

Disability Equality Statement

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Every year we enrol many students drawn from all sectors of the community and from all walks of life. We work very hard indeed to help them achieve their ambitions. Equally, we regularly recruit new staff to the College and seek to ensure that they are representative of the community the College serves.

In 2005/6 there were many students who declared a disability and/or learning difficulty. Our record in supporting students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties was identified as one of the strengths of the College in the inspection carried out by Ofsted in February 2005. Of course, we are always working towards improving our services as well as personal and learning support. So, for example, students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties can receive financial help from our Student Support Fund. This fund helps students who are experiencing financial hardship with the costs of transport, essential equipment and course fees.

The College also has good support systems in place to enable all staff to fulfill their roles. In addition there is an excellent procedure in place that enables staff with any particular needs/difficulties to raise issues and have them resolved. In respect of disability, the recruitment process enables any needs to be identified early to ensure that staff are supported appropriately. Through referral to its occupational health services, the College ensures that it supports staff who develop a disability during the course of their employment.

We are committed to ensuring that people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, are treated fairly and that the College complies fully with its legal obligations. We will make all reasonable adjustments to provision to ensure that disabled students and staff, and other disabled people are not substantially disadvantaged. Equally, we are committed to involving students and staff in all the decisions, plans and evaluation of our performance so that they know that their needs are taken seriously.

Our Disability Statement is intended to set out how the College, both as an employer and as a learning organisation, will work towards the elimination of all forms of disability discrimination.

This guidance has been developed for the College to meet its obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001, the European Directive 2000 and other relevant legislation.

Steve Darby
Chair of Governors

1. Our mission

Our mission is to provide excellent education and training for all and our approach to equal opportunities is based on three practical principles:

- identifying any barriers to accessing and benefiting from learning and working
- working to remove them
- promoting and celebrating diversity

We have a shared belief that everyone can benefit from education and training, and should be enabled to achieve their individual potential.

2. Our Policy

Students and staff with physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties are not necessarily identified in the College's published statements and plans, because we believe in parity of treatment for all. However, we do recognise that there are individuals, groups and communities who may require facilities, provision and targeted resources to enable them to become successful. To facilitate this, there are named colleagues with specific responsibilities to ensure that the requirements of particular individuals and groups are met.

Our policy states that all staff are responsible for developing and promoting inclusion, widening participation and diversity. Staff and students are expected to:

- behave in a way that does not disadvantage other individuals or groups; this is built into our College Code of Conduct
- create an atmosphere of openness where individuals can make mistakes and learn from them, recognising that there are no simple answers
- take responsibility for each other

We are committed to ensuring that students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties are as far as possible integrated into all courses of the College. However, we recognise that some students may need additional support and we provide this through specialist courses, discrete tutor groups and personal facilities, where appropriate.

All students will be aiming for recognised qualifications and their educational and career aspirations will be taken seriously. Specialist courses will be integrated into the main College wherever possible and all possible funding routes will be explored to add value to provision. Whenever the College develops strategy or provision for specific groups of students, the students themselves are involved in planning and evaluation.

3. Recruitment and Continuous Development of Staff

The College advertises all vacancies widely and all application packs are available in a variety of formats, including large print, Braille or community languages on request, and a reader or sign communicator can be made available if required. We have fax machines and Minicom for those who wish to phone us and our College website has the option for changing the size and colour of fonts.

A potential member of staff is entitled to:

- a quick response to an initial enquiry
- request information in alternative formats
- an opportunity to discuss any support requirements that they may have

When applying for a role in the College, we ask applicants to tell us if they have a disability and/or learning difficulty. This information is treated with respect, used for monitoring purposes and is used to ensure that support is provided as appropriate.

The College has excellent facilities and arrangements to ensure staff acquire the necessary skills, behaviours and qualifications to fulfill their roles. Members of staff are asked to alert us to any additional support needs that they have on their staff development application form.

The College's Professional Development Strategy includes an entitlement for any staff to be trained in understanding and supporting students. Staff who work substantially with students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties will be supported to achieve relevant specialist qualifications.

