Making things better for everyone

LSC’s Single Equality Scheme

Easy read
What is this booklet about?

This booklet is about the Learning and Skills Council’s ‘Single Equality Scheme’.

An Equality Scheme is a plan to make things fair for different sorts of people.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) has one plan – our ‘Single Equality Scheme’ – for people of different race, disability and gender. It brings our Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme together into one place.

The LSC plans and pays for services to help people in England get the best skills for life.
Race means someone’s **ethnic** background.

Disability is when someone is not able to do everything that most other people can do easily.

Gender means someone’s sex – either male or female.

**Equality** means being fair to everyone.

**Scheme** means a plan.

This booklet is a short version of a much longer booklet called ‘Single Equality Scheme: Our Strategy for Equality and Diversity’. If you want to look at the longer booklet, you can find it on the LSC’s website: [www.lsc.org.uk](http://www.lsc.org.uk)
What is in this booklet

How to use this booklet ........................................ 3
What is our Single Equality Scheme for? ............. 4
What is in the Scheme? ....................................... 10
Our Action Plan .............................................. 12
What have we done already? ............................. 13
What do we want to do? ................................. 15
Our Annual Business Cycle ............................. 17
Impact Assessment ........................................ 18
Our targets ..................................................... 20
Working with other people ............................. 21
Giving information ........................................ 22
Putting things right ......................................... 22
Making our plans work ................................... 23
Telling people how we are doing ..................... 24
Helping learning providers ............................ 25
Who helped us write our Single Equality Scheme? . 26
What we found out about race equality ........... 28
What we found out about disability equality ....... 29
What we found out about gender equality ........... 32
How we use information ................................. 33
The future .................................................... 34
How to find out more ................................... 35
Useful words .................................................. 36
How to use this booklet

Although this booklet is short, there is a lot in it. You may like to have someone to support you when you read the booklet.

When we say ‘we’ in this booklet, we mean the Learning and Skills Council or LSC.

When we say ‘Scheme’ we mean our Single Equality Scheme.

Some of the words in this booklet are printed in purple like this. There is a list that explains what these words mean on page 36.
What is our Single Equality Scheme for?

Our Scheme is to help the LSC and the people we work with:

- learners,
- people who would like to be learners,
- our staff (the people who work for us),
- employers, and
- learning providers (organisations that help people to learn).
The Scheme says what we want to do to help all **diverse** people (diverse means different sorts of people). It also tells people how they can be a part of our plans and how they can help us.

The law says that organisations like LSC must be fair to people of different:

- races,
- disabilities, and
- genders.
The law also covers people with different:

- religion and beliefs,
- sexual orientation, and
- ages.
Some people reading this Scheme may have had more than one experience of diversity. They may have been bullied because of their race and because of their disability. Our Scheme wants to help everyone.

The laws want to stop discrimination against all people. Discrimination means being unfair to someone because of their race, religion or beliefs, disability, gender, sexual orientation or age.

The laws say we should do more to make things fairer for different sorts of people, and help people to understand diversity better.

We want to be sure that we obey the law. We want to make sure we are fair to everyone. But we want to do even better than what the law says.
We want to be fair to:

- all learners,

- everyone who would like to be a learner,

- people on low incomes or with other problems,

- people from different backgrounds,

- people who work for us, and
employers (organisations that give people jobs after they have been in learning).

We also want to help learning providers to do a better job. Learning providers are organisations that help people learn.

Our Scheme says how we will do all these things. It says what we have done already, and it says what we want to do in the next 3 years.

We will use our Scheme to make sure that we make learning better and fairer for everyone. We will keep checking how we are doing against what we have said in the Scheme.
What is in the Scheme?

The Scheme says:

- what things we want to do,
- why we want to do them,
- how we will do them,
- how we will make sure different sorts of people can help us,
- how we will tell people about what we are doing,
how people can tell us if they think we are getting anything wrong, and

how we will check that the things we do will be fair and will make things better for everyone.

All through the Scheme we say how the things we want to do will affect all the diverse people we want to help.

There is also some advice for learning providers in the Scheme. The advice gives some ideas about how learning providers can make their services better.

There is also our Action Plan.
Our Action Plan

Our Action Plan is a long list of all the actions we will do for all the people in our Scheme.

The Action Plan says who each action will help, how it will help them and when we will do it by.

If you want to see the whole list, you can find it at www.lsc.gov.uk
What have we done already?

We have already started to do some of the actions in our Scheme.

One action we’ve done is to look at how we can make learning better for people with learning disabilities.

