



Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2017 – 2018



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE



Corporate
Covenant



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Please contact quality@thecollegespartnership.co.uk if you would like this annual report made available in alternative formats/languages or call 01258 481079

This report is also available on the Colleges' Partnership website: tcpartnership.ac.uk where it can be viewed in alternative formats and languages

1. Our Commitment

The Colleges' Partnership continues in its endeavours to remove barriers to education, training and employment opportunities, The Colleges' Partnership Ltd. continue to actively promote Equality and Diversity for all, including staff, learners, contractors and any members of the company community who have direct or indirect contact with the Colleges' Partnership. The aim of The Colleges' Partnership over the last year has been to widen access through a flexible and inclusive culture; creating, promoting and maintaining an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect, value each other's contributions and which is free of discrimination.

The Colleges' Partnership is committed to advancing its statutory duties as set out in the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty in order to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination; demonstrating a clear commitment to placing equality, diversity and inclusion at the centre of the Company ethos.

This commitment is underpinned by The Colleges' Partnership vision, mission and strategic ambitions.



OUR VISION

To be the industry Training Provider of choice, consistently exceeding our customer expectations.

This means that we will:

- *Continue to improve our performance year on year*
- *Be recognised and valued for our delivery and performance in the Education Sector*
- *Promote and value the diversity of our staff and learners, at all times*

OUR MISSION

To provide outstanding education and training that empowers our learners to meet their personal and career goals and aspirations. To be an employer who values the individual, encourages autonomy, supports innovation and promotes professional development

This means that we will:

- *Focus on ensuring the best outcomes for learners*
- *Enable and encourage all of our learners to challenge themselves to achieve their ambitions*
- *Ensure that the qualifications have vocational relevance and enhance learner skills in the workplace*
- *Use innovation and technology to improve and enliven delivery*
- *Ensure staff are knowledgeable, experienced and committed to their learners*

OUR VALUES AND STRATEGIC AIMS

Honesty and Openness Integrity and Respect Teamwork Excellence

HIGH QUALITY PROVISION AND EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE
GROWTH, RESPONSIVENESS AND CHANGE
EFFICIENCY, EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY



Equality & Diversity in Recruitment and Selection

- The Company is committed to a policy of treating all its employees and job applicants equally and to recruit the best person for each vacancy. No employee or potential employee shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration during recruitment and selection on the ground of race, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, marital status or part-time status or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment that cannot be justified as necessary on operational grounds.
- The Company's Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure requires of employees that Equality and Diversity principles be strictly adhered to in relation to all applications and appointing managers and HR team members taking part in recruitment and selection will have been trained in interviewing skills and equal opportunities.
- Information on, Age, Sex, Disability and nationality is collected to monitor the numbers of applications from different groups.
- Human Resource is responsible for ensuring that the recruitment and selection policy does not discriminate in any way and that job advertisements are fully inclusive. The Company will ensure that recruitment and selection procedures are open, consistently applied and free from bias, stereotyping and discrimination.
- The Company is committed to the fair treatment of its employees and managers are expected to consider potential employees on the basis of their suitability for the post regardless of gender, race, nationality, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation, marital status, religious beliefs and activities, disability including mental or other forms of disability or other reasonable grounds.
- The Company will ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to recruitment and selection arrangements and premises to ensure both current and potential team members with a disability have equality of access to the recruitment and selection process.
- The Company ensures recruitment and selection is conducted as an evidence based process and candidates are assessed against agreed selection criteria, based on relevant knowledge and skills, competencies, experience, and qualifications to perform the job.

