

The Mary Ward Centre Single Equality Policy (SEP)

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Introduction

Following the revision and clarification of equality legislation in the Equality Act 2010, the Mary Ward Centre has considered the presentation and effectiveness of its policies relating to equality issues. This Single Equality Policy (SEP) is the result of a decision to make our commitment to equality more accessible to all users of the Centre. It applies to our students, visitors and staff, and all other members of The Mary Ward community. It replaces the Centre's individual Equality Assurance, Race Equality and Sex Equality Policies and its Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Disability Statement, and includes additional references to age, faith, social class and sexuality. Our aim is to ensure that all our users are aware of our, and their, responsibilities in opposing discrimination and promoting a culture of respect, inclusion, and positive relations between different groups.

A summary of this policy, for wider distribution to students and for inclusion in the Student Handbook, is included in this document at Appendix 2.

The Mary Ward Student Charter has been amended to include additional reference to equality and is included at Appendix 3. It includes the following **Equality and Assurance and Race Equality Statement**:

"We are committed to providing a service which offers equality of opportunity. We believe that all adults have a right to education in an environment which promotes social justice and is free from unfair discrimination both in the delivery of our adult education service and in our recruitment and employment practices. The Centre's Single Equality Policy upholds these principles and legislation requires that we monitor and report on the effectiveness of our arrangements".

1 Our commitment to equality and "equalisation"

Mary Ward Centre values diversity. We are committed to opposing discrimination both in our delivery of adult education and in our recruitment and employment practices. Our long-standing commitment to address equality issues is expressed within our broad curriculum offer, our five Mary Ward Settlement aims* and our ten Mary Ward Centre objectives*. One of our five Settlement aims is "Equalisation", a term used in the 1890s by our founder Mrs Humphry Ward (Mary Ward) and which we still use today, to describe the opportunity for people from all backgrounds to study together and to access a wide range of subjects which had previously only been accessed by "the privileged few".

(* see appendix for copies of these aims and objectives)

2 The Centre's Single Equality Policy (SEP) in the context of the Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 lays down a specific duty to publish, by April 2012, and at four-yearly intervals thereafter, 'specific measurable equality objectives' together with how progress towards these objectives will be measured. The terms, procedures and requirements set out in this paper underpin the work of the Centre and indicate how the Centre complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

The Equality Act 2010 has three main aims:

- to simplify, streamline and harmonise the law,
- to strengthen the law and
- to support progress in promoting equality and achieving year on year improved outcomes.

The Act introduces the term 'protected characteristic' to refer to aspects of a person's identity explicitly protected from discrimination. Of the nine protected characteristics identified in the Act, eight feature in the education duties of the Act, namely; race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, gender reassignment, and pregnancy and maternity. The ninth protected characteristic, marriage and civil partnerships, is covered in the employment duties of the Act, but not the education duties.

The Act recognises the following types of discrimination:

- direct discrimination, including through association (this covers people who are discriminated against because of their association with a person suffering discrimination, for example a carer of a person with a disability or through perception discrimination against someone who is wrongly perceived to have a particular characteristic)
- indirect discrimination
- harassment
- victimisation
- discrimination arising from a disability
- failure to make reasonable adjustments

Although a Single Equality Scheme, as such, is not required in law, the Act introduces an extended Public Sector Equality Duty, in force on 6 April 2011, requiring organisations:

- to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation,
- to advance equality of opportunity (the word 'advance' means that actions must result in improved outcomes) and
- to foster good relations.

In addition, there are two new specific duties;

- to set and publish equality objectives and
- to publish information.

By 31 July 2011, and then annually thereafter, we will be required to report on the effects of our policy and practice and how we are meeting our duty to eliminate discrimination. To a great extent, the operational arrangements for our Policies and the data collected already meet requirements. Nonetheless, it will be necessary to review current arrangements to ensure our compliance with all relevant aspects of the 2010 Act.

3 Our Single Equality Policy (SEP)

We believe that all adults have the right to learn in an environment which promotes inclusion and social justice, champions the value of diversity, maximises equality, and generates a sense of belonging for all. The Policy sets out how the Centre will promote and advance equality for everyone who uses the Centre. In accordance with the SEP, the Centre will realise the commitment to equality of access, treatment and outcome in four stages:

- gather information about the experience of students and staff in relation to recruitment, retention and success
- assess the equality impact of all our decisions
- act on the findings
- publicise the policy, our plans and the outcomes.

Initial consideration of the Policy takes place in the Centre's Quality, Equality and Curriculum Committee (QEC) which meets regularly and has a diverse membership. The Committee reports to the Board of Trustees of the Mary Ward Settlement. Amongst its responsibilities, the Committee is entrusted to report on:

- areas of under-representation in the staff and student population
- how evidence of under-representation can be taken into account in marketing, recruitment and selection procedures
- the implementation of all equality actions
- the diversity profile of our staff recruitment
- diversity of representation in publications
- the incorporation of equality into the planning, delivery and review of curriculum and
- breaches of equality and evidence of any failure to implement equality assurance at any level of the Centre's activities.