4. Admission of Students

Our Charter entitles all students access to appropriate information and assessment by the College. We provide information to students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties about the College and its courses in a range of formats. Information is available in Braille, large print, or community languages on request and a reader or sign communicator can be made available if required. We have fax machines and Minicom for those who wish to phone us and the College website has the option for changing the size and colour of fonts. Our course directories give general information on support available and our Course Enquiry Packs give specific information on support services.

Potential students are entitled to:

- a quick response to an initial enquiry
- request information in alternative formats
- an appointment to discuss opportunities available with either a member of Student Services or a subject tutor
- an opportunity to discuss any support requirements that they may have
- an initial assessment to confirm whether the course or level is right for them, taking into account any qualifications they already have. Diagnostic assessments are carried out to identify any further support needed.

When applying to join the College and when enrolling, we ask potential students to tell us if they have a disability and/or learning difficulty. This information is treated with respect and is used ensure that they get any support needed. If for any reason support requirements cannot be met, we will try to refer learners to an alternative provider who can meet them.

5. On a course

We aim to match students to the right learning programme and to provide them with the appropriate support. Students will be asked to sign to confirm any support arrangements agreed with them. Once a student is enrolled, we can offer support in a number of ways, through:

- **a personal tutor.** A tutor will ensure that a student has an appropriate induction and will monitor progress throughout a course. For example, he/she will write an Individual Learning Plan that records learning targets and will take any support agreement into account. A student can let his/her tutor know if they think College work may be affected by their disability, or medical condition. A personal tutor will follow this up with the student and other specialist staff if necessary.
- **the Additional Learning Support Manager** will arrange for specialist assessments and support for students.
- **the Additional Learning Support staff** who operate across the whole College, and can help with personal care, mobility needs and classroom support. This support includes assisting with practical activities, using equipment and preparing learning materials. We can arrange for a signer to be made available if required. We also have staff that support learners who have behavioural and emotional difficulties to ensure that these difficulties do not interfere with achievement on their chosen course.
- **examination and assessment arrangements.** We can sometimes get permission for a student to have extra time or support for examinations. Student needing support will be required to tell their

tutor as soon as they enrol or as soon as they register with the examining body. We try to be as flexible as possible regarding other forms of assessment, enabling students to complete assignments, portfolios or records of competence in the most appropriate way and within an achievable time scale. We will be introducing RARPA (recognising and recording performance and achievement) this year, which will enable us to accredit a broader range of achievement.

- **improving the College environment.** We regularly consult our students on what would make the College environment better and are always interested to hear suggestions from students who have suggestions. Any ideas can be handed in to reception at our main sites or any of our centres.
- **work experience, educational visits and residential.** Students may require support to take part in certain aspects of their course such as work experience, out of College activities and residential. The support workers or student services team may be able to assist with transport arrangements. If we cannot provide our own transport, we may be able to finance other options.
- **specialist teaching staff.** These staff provide additional support for dyslexia and help with numeracy, literacy and language. Support can be arranged through a personal tutor. There is also a team of specially trained staff who provide courses for learners with moderate or severe learning difficulties.
- **the Student Support Fund.** This fund provides support for students experiencing financial hardship, and can help with equipment costs, fees, travel costs, childcare expenses and books. Application forms are available at reception at all main sites and at all local centres. Our Student Advisers can also offer advice on welfare benefits, other sources of financial help and personal issues. This team also supports students accessing their **Educational Maintenance Allowance**. This is a government scheme of weekly allowances and bonus payments for 16-18 year olds who are UK residents, on a full time course and whose parents' gross taxable income is less than £30,800 per year.
- **technology and equipment.** We have a range of equipment, including various computer aids and adaptations, to meet individual requirements. These include anti glare screens, joysticks, track balls, wrist rests, key guards, large monitors, speech out software and Braille embossers. We also have audiotape recorders, a Perkins Braille, an induction loop and a cordless induction loop system with radio transmitter. We can usually adapt furniture to suit individual needs. We have some adjustable workbenches with tilt tip tables for workshop use. We take advice from external specialist organisations on appropriate equipment and support for individual students.
- **work with other agencies.** The College also works with other agencies to provide the best support. For example, we work with: The Community Learning Disability Team; The Community Mental Health Team; Educational Psychologists Service; Bassetlaw Health Authority; Pupil Referral Unit; Behaviour Support Service; Dyslexia Association; Social Services; Connexions and many more.

