QUEEN ELIZABETH SIXTH FORM COLLEGE

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2022

Presented June 2023

Introduction

The College strives to ensure that all students are provided with an equal opportunity to flourish and succeed, that diversity is celebrated and promoted, that we are inclusive in all our activities and that discrimination, intolerance and hate are combatted. In doing so we are mindful of our duties under the Equality Act (2010) towards those with protected characteristics and our responsibility more generally to promote the interests of all those who face disadvantage.

In pursuit of these aims the College undertakes, though its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to:

- Develop an awareness of equality and diversity issues amongst all staff, students and users;

- Encourage the promotion of equality and diversity in all aspects of College life;

- Ensure that all members of the College community are valued equally;

- Combat discriminatory practices and stereotyping;

- Prevent oppressive behaviour, including all forms of harassment;

- Monitor equal opportunities and investigate any issues which arise;

- Comply fully with the requirements of the Equality Duty, the College's Equality Statement, and all other relevant legislation;

- Eliminate all unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic, as defined in the Equality Act 2010, and people who do not share it.

- Recognise and value diversity, and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic as outlined above and those who do not share it.

In September 2021, the College adopted revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion College objectives, which have been approved by the Board of Governors and which will be reviewed in September 2024. These objectives are as follows:

1) To embed the promotion of equality, diversity and Inclusion themes (including neurodiversity) across the curriculum explicitly through teaching and learning.

2) To ensure that students with protected characteristics have equal access to appropriate mental health support.

3) To raise awareness of the issues facing LGBT+ students, and to continue working with them to ensure they feel valued and succeed.

Progress towards the Meeting of Equality Objectives

In addition to activity taking place in 2021-22 the College has, since September, made further progress towards each Equality Objective:

Objective 1

- A Neurodiversity Group has been established within the Student Association to give a voice to students who face potential barriers to learning as a result, for example, of their social preferences, ways of communicating and ways of perceiving their environment. These students include those with autism and other development and learning conditions. This group has identified issues relating to the student experience for further discussion and action by staff and by the Student Association. These issues concern, for example, the classroom environment, teaching strategies, approaches to communication and relationships between students.

- The Learning Support team and James Stubbs, Learning Leader, have delivered training to teaching staff relating to neurodiversity (3rd March.) The training outlined strategies for promoting and responding to neurodiversity, linked to the Quality First Teaching Framework.

- This training is delivered in advance of, and in preparation for, Neurodiversity Week (13th to 19th March) which the College will mark with an awareness campaign.

- Health and Social Care students are supporting this work by producing videos which communicate neurodiversity issues to students and staff.

Objective 2

- Additional counselling capacity has been sourced by TA which a view to catering for the needs of the widest possible range of students, including those with protected characteristics.

- Students are signposted to counselling services with particular specialisms, e.g. LGBTQ

- Students who request and access counselling services are now carefully tracked, so that analysis in terms of protected characteristics can be undertaken at a later date.

Objective 3

- The College's LGBT student group remains active and visible, building on the successful acquisition of a Rainbow Award in 2021-22.

- A student survey undertaken as part of the Student Association's planning for priorities demonstrated that the LGBT Group is the best know student-led group in the College.

- LGBT campaigning activities included the organisation of a Christmas fundraiser event to provide   gifts to a local women's refuge.

- LGBTQ History Month was marked through College-wide displays.

- The LGBT group maintains an active social-media feed, sharing aspects of its work.

Additional Activity to Support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- The College's Diversity Group, which operates within the Student Association, hosted a College-wide Culture Day in February, to celebrate ethnic and cultural diversity. The event included the showcasing of diverse cuisine, information displays and cultural activities from 21 different heritages. Culture Day was very well supported by students and staff and set a clear standard for future EDI events and activities.