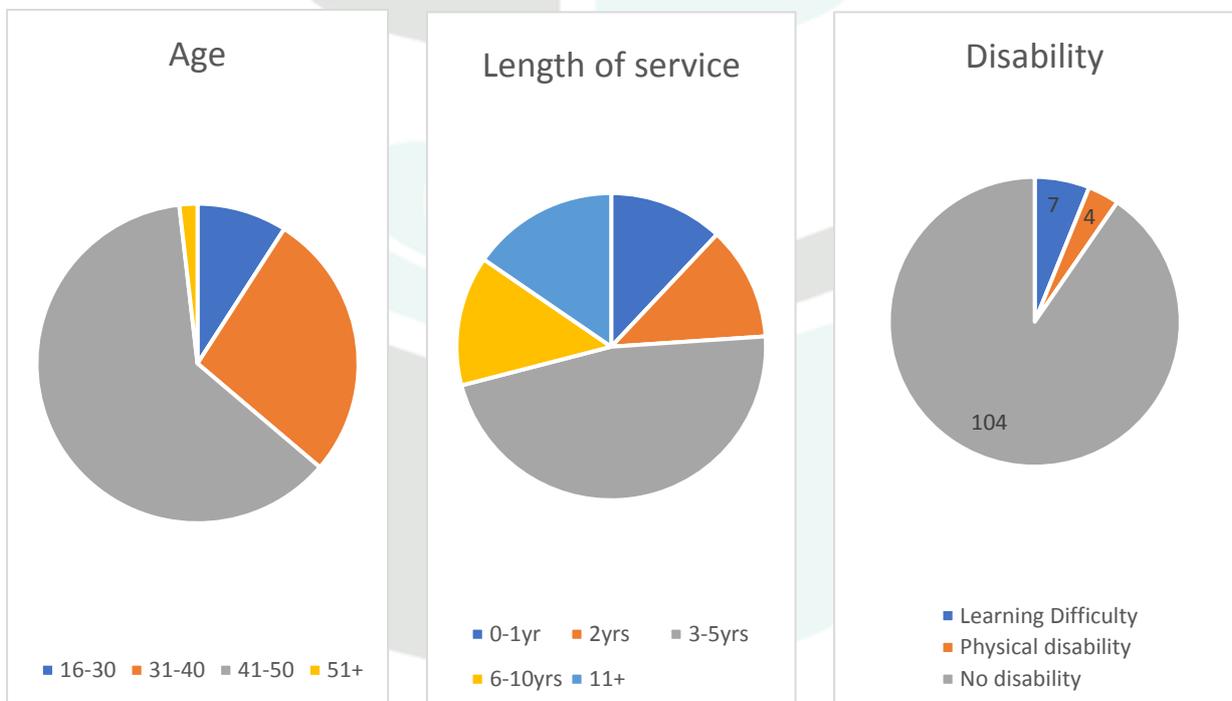


Equality & Diversity in Employment

- All Colleges' Partnership policies and procedures are subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.
- HR is represented on the Company's Equality and Diversity Committee where progress regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is reviewed against its equality ambitions and objectives.
- All staff undertake annual training on Equality and Diversity, including Mental Health and Prevent.

Staff Data

Information regarding staff demographic is collected via our staff survey which is run at the end of the calendar year, this data enables us to assess our staff make up and address any issues which arise. In order to make this more comprehensive the Human Resources Department are developing the use of Select HR. The tables below show the actual figures for staff by age, Length of service and disability as collated in December 2017.



2. The Company

The Colleges' Partnership Ltd. is a well-established and respected training provider, we specialise in the provision of vocational training solutions, Apprenticeship management and Professional Learning and development opportunities delivered directly into the workplace. We understand that each organisation is different and as a result learning and training requirements are tailored and managed to the exacting business objectives needs. Our successful delivery of training solutions to military, commercial and public-sector clients throughout the UK and Europe is testimony to the flexible and highly portable service we deliver.

3. Partners

The Colleges' Partnership Ltd. is a not for profit joint venture company owned by Wiltshire College and Bridgwater and Taunton College. The Executive Board consists of professionals across each organisation who share a commitment to helping learners from a diverse range of social and economic backgrounds to develop the skills required for the world of work and for life. The Board understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and drive improvements as part of The Colleges' Partnership strategy. We operate under several contracts to the directorate of Educational and Training Services (Army) in the UK and in Germany; we also offer Tri Service professional education opportunities. We have developed a close working relationship with the Army, RAF and Navy at all levels. 2017-2018 Employer survey of our Military partners reports that 84% of employers are aware of our E and D policies and 100% believe that soldiers are treated fairly and equally.