We have written about our plans for people with learning disabilities in a booklet called ‘Learning for Living and Work’. You can find this on our website or you can order a copy. We tell you how to order a copy on page 35.

We have set up a group of people called the ‘Learners’ Panel’ and a group with learning disabilities called ‘Learners with Learning Disabilities’.

These groups look at what the LSC is doing and tell us what they think about how we are doing it and what we could do better.
We have looked at learners to find out:

- how many learners there are,
- how many are male and how many are female,
- what ethnic minority backgrounds they come from,
- what age they are,
- how many have learning disabilities, and
- how many older people are in learning.

We have looked at our staff to find out:

- how many women and how many men work for us,
- what sort of jobs women and men do for us,
- how many of our staff come from ethnic minority backgrounds, and
- how many of our staff have a disability.
What do we want to do?

We want to:

- do what the law says – and sometimes do more,

- help people with low skills who are not already learning to find out more about learning and training,

- help people to enjoy their learning and training,

- help people to do what they can do and what they want to do,

- give everyone a fair chance to do well, and

- make sure there is no discrimination or bullying in learning.
We will:

- check that we are doing what we have said we will do in our Scheme,
- keep good records, and
- ask people how they think we are doing.

We will work with other learning organisations like the Department for Education and Skills, Jobcentre Plus and local councils. These are our partners. We will work with them to help us do what we have said we will do in our Scheme.

We will also have a plan for how we work with learning providers. This is called our Annual Business Cycle.
Our Annual Business Cycle

Our Annual Business Cycle is a plan that says what we want learning providers to do and how we will check that they are doing a good job.

We will use the plan to:

- help us choose which learning providers to use, and
- check that they will be fair to everyone in the services they give.

If learning providers do not have good plans about diversity and equality, we will not use them.
Impact Assessment means looking at all the different parts of our work to see how each part might affect the diverse people covered by our Scheme.

To do this, we will:

- find out where there are problems,
- find out where choices for learning are unfair for different sorts of people,
- ask why there are differences,
- work out how to make things fairer,
- collect more information about all learners, especially learners with disabilities,
• make the information we have on our staff better,

• check that learning providers are doing what they should do,

• train our staff how to collect and how to use information well,

• use what we learn from the information we collect to make our services better, and

• check how well we are doing against our Action Plan.

We will talk to people who are affected by our plans to help us decide what we should do.

When we have finished our Impact Assessments and decided what we should do, we will write about what we have decided.

We will also put the information on our website: www.lsc.gov.uk
Our targets

Our targets are what we aim to do. We will set targets that we can measure so that we can check how well we are doing.

Here are some of the sorts of targets we have:

1. By 2010, we want at least half of the people who work for us in important jobs to be women.

2. By 2010, we want at least 9% of the people who work for us to be from ethnic minority backgrounds.

3. By 2010, we want at least 7% of the people who work for us to be disabled.

We have a lot of targets. Some of them are linked to what we have agreed with the Government.

You can read about all our targets in the longer version of this booklet on our website: www.lsc.gov.uk
Working with other people

We listen to learners and our staff to help us give a better service.

We listen especially carefully to people with learning disabilities.

We talk to other organisations, such as the Network for Black Professionals, which work to make things fairer for ethnic minority people at work.

We will share what learners, our staff and other people tell us with other organisations, like the Department for Education and Skills.

We have already talked to a lot of learners when we were making our plans for our Race, Disability and Gender Schemes.
Giving information

We want to make sure all our information is easy to find and easy to understand.

To do this we will:

- put all our booklets and leaflets on our website: www.lsc.gov.uk

- have copies of our booklets and leaflets in large print, in Braille and on CD,

- have information in different languages, and

- have a special page on our website about diversity and equality.

Putting things right

We will listen to people who think we have done something wrong or that we have not done a good job. We will try to put things right or do things differently in the future.
Making our plans work

To make sure our plans work well, we will:

- give important people the job of making sure different parts of our Action Plan do happen,
- help people to do their jobs well,
- train all our staff about our plans and explain why the plans are important.
Telling people how we are doing

We have 2 groups that will watch how well we are doing with our plans. These are:

- the National Equality and Diversity Committee, and
- the Equality and Diversity and Learners with Learning Disabilities Group.

These groups will tell us what they think about what we are doing.

We will:

- tell people how we are doing every year in our Annual Report,
- put news about our Action Plan on our website: www.lsc.gov.uk
- look at our Scheme every year and change anything we need to change,
- look back after 3 years at all the things we have done,
- report on how well we are doing, and
- make sure learners and staff from all groups help us at every stage of our work.
Helping learning providers

Our Scheme tells learning providers what we want them to do, and gives them some advice on how to do things better.