- An Anti-Racism Group has been established by students who are determined to share their experience of discrimination and injustice with staff and with other students, and to promote change in response. Motivated in part by the Black Lives Matter movement and by the decolonisation agenda, these students have, in recent months, had a significant impact on several aspects of College life:

  o The group, supported by Nancy Wall (Student Services Coordinator) is leading the College's work to achieve the Anti-Racist Schools Award, an assessment tool to evaluate practices and initiatives across a range of College activities, including curriculum content and the classroom environment. The Award is accredited by the Centre for Race, Education and Decoloniality (CRED) at Leeds Beckett University. We aim to achieve the Bronze Award during this academic year and to work towards higher awards in subsequent years.

  o Hannah Malik, SA President, who founded and steers the Anti-Racism Group, led a staff development session on Unconscious Bias in November.

  o The group met with Carolyn Salt, HR Manager, to discuss issues relating to diversity and staff recruitment.

- The College led Darlington's Holocaust Memorial Day Commemoration on 27 January. Participating students included those from the Diversity, Anti-Racism and LGBT groups.

- Black History Month was marked in October, as in previous years, through promotional displays, tutorial activities and through teaching and learning.

- The College's Personal Development Action Plan commits the College to developing a Disadvantaged Strategy. While not a protected characteristic under Law, social and economic disadvantage constitutes the most serious barrier to educational success. The Disadvantaged Strategy aims to identify disadvantaged students more accurately, to remove financial barriers to participation and achievement and to promote a 'Disadvantaged First' approach to teaching and learning.

- EDI issues continue to be addressed through staff induction, staff development, teaching and learning, the tutorial programme and through quality assurance processes.

Analysis of Disaggregated Data

a) <u>**Gender**</u>

Table 1: Gender (L3VA – Using 2019 L3VA Benchmarks)

	Average of VA Grades		Entries	
	Female	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**
GCE A Level 2019	0.12	0.34	978	788
GCE A Level 2020	0.56	0.48	1116	890
GCE A Level 2021	0.51	0.28	1010	814
GCE A Level 2022	-0.02	0.01	1060	829

- Female students accounted for 55% of A Level entries in 2021 compared to 56% in 2020 and 55% in 2019.

- While make students made more progress than female students by these measures, as students returned to external examinations for the first time since the pandemic, the 2022 outcomes represent the narrowest gap in progress for many years.

Table 2: Gender (Attainment – National Benchmarks in brackets)

		Pass %	**High Grades %**
2018-19	**Female**	99.7 (98.0)	58.4 (53.0)
	Male	99.5 (97.0)	53.0 (49.8)
2019-20	**Female**	100% (99.8)	69.4% (68.7)
	Male	100% (99.7)	64.3% (62.9)

2020-21	**Female**	100% (99.6)	68.6% (73.4)
	Male	100% (99.3)	58.6% (66.5)
2021-22	**Female**	99.1%	62.8%
	Male	98.1%	57.9%

- While female students achieved a higher pass rate and higher 'high grade' rate than males in 2022, male students made slightly more progress. This therefore reflects a difference in academic starting point rather than male underperformance. Note that the comparison with 2021 and 2020 figures should be put in the context of the systems used to award grades during the pandemic.

- The difference in 'high grade' passes between male and female students is similar to the last comparable (pre-Covid) year.

- No gender based national benchmarks were produced by JCQ in this academic year.

b) Disadvantaged Students

Table 3: Disadvantaged Students (L3VA – Using 2019 L3VA Benchmarks for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)

	Average of VA Grades		Entries	
	Disadvantaged	**Non-Disadvantaged**	**Disadvantaged**	**Non-Disadvantaged**
GCE A Level 2019	0.19	0.22	206	1560
GCE A Level 2020	0.57	0.52	202	1804
GCE A Level 2021	0.35	0.41	214	1610
GCE A Level 2022	-0.16	0.01	204	1686

Table 4: Disadvantaged Students (Attainment)

		Pass %	High Grades %
2018-19	**Disadvantaged**	99.0%	43.7%
	Non-Disadvantaged	99.7%	57.6%
2019-20	**Disadvantaged**	100%	55.9%
	Non-Disadvantaged	100%	68.3%
2020-21	**Disadvantaged**	100%	56.5%
	Non-Disadvantaged	100%	65.2%
2021-22	**Disadvantaged**	97.1%	50.5%
	Non-Disadvantaged	98.8%	61.9%