The Colleges' Partnership has established effective working relationships with Army Apprenticeships to ensure a joined up collaborative approach is in place when managing learner needs:

- The Reasonable Adjustment policy was written in conjunction with Army Apprenticeships to ensure both the needs and procedures of the employer are followed as well as managing our obligations under The Equality Act 2010. Review of this policy runs in conjunction with Army Apprenticeships directives.
- Equality and Diversity Lead staff are members of the Society for Education and Training which enables the Company to access information from across the sector and gain peer support from other organisations.
- Equality and Diversity staff are signed up to a number of organisations where support, guidance and training can be sourced, this includes:

Mind
Stonewall
NSPCC
Disability Matters

4. Policies

The Colleges' Partnership Equality and Diversity policy, Reasonable Adjustment policy and Learner Needs referral Procedure is reviewed annually and approved by Senior Management. The Learner Bullying and Harassment policy was developed last year and is an integral part of the suite of Policies which manage Equality and Diversity.

Enactment of the policy is monitored by the Director for Performance and Standards and the Equality and Diversity Committee. The Colleges' Partnership Prevent Duty and Safeguarding policy is reviewed as above and monitored by the Safeguarding Committee.

5. Activity, Improvements and Impact

The endeavour to embed equality, diversity and inclusion in The Colleges' Partnership community has remained a key focus in the last year. The objective to recognise, embrace, promote and value difference, as well as to address examples of discrimination and stereotyping where it occurs; has led to improvements in all aspects of The Colleges' Partnership work.

All staff have completed the mandatory PREVENT training which has resulted in a cross organisation awareness with regards to the PREVENT strategy. For teaching staff this has been accompanied by face to face training and guidance during Quality Monitoring Visits and in response to direct requests for support and information. Our PREVENT lead is highly knowledgeable regarding the PREVENT objectives having experience working for the Home Office. This experience is shared during CPD sessions and the member of staff acts as a point of contact for all queries.

Functional Skills delivery staff actively develop resources embedding British Values, these resources are shared via the Virtual Learning Environment and can be accessed by all staff who then select and utilise the most appropriate for their sessions.

“Performance management is strong and there is more evidence of people working together and sharing good practice across contract teams. At a team level people are involved in decision making and improving performance.”

(IIP Assessment report Nov 2017)

Focus has also been placed on developing better learning environments, this has been challenging as many environments are shared with military employers and therefore changes or improvements have been difficult. However, where possible staff have embraced the need to develop environments to ensure they are accessible, welcoming and informative regarding themes of equality, diversity and inclusion.