6. Student Services

a) Advice

Student mentors are available for general support throughout a College course. Mentors offer impartial and confidential information, advice and guidance to students in a wide range of areas including:

- help dealing with work loads and timekeeping
- welfare advice
- information and guidance on personal issues

They will refer students to external sources of specialist support if appropriate. They can be contacted through Student Services.

b) Information, advice and guidance on courses and careers

We have careers advisers to give course and careers information and guidance to individuals and groups. We have course directories and information sheets, computers and careers software. There is a browsing facility within a well stocked careers library, up to date information on jobs and further/higher education, computers to help students write CVs and letters, a range of local and national newspapers and career

magazines. This information is available in Braille, on tape, or in large print, on request and if it is not available, efforts will be made by the Learning Resource staff to meet individual needs. The College has also established links with Connexions and appointments can be arranged to visit a convenient Connexions centre or to meet an adviser in the College.

c) Financial Support

Many students need advice about financial matters. Individual advice on financial matters, benefit entitlements or information about travel grants, EMAs and the Student Support Fund is provided by a student adviser through Student Services.

d) College Counsellor

The College has a fully trained counsellor who is able to provide a professional, confidential service in relation to personal issues.

e) First aid

The College has nominated trained first aiders in all areas. Arrangement can be made for further medical help as required. Where necessary arrangements will be made for the transportation of students to the nearest hospital or their home and contact made with parents/carers as appropriate.

f) Childcare

The Early Learners Centre provides nursery places for children between the ages of two and eight years.

g) Child protection

The College has a very rigorous Child Protection procedure and is committed to working with all other agencies concerned with child protection. Whilst it is not the College's responsibility to investigate, it has a duty to notify the Social Services Department or the Police if there is cause for concern. A full copy of the Child Protection Procedures is available from the College's named Child Protection Officer.

8. Physical access to education and other facilities

We are committed to improving the physical access of our buildings. Where funding has been secured and where the property belongs to the College, substantial improvements have been made. Equality of access is always an important feature whenever any of our buildings are remodelled or redesigned. In 2003 we conducted a full Accessibility Audit and have now implemented its recommendations. All our new buildings are fully compliant with the new accessibility requirements. If a course is in a building which is not fully accessible to a student, wherever possible, we will make arrangements for them to study at another venue.

a. Carlton Road, Workshop - this is our largest site and administrative centre. The Library, Learning Resources Centre, Study Workshop, Early Learners' Centre and Student Union building are here. There is also a restaurant for students and staff called the Bistro. Much of the site is two-storey, with ramps and wide doorways ensuring that all classrooms and teaching areas on the ground floor area are accessible. There are two lifts and a ramp on the upper floor to ensure access to most of the upper floor area including a fitness suite, where we have suitable exercise equipment. The Mount and Highfield House upper floors are not accessible to wheelchair users. However, we have a flexible rooming policy and will make changes according to a student's requirements. There are parking spaces designated for disabled drivers/passengers in a number of areas on this campus. If a student does not have a "blue card" please let the College know and we will ensure this does not limit access to close parking.

There are a number of toilets suitable for wheelchair access or personal care. They are located in the Learning Resources Centre, Oscroft Centre, Bistro, Medical Centre, and Employment Skills Centre. We also have shower facilities and a medical centre with hoists and personal care equipment. We can order equipment specific to needs, but may need a little notice.

b. The Fluid Power Centre and the Food Technology Centre - All rooms on the ground floor are fully accessible to wheelchair users. The site has accessible toilet facilities, food and drinks vending machines and a social area for students to relax. There is a lift to the first floor operated by a key, which is available at reception. Parking for disabled people is available and the College can be contacted if a student needs to reserve a space.

c. Out Reach Venues – our Adult and Community Learning Programmes are delivered in over 70 venues. Almost all of these venues are fully accessible. The Community team can be contacted if a learner has particular requirements on 01909 504522.