- Historically, the gap in progress achieved by disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students has been small and in some years disadvantaged students have outperformed the non-disadvantaged. However, in 2022 a large gap in progress opened up, while the gap in high grade passes widened, indicating that disadvantaged students struggled to make the progress that was expected. Explanations for this widening gap lie, it seems, in the differential impact of the pandemic on students with limited resources. Our response to this lies in the Disadvantaged Strategy outlined above.

c) **Ethnicity**

Table 5: Ethnicity (L3VA – Using 2019 L3VA Benchmarks for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)

	Average of VA Grades		Entries	
	Non-White British	White British	Non-White British	White British

GCE A Level 2019	0.12	0.22	71	1592
GCE A Level 2020	0.55	0.53	74	1820
GCE A Level 2021	0.41	0.41	156	1649
GCE A Level 2022	0.23	-0.04	147	1720

Table 6: Ethnicity (Attainment)

		Pass %	High Grades %
2018-19	**Non-White British**	100%	49.3%
	White British	99.6%	56.8%
2019-20	**Non-White British**	100%	55.4%
	White British	100.%	67.7%
2020-21	**Non-White British**	100%	67.9%
	White British	100%	64.0%
2021-22	**Non-White British**	99.3%	62.6%
	White British	98.5%	60.6%

- For three consecutive years, non-White British students have made equal or greater progress than White British students. In 2022 the differential was very significant. With non-White British students outperforming others by a large margin. Non-White British students also achieved a higher 'high grade' pass rate than others, marking a continuation of a pattern first established in 2021. There are numerous possible explanations for this success and the diversity of the group 'non-White

British' makes meaningful analysis difficult. However, the College's recent engagement with the work of the Anti-racism group, which has included training on unconscious bias, for example, will, it may be hoped, contribute to further strong outcomes for students of colour in particular.

d) <u>**Disability**</u>

Table 7: High Needs EHCP Students (L3VA – Using 2019 L3VA Benchmarks for 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022)

	Average of VA Grades		Entries	
	EHCP	**Not EHCP**	**EHCP**	**Not EHCP**
GCE A Level 2019	0.83	0.21	11	1755
GCE A Level 2020	1.02	0.52	4	2002
GCE A Level 2021	0.65	0.41	2	1822
GCE A Level 2022	-0.28	-0.01	6	1884

- The performance of students supported by an EHC Plan, as measured by progress made, when compared with those who were not, is disappointing and marks a reversal of the pattern seen in recent years. However, the number of such students is low and statistical significance is therefore difficult to establish.

<mark>Not Collected in 2022</mark>

Table 8: Students in Receipt of Learning Support (L3VA – Using 2019 L3VA Benchmarks for 2019, 2020 and 2021)

	Average of VA Grades		Entries	
	Learning Support	**No Learning Support**	**Learning Support**	**No Learning Support**
GCE A Level 2017	0.22	0.13	147	1843
GCE A Level 2018	0.08	0.12	240	1629

GCE A Level 2019	0.33	0.18	439	1327
GCE A Level 2020	0.55	0.51	653	1353
GCE A Level 2021	0.37	0.42	590	1234

Table 8: SEND (inc EHCP) (L3VA – Using 2019 L3VA Benchmarks for 2022)

	Average of VA Grades		Entries	
	SEND	**Non-SEND**	**SEND**	**Non-SEND**
GCE A Level 2022	0.12	-0.05	436	1454

- For 2022, a change in the methodology used to assess the impact of Additional Learning Support was made so that all students on the SEND register, such as those with Access arrangements, rather than all those in receipt of learning support were made the basis for comparison. In practice, the overlap between the two groups is great and therefore comparison remains valid.

- In this context it is pleasing to see that the progress made by SEND students exceeds by a significant margin, that made by others and that the gap is greater than in any recent year. This is testament to the work of the Learning Support team, not only in supporting SEND students but in ensuring that teachers are equipped with strategies which help such students to succeed.