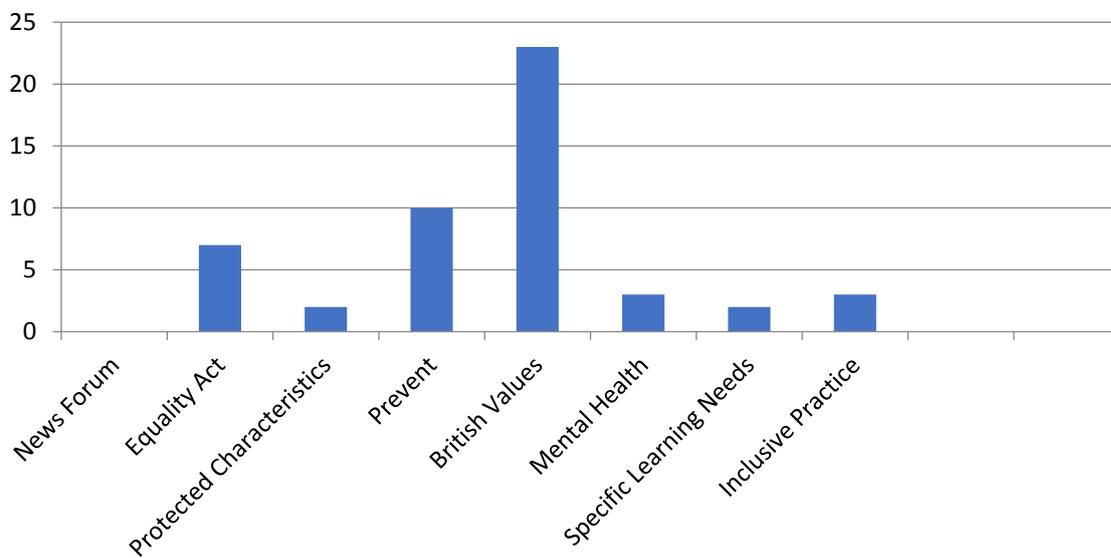


Noticeboards, displays and resources have been developed to promote Equality and Diversity, British Values and Prevent in all learning locations. Information and guidance is passed to staff through Quality Monitoring Visits and via the VLE where information and news is regularly posted; this is automatically then sent to staff through the email notifications. This ensures all staff have the required information to develop their practice and learning environments.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is championed across The Colleges' Partnership Virtual Learning Environment where users are guided to the Equality and Diversity sections, and can see news, events and shared resources on the front page. The VLE contains a dedicated Equality and Diversity section, with large amounts of information available together with details of contact for advice and guidance. All staff are automatically subscribed to the group. Information is broadly organised in line with the Equality Act 2010 detailing

information regarding each protected characteristic as well as sections devoted to Prevent and British Values. Staff and learners receive updates and news about significant national and international events and festivals. Updates concerning good practice and sharing of resources and materials are published and shared with staffs via news items and bulletins which are also sent as e-mails.

VLE Access To E and D information 2017-2018



There has been a reduction in the numbers of staff and learners accessing E and D material on the VLE, this is partly due to increasing levels of confidence in knowledge of EDI issues, we are however mindful that E and D is ever developing and therefore an objective for this coming year will be to review VLE content to ensure the information matches the needs of staff and learners.

A printable diversity calendar detailing significant dates, events and festivals has been developed and this is circulated to all staff monthly, together with advice on how events could be used within the learning environment.



Staff are supported and encouraged to develop resources and share them, the VLE has a dedicated section where all resources can be found. A search facility is in place where resources can be highlighted by topic and a specific subject found easily.

Towards the end of 2017 The Colleges' Partnership bid for and was awarded funding from the Education and Training Foundation and the South West Association of Colleges as part of the Professional Exchange. The Professional Exchange is a network of practitioners coming together to share ideas and resources and to test and trial innovative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. The exchange affords teaching staff across the education and training sector in the South West the time to reflect on their professional practice with a view to improving the teaching, learning and assessment of their learners.

We were successful in our application to take part in two projects, one focused on the provision and use of ungraded lesson observation, this was led by a member of staff who was also assigned as project lead by the AoC and another which looked at the use of technology to support learners with English as a second language. This project entitled:

“Using Podcasts to support Functional skills for Commonwealth and ESOL learners”

Has developed resources to be used by our ESOL learners, providing support in their first language to enable progress in Functional skills English and maths learning. This project was show cased at the AoC dissemination event.

Following completion of a project reported in last year’s annual report The Colleges’ Partnership has established the Peer Observation and self-reflection strategy which develops and encourages staff to work together to develop ideas and methodologies within teaching learning and assessment; the focus remains on highlighting where E and D practice is good and where it can be improved.

The new website has been developed for The Colleges’ Partnership with accessibility in mind. The website is fully responsive and conforms to W3C Accessibility Standards. The website additionally features an accessibility toolbar featuring font sizers, colour themes, screen magnifier, language translator, screen reader, mp3 download and text mode. The aim of this is to ensure Website visitors are able to customise the features to meet their own needs e.g. change the colour, language, text size etc. these preferences can be saved so the website will appear as they need it to. Text to speak functionality, dyslexia software, interactive dictionary, translation tool, magnifier and download facility to MP3 provide accessibility to those using the website whatever their need.