9. Promotion of Equality and Diversity

Governors, managers and staff of the College seek to promote equality in the following areas:

Marketing, Recruitment and Admissions by ensuring:

- application, admission and enrolment processes are welcoming and free of bias
- the College's marketing and publicity materials present diverse and positive images of people with a range of disabilities
- our web site is fully accessible

Curriculum Content, Teaching and Learning by ensuring:

- the curriculum promotes a positive inclusive ethos, which presents positive role models, challenges stereotypes and educates students for life and work in a society which encourages good relations between disabled and non-disabled people
- learning programmes are developed, which encourage wider access to further and higher education
- learner induction and tutorial programmes reflect the College's commitment to promoting equality and diversity for all
- the College promotes inclusive learning
- bias is avoided in marking, assessment and internal verification
- criteria related to equality and diversity (where appropriate) are included on Teaching Observation Reports

Health and Safety by ensuring:

- arrangements for specific health and safety needs, which may arise from the learner or staff member's disability are assessed for risk prior to the person joining the College
- the arrangements made for learners should their needs become apparent after they join a course are inclusive and sensitive to the learners' needs
- emergency evacuation procedures provide guidelines for people with different disabilities
- work placements are assessed and managed for risk
- designated parking spaces are available

Leadership, Management and Quality Assurance by ensuring:

- the College implements its annual equality and diversity action plan
- that equality and diversity is integrated into all quality assurance processes
- that detailed monitoring and evaluation of the progress we are making towards meeting our targets and plans is done routinely
- that good practice is promoted through the Inclusive Learning Strategy Group

Governance of Equality by ensuring:

- the membership of the Corporation reflects the diversity of the communities served by the College
- that governors are aware of the Corporation's statutory responsibilities in relation to disability legislation as an employer and service provider
- that governors are trained in their responsibilities to promote equality
- the College's Strategic Plan includes a commitment to equality

- that training on equality features as part of the College's strategic plan
- that governors receive and respond to the disability monitoring information on learners and staff

Employment of Staff by ensuring:

- equality and diversity training is a strong element of staff induction
- staff are trained in their responsibilities to promote and uphold the principles of equality and the College's statutory duties
- the recruitment of staff to permanent, fixed term and hourly paid contracts is managed in accordance with the principles of equality and diversity
- applicants who meet the essential criteria for a job vacancy are guaranteed an interview
- all staff involved in the recruitment of staff are trained in the College's recruitment procedures and equality and diversity issues
- we support staff with a disability to work at the College
- we make every effort to support staff when they become disabled to help them to continue working at the College
- we consult with employees with a disability to make sure they can develop and use their abilities at work
- all managers are trained in the application of personnel procedures and equality and diversity
- staff are managed fairly through the application of personnel procedures
- all staff demonstrate a positive commitment to equality and diversity
- that annually we review our commitments to being a Positive About Disability employer.

Appointment and Management of contractors by ensuring:

- contractors are informed of their responsibilities under the Disability Statement

10. Monitoring the impact of our policies

The College is committed to assessing the impact of all of its policies on students and staff. All College policies are updated regularly, on a rolling programme basis. Managers responsible for updating policies will be asked to identify any amendments or changes that need to be introduced in order to support the aspirations of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Special Education Needs and Disability Act 2001, the European Directive 2000 and other relevant legislation. They are also asked to ensure that promoting equality and diversity and tackling discrimination is a regular agenda item in all of their meetings and included in their evaluation of the service or provision that they offer.

The College will also regularly monitor the effects of its policies and practices in the following ways:

Equality and Diversity Impact Measures

Each year the College analyses all of its retention, achievement and success data against all equality and diversity indicators. This analysis is reported to the Governors, the College Executive and the Inclusive Learning Strategy Group in order that targets can be set.