We want learning providers to:

- do what the law says,

- understand why diversity and equality are important,

- make sure their services are accessible,

- help all the diverse people covered by our Scheme,

- check how well they are doing,

- keep records, and

- make their services better if they need to.
Who helped us to write our Single Equality Scheme?

We know it is important to talk to the people the Scheme is about. So we talked to a lot of people from ethnic minorities, men and women, and disabled people. We talked to some disabled people using our website.

We talked to learners, our staff, learning providers and employers.

We also talked to groups like:

- our National Equality and Diversity Committee,
- the National Union of Students Disabled Students’ Committee,
- the Commission for Black Staff in Further Education,
- trade unions,
- young Muslim learners,
- disability groups, and
- advocacy groups.
We asked people what they thought about:

- how we should pay for learning services,
- what help and support we should give to different types of learners, and
- how we could make things better for the different groups of people.

And we looked at a lot of written information.
What we found out about race equality

In 2006, we looked at our Race Equality Scheme.

We found that there were a lot of good things happening all over the country for learners from ethnic minority backgrounds. We found that we were doing better than a lot of other organisations.

We are already working with organisations that look after the rights and needs of people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

We also added some new things to our Action Plan.
What we found out about disability equality

Disabled people we talked to about our Scheme told us:

- we should look carefully at how we spend money on services for disabled learners who are older than 19,
- some disabled learners need more support,
- we need to make targets for disabled learners clearer,
• we should pay for more courses for disabled people – courses like lip reading,

• it is difficult for some disabled people to get the skills they need to get on to some courses, and

• we should teach our staff about disability.

Some of the things disabled people told us about need to be looked at by other organisations. We have told the other organisations about what the disabled people said.
We have already:

- looked at how well we are meeting the learning needs of adults with learning disabilities,

- given money to the Learning and Skills Network to help learning providers to do what the law says they must do for disabled people,

- written some booklets about what learning providers must do for disabled people, and

- given money to help some learning providers make their services more accessible to disabled people.
What we found out about gender equality

We found that some women learners need more help. So we are working to make it easier for women to get on to higher level courses. We are trying out a way of doing this in London called ‘Train to Gain’.

The Equal Opportunities Commission told us that women from some ethnic minority backgrounds need more help to get better jobs. So, we will include this in our planning of learning for women from Bangladesh, Pakistan and the Caribbean.
How we use information

We have a lot of information that we can use to help us understand different types of learners and staff.

We use the information:

- to make sure that we treat everyone fairly,

- to check how we are doing against our targets, and

- to share with other organisations in education to help us all give a better service.
The future

In the future we will:

- make sure we talk to the people who use our services to find out what they think,
- carry on trying to make learning better for everyone,
- use our Action Plan to help us do this,
- tell people how we are doing, and
- make changes to our Scheme and Action Plan if we need to.
How to find out more

To get another copy of this booklet or an Easy read copy of ‘Learning for Living and Work’ you can:

Write to:
Learning and Skills Council
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT

Telephone:
0845 019 4170

Visit our website:
www.lsc.gov.uk
# Useful words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Plan</th>
<th>Our list of things we plan to do, and when we will do them.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>advocacy</td>
<td>When someone helps you explain to someone else what you want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bullying</td>
<td>When someone treats you badly because they are stronger than you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discrimination</td>
<td>Treating someone unfairly because of their illness, disability, race, religion, gender or age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diverse</td>
<td>A mix of different sorts of people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diversity</td>
<td>A mix of lots of different sorts of people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employer</td>
<td>A person who gives jobs to other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equality</td>
<td>Being fair to everyone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnic minority</td>
<td>People who are part of a group that comes, or came from another country. They may have a different skin colour to other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender</td>
<td>Someone’s sex – either male or female.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jobcentre Plus</strong></td>
<td>The part of the Government that helps people find jobs, or pays them if they cannot work.</td>
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<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>learners</strong></td>
<td>People who are learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>learning providers</strong></td>
<td>Organisations that help people to learn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LSC</strong></td>
<td>The Learning and Skills Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>race</strong></td>
<td>Someone’s ethnic background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>religion</strong></td>
<td>Belief or faith.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sexual orientation</strong></td>
<td>Whether someone is sexually attracted to men or women, or both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Single Equality Scheme</strong></td>
<td>The LSC plan for people of different race, disability and gender. It brings our Race Equality Scheme, Disability Equality Scheme and Gender Equality Scheme together into one place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>skill</strong></td>
<td>Something you can do well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>staff</strong></td>
<td>The people who work for us.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>