

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Assessment Area: Retention

Assessed by: Clare Fraser

Date of Assessment: October 2009

Step 1: Identify aims of the practice

What is the **relevance** of the area under assessment?

The College wishes to have a learning environment where all students can progress and achieve their potential. In terms of achieving equality of opportunity, it is important that the College regularly reviews student retention to ensure that no minority groups are experiencing a detriment. In particular, the College wishes to ensure that withdrawals are not connected with a student's equality background.

Step 2: Consider the evidence

What data or evidence do you intend to use for the purposes of the assessment?

The data used for the purposes of the assessment is included in the College's annual monitoring report which is available on the website. Evidence includes:

1. The College gender student profile (Table 1 in Data Report)
2. The College ethnic student profile (Table 2 in Data Report)
3. The College disability student profile (Table 3 in Data Report)
4. The 2001 Census information, including information for Scotland as a whole, Glasgow and North Lanarkshire
5. Information provided by the SFC in "Scotland's Colleges – A Baseline Report" February 2007.

Step 3: Assess likely impact

What does the information you have tell you about a **positive impact** on equalities groups?

- 11% of female students withdraw compared with 8% of male students. While this is a small percentage differential, it may suggest that initiatives to retain male students are more effective than those with regards to female students.
- Approximately 10% of White students withdraw. The same approximate percentage of 10% applies to Black Minority Ethnic (BME) students. External data from the SFC shows that BME students in the UK tend to have a higher withdrawal rate than White students. This is not the case at Coatbridge College which could indicate a positive impact of Coatbridge College's policies and practices.
- 11% of students who have not declared a disability withdraw compared to 8% of students with a disability. This could indicate a positive impact on students with a disability.

What does the information you have tell you about **negative impact** on equalities groups?

- The 3% differential with regard to the higher rate of female students withdrawing, though comparatively small, could indicate a negative impact on female students. This should be investigated further, as it may be the case that a student's gender has an impact in their ability to attend, for example, if they have childcare commitments.

Are there **other factors** that might help to explain the adverse impact?

None identified.

Could **equality of opportunity** be promoted in this area?

Yes.

- The College could promote equality by displaying a commitment statement on its website and other publications.
- The College could use the QELTM (Quality and Equality in Learning and Teaching Materials) to ensure that learning and teaching materials cater for students from equality groups. This should have an impact on all students' progress.

Step 4: Consider alternatives

What changes to the area could be introduced to **reduce the adverse or negative impacts** identified in step 3?

- The College will investigate the reasons behind the female withdrawals. If it is the case that underlying reasons are related to gender, such as childcare commitments, the College will take action to ensure that negative impacts are reduced.

Step 5: Consultation

What consultation have you carried out?

A summary of this assessment has been emailed to all staff for their comment, and a focus group was held to gather staff's views on this assessment. *Other consultation activities to be added.*

How successful has this been, and what can you do in the future to improve this process if necessary?

To be completed after consultation.

Step 6: Taking Action

What action will you take?

1. Display an equality commitment statement on website and key publications.
2. Raise awareness of QELTM for all staff with training and distribution of exemplar material.
3. Review reasons for female withdrawals, and take action if they are related to their equality background.

How will you ensure that this action is taken?

These actions will be added to the College's Equality Scheme which is reviewed by the College's Equality and Diversity Committee. An annual report reviewing action taken will be published. *To be completed after consultation.*

Step 7: Make monitoring arrangements

How will the practice be monitored?

Data will be collected by the College's Information Service and analysed by the Equality and Diversity Advisor on an annual basis. This data will then be discussed with the Equality and Diversity Committee, and reported to all staff and relevant external organisations.

Step 8: Publish assessment report

What are the arrangements for publishing?

This assessment will be published on the College's website.