4 Review of the Policy

This Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis, within the context of the implementation of the Equality Act 2010 and the need for good practice, by the Centre's QEC. As part of the review, the QEC will seek and take into account the views of learners, staff, work placement providers, partner organisations, the local consultation/negotiating arrangements within the Centre, and any advice if required from the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

4.1 Consultation Arrangements

Existing systems for obtaining insights into user and staff perceptions will be used. For example, the annual comprehensive staff satisfaction questionnaire and student feedback questionnaires will be analysed to identify variance in experience of different groups. In addition, discussion groups of students and staff may be set up to consider any issues arising from the feedback and to recommend actions for improvement.

4.2 Advancing equality

The Centre recognises that, despite legislative attempts to achieve equality, some groups are still subject to discrimination, lack of opportunity and social injustice. Women and black and minority ethnic people, working class men, and other disadvantaged groups are still disproportionately found in lower-paid employment, concentrated into a narrow range of jobs, and generally under-represented in management jobs. The Centre is committed in its role both as employer and as education provider to work to eliminate all forms of discrimination in its structures, employment practices and curriculum content, as well as to encourage changes in individual behaviour and attitudes, to ensure equality of access, treatment and outcome for all.

4.3 The Curriculum

The Centre recognises that the programme of courses and activities making up the Centre curriculum can play a major role in promoting positive attitudes. This can be achieved through the content of what is taught, the way it is taught, and the timing and arrangements of courses and activities. We aim to ensure that the curriculum is given the depth and breadth needed to make it relevant to a diverse student group. To this end, the Centre will audit the curriculum from time to time.

4.4 Recruitment of staff

Our aim is to close the gap between the profile of our students and the profile of our staff. We will ensure our recruitment and employment policies work to achieve this. Details are to be found in the Recruitment Policy.

4.5 Staff development

The Centre will ensure that members of staff have equitable access to all appropriate forms of training and staff development. From time to time we will carry out diversity monitoring of take-up to check our performance.

4.6 Social Class

Social class, though still one of the strongest factors in denying educational success, is not currently included in equality legislation, and we do not collect data on this in the Centre. We do report on the proportion of concessionary fee payers, year on year. The maintenance of an agreed proportion (in 11/12 we aim for 43%) of concessionary fee payers is a key performance indicator against the Settlement's aim of "equalisation" and is monitored annually by the Board.

5 **Race equality**

The Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 placed a 'general duty' on all public authorities to demonstrate their commitment in working practice to:

- eliminating unlawful racial discrimination
- promoting equality of opportunity and
- promoting good relations between people of different racial groups.

Colleges also have the following 'specific duties':

- to monitor by racial group the number of teaching staff in FE establishments (as defined in the Further and Higher Education Act 1992) and
- to take reasonably practical steps to publish, each year, the results of this monitoring.

These general and specific duties are carried forward into the Equality Act 2010. Detailed guidance on the duties has been published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The Mary Ward Centre welcomes the proactive nature of the public duties and will actively promote them in its work.

6 **Gender equality**

6.1 The Equality Act 2006 placed a statutory duty, carried forward in the Equality Act 2010, on public authorities to promote gender equality with due regard to the need:

- to eliminate sex discrimination, which is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act and the Equal Pay Act and
- to promote equality of opportunity between women and men.

6.2 The Centre works to eliminate sex discrimination and create a working and learning environment based on good relations between women and men. To this end, the Centre provides diverse, non-stereotypical images of women and men in all learning and display materials. It creates a positive and inclusive ethos, with a shared commitment to gender equality, where sexism and stereotyping are discussed openly.

- 6.3 The Centre will ensure that male and female students have equal access to all learning programmes and facilities.
- 6.4 The Centre will ensure that all parents' rights to parental leave are met. For details, see the Centre's Human Resources Policies.
- 6.5 The Centre will ensure that there is no gender discrimination in relation to dismissal of staff. In particular, should a redundancy situation occur, it will ensure that gender is not a factor in the selection of those to be made redundant. For more details see the Redundancy Policy.
- 6.6 Sexual harassment is viewed by the Centre as a very serious offence which, if proven, could lead to the dismissal of a member of staff or the expulsion of a student.

Promoting equality between men and women

- 6.7 The Centre believes that there is a continued assumption and expectation in some sections of society that women should take the major responsibility for childcare, care of other dependent relatives and for housework. The Centre accepts that, to counteract these assumptions and expectations, it must take specific action to ensure genuine equality of access for women staff and students, including provision of facilities for pregnant women and mothers, and adopting a flexible approach to timetabling to assist those with family responsibilities.
- 6.8 The Centre recognises that stereotyped gender roles can be harmful to both women and men, who may feel constrained to behave in ways and work in areas considered 'appropriate' for their sex. In the Centre's work, encouragement and support will be given to staff and students who seek to step outside the constraints of stereotypes.

