and locally, the proportions of different needs/impairment types and respective age groups;
  - information from other parts of the education sector: we will share learner information across the sector to help improve the consistency and value of that information, measure and improve our performance and promote equality;
  - learner information using our Individual Learner Record: participation, completion of courses, achievements and qualifications, support for disabled learners;
  - learner satisfaction: through our annual learner survey, which reports specifically on disabled learners' views.
- 4 The following information relating to employees, members of Council and its committees is available to us:
  - numbers and staff grades of disabled people;
  - diversity monitoring throughout employment;
  - recruitment including advertising, requests for information, applications, sifting, interviews, job offers, medical clearances, appointments;
  - development including availability and take-up of training, promotion rates, performance appraisals, satisfaction levels;
  - staff training in relevant disability topics;

- workplace benefits and facilities;
- data on harassment, discrimination grievances and disciplinary action;
- retention and leavers (with reasons);
- how we make reasonable adjustments.

5 We will analyse information in relation to the outcomes and experiences of non-disabled people so that we can identify any areas where disabled people do not have equal opportunities. This will inform our impact assessments, the action plan, future changes in policies/practices, and targets for remedial actions. Where necessary, we will co-ordinate information-gathering and analysis across the education sector. Guidance on information-gathering and analysis will also be revised and re-issued to our delivery partners where appropriate.



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