We have worked on expanding our Continuous Professional Development framework, which is available to our staff. The framework will be used to evidence CPD and meet development requirements that are identified from observations of teaching and learning, staff appraisals and 121 meetings.

Several strengths were identified such as ...training and development and a desire to give staff autonomy and responsibility for learner outcomes and continuous improvement.

(IIP assessment report Nov 2017)

Quality Improvement

Quality and performance processes are robust. Self-assessment and review processes are well embedded within the Quality Monitoring activity, addressing any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matters where needed. This has been endorsed in our most recent Investors in People Report.

“Quality and excellence in teaching and learning has become more embedded and processes relating to quality assurance have developed into learning opportunities through professional conversations resulting in more ownership of the learning and opportunities for improvement from quality review activities.”

Our SAR process identifies new and innovative strategies and reviews whether current strategies are impacting positively on achievement gaps and the overall learner experience. Quality Monitoring visits focus quality clearly on improvement and support. These visits have enabled the Quality to Team to offer bespoke training and development regarding Equality Diversity and Inclusion to teams. This has included Prevent awareness, Embedding British Values and Managing the Equality Act 2010. The team also review the inclusion of Equality and Diversity matters in reviews and assessment and teaching activity, support is then provided where improvement is needed.

To support the promotion of Equality and Diversity, the committee has been expanded to support the dissemination of information across the company as well as being a point of contact for queries and questions. Their duties include:

- To Share best practice between service areas
- To promote Equality and Diversity in all company activity
- To build knowledge and share expertise from each Protected Characteristic
- Help to review and update policies in line with legislation
- Maintain the Equality and Diversity agenda to colleagues, managers and the Senior Management Team.
- Addressing Equality and Diversity questions effectively and efficiently

6. Review of Equality Diversity and Inclusion objectives for 2017-2018

We have worked on our objective to promote the understanding of Mental Health themes; this is a significant subject area for some of our learners, but this theme will also be developed in relation to the well-being of staff. This work will be developed in conjunction with our Health and Safety lead; stress is the most commonly reported work-related illness in the UK and must therefore be considered as part of our welfare support.

Kite marks, recognition and awards have been pursued this year as a reflection of the considerable progress made. This includes Disability Matters, Stonewall Diversity Champion Programme and Investors in Diversity.

A policy review has been completed this year to include themes related to Mental health and well-being, these are now explicitly included in relevant policies and positive messages related to mental health are promoted.

The staff survey has been updated to include questions related to mental Health and wellbeing.

We aimed to develop a Mental Health Management Handbook for managers as a tool to support staff and learners. The Handbook has not been developed this year, but Managers have the opportunity as part of their mandatory training to complete the First Aid for Mental Health course. This has been instigated to enable managers to support their staff in filed locations as and when needed.

7. Equality Diversity and Inclusion objectives for 2018-2019

For the coming year The Colleges' partnership needs to develop a training programme to expand understanding of the management and differentiation for those with specific learning difficulties (SpLD). The Colleges' Partnership has a member of staff qualified to level 7 in the assessment of SpLD and an objective this year will be on the formalisation of the provision of a service to offer assessment and support for learners across the company.

A focus will be maintained on the understanding of Mental Health, this work will be developed in conjunction with our Health and Safety lead as stress is the most commonly reported work-related illness in the UK and must therefore be considered as part of our welfare support.

We will form proposals in relation to Kite marks we wish to pursue, the committee will continue to seek recognition for the excellent work being carried out.

Develop the VLE resources and material to ensure that the content meets need and addresses the most pertinent areas staff need information about.

Develop the employer handbook to ensure all employers are fully aware of our E and D policies practice sand process relating to their soldiers.

Develop marketing material promoting The Colleges' Partnership's commitment to Equality and Diversity.

the colleges' partnership

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