Provision for those with dependants

- 6.9 The Centre recognises that both staff and students may at times have responsibilities for the care of dependants, and that, while this is more likely to impact disproportionately on women, men are also affected. The Centre will make every reasonable effort to meet the needs and requirements of staff and students with such responsibilities.
- 6.10 Details relating to compassionate, adoption, paternity, fertility treatment and dependents' leave will be set out in our Human Resources policies.
- 6.11 The Centre will provide support for staff returning after a break caused by caring responsibilities.
- 6.12 For staff with significant caring responsibilities returning to work after a career break, the Centre will assess, against transparent criteria, the possibility of posts being shared [job share] or for staff to move from a full-time to a reduced, term-time only or part-time contract for a specified period.
- 6.13 The Centre, when producing timetables for teaching staff or work patterns for support staff, will adopt a flexible approach which endeavours, whenever possible, to meet the individual needs of staff with caring responsibilities.

Part-Time Working

6.14 The Centre recognises that a disproportionate majority of its part-time workers are women, for reasons partly related to the greater burden of caring responsibilities that they often bear. The Centre appreciates that any generalised treatment of part-time workers is at risk of having a more adverse impact on women than on men. It will include this awareness in its impact assessments.

7 Disability equality

7.1 The Disability Discrimination Act placed a statutory general duty, carried forward in the Equality Act 2010, on all public bodies to promote disability equality. This means that colleges must, in carrying out all functions, have due regard to their need to:

- promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and non-disabled people
- eliminate unlawful discrimination
- eliminate disability-related harassment
- promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- encourage participation by disabled people in college life and
- take steps to meet disabled people's needs.

Colleges also have the following 'specific duties' in order to provide a clear framework for them to meet their 'general duty':

- to report annually on progress made and
- to review and revise their SEP every three years.

These general and specific duties are carried forward into the Equality Act 2010. The QEC will be presented with a report on progress at the Centre.

During 2007-08, the Centre developed a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) advised by a group of disabled students and staff. This SEP incorporates the key elements of that DES.

Disability statement

7.2 The Mary Ward Centre welcomes applications from people who have particular needs associated with a physical disability, sensory disability, learning difficulty, mental health needs or those who require additional support with basic skills including literacy. The Centre considers each applicant's circumstances and provides, to the best of its ability, specific support where possible to assist students. We aim to create an environment that promotes wellbeing and inclusion.

8 Admissions arrangements

The enrolment form invites students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties to give details of their needs and a named person to be contacted if the student has any specific requirements that they wish the Centre to take into account. Any information is collected in confidence and tutors are only informed if requested by the student.

9 Educational facilities

9.1 The Centre creates an environment in which all students and staff feel comfortable and free from oppressive attitudes and surroundings. Signers, interpreters and other support staff are available to ensure our service is accessible to all.

- 9.2 The main premises comprise two early Georgian three-storey houses plus basement and a three-storey rear addition in Queen Square. Signage within the Centre incorporates Braille to assist the visually impaired. Access for wheelchair users and mobility-impaired staff and students is via a ramp to the side of the building. There is a lift providing access to the two higher floors and the basement. Architecture and practical problems exist which makes the provision of lift access to the single remaining classroom on the third floor and roof garden currently impractical. As the Queen Square building is Grade 2 listed there are restrictions on what we can do, although significant progress has been made on disability access over the last four years. Notwithstanding the access constraints the building imposes on people with mobility impairments, extending disabled access and increasing the use of the Centre by disabled people has been a priority.
- 9.3 The Centre's second building at 10 Great Turnstile is a 1980s built office block of 9000 sq ft over 5 floors. When purchased, it was subject to a major refurbishment to make it suitable to house extra classroom and common room space for our students, as well as new office and consultation facilities for our sister organisation the Mary Ward Legal Centre. The refurbishment incorporated all necessary consideration for disabled access, including overhaul of the lift giving access to all floors and new steps and disabled lift at the front entrance.

Designated responsible persons

- 9.4 The Learning Support Manager oversees the range of learning and disability support to students and has responsibility for its monitoring and evaluation.
- The Learning Support and Community Outreach Administrator is responsible for enquiries, admissions and dealing with specific requirements of disabled students and students with learning disabilities and difficulties.
- Heads of Department have responsibility for arranging other learner support specific to accessing the content of courses, in partnership with the tutor of the course.

Welfare and counselling arrangements

- 9.5 There is no designated welfare service or student counsellor service at the Centre. Where the need is beyond the scope of the Centre's staff, referral is made to an appropriate external source. This is reiterated in the Centre's Student Charter.

10 Examination arrangements