Inclusive Learning Strategy Group

This group has representation from all Academic and Business Areas and meets on a monthly basis reporting to Academic Board, to the College Executive and the Quality and Standards Committee of the Governing Body. It is responsible for the prioritisation, development and monitoring of activity associated with and related to equality and diversity legislation.

Equality Opportunities Committee

The College has a long standing tradition of inviting stakeholders to comment and advise on its equality and diversity policies, procedures and practices. The Equal Opportunities Committee meets regularly and makes recommendations to the appropriate staff, departments and groups in the College

Performance Monitoring Review

Senior Managers meet on a regular basis with Programme and Business Managers to discuss financial, business, and staffing issues. Action plans are required from managers wherever issues arise from these Performance Monitoring Reviews.

Human Resources

The Director of Human Resources reports to the College Principal and the Personnel and Pensions Committee of the Corporation on a termly basis. This report includes information on the breakdown of equality and diversity indicators, associated targets and response to relevant legislation.

Questionnaires and Focus Groups

The views and feedback from all stakeholders is sought regularly through surveys and focus groups

10. Suggestions, concerns and complaints

We provide opportunities for staff and students to make suggestions, express concerns and make complaints both informally and formally.

Students can make **Informal** suggestions, concerns and complaints through a personal tutor, the Students Union or Student Services. The procedure is described in both the Student Charter and Student Handbook. There is a list of contacts at the end of this statement.

We also provide a clear and accessible system for students to make **formal** suggestions, concerns and complaints. The forms for this are available from reception or Student Services. A member of the College management team will meet with students, at a convenient place and time to discuss the matter fully. Students can be accompanied by an advocate who may be a friend or relative or a member of the support worker team if they wish. We will investigate the matter thoroughly and report back on the outcome promptly, either in writing or verbally. This is explained in the Student Handbook. As part of our quality system, we monitor all student concerns and identify any commonly occurring ones for action.

Staff can outline suggestions as to how services and facilities for people with disabilities may be improved either in writing or in person to the HR Director.

We provide opportunities for staff to express concerns and make complaints both informally and formally. Details of the Grievance Procedure are provided at induction. The Grievance Procedure is available in a variety of formats upon request from the HR Department.

11. Contacts

Phil Fone (Principal and Chief Executive) 01909 504504 ext 4601

Steve Darby (Chair of Governors) 01909 504504

Theresa Hussey (Director of Inclusive Learning) 01909 504500 ext 4519

Denise Digby-Taylor (Human Resources Director) 01909 504516 or 07974 450190

Nigel Senior (Additional Learning Support Manager) 01909 504511

Sally Senior (Progression Skills Programme Manager) 01909 504504 ext 4537

Jan Stevenson (Director of Higher Education and Quality) 01909 504504 ext 4553

Sarah Harding (Customer Services Team Leader) 01909 504500

Claire Christian (Guidance Team Leader) 01909 504 500

Student Help Line 01909 504555

Minicom 01909 488006

Fax 01909504505

Website www.nnc.ac.uk

email sbarnett@nnc.ac.uk

Specific responsibilities:

Additional support: students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties	Nigel Senior
Additional support: literacy, numeracy & dyslexia	Antony Martin/Anne Hird
College Mentors:	Wesley Mollinson/Debra Jones
Courses for individuals with learning difficulties:	Sally Senior
Student Services (including Learner Support Fund & EMAs)	Sarah Harding
HR services	Denise Digby-Taylor
Information, advice and guidance	Claire Christian
Examinations administration	Chris Price
Health and Safety	Ian White
College Counsellor	Michael Mason
Complaints	Carole Gardner
College Nominated Child Protection Officers	Theresa Hussey (Students) Denise Digby-Taylor (Students)

12. Your views

If you would like to make any comment about this Disability Statement please do not hesitate to contact Theresa Hussey, Director of Inclusive Learning or Denise Digby-Taylor, HR Director. For example, you may feel that we have left out important information or that the layout is not helpful. Your comments will be very helpful when reviewing the statement next year. If you have any observations, suggestions or feedback about our services for people with disabilities and/or learning difficulties we would be pleased to hear from you.

Copies of this Disability Statement are also available in Braille and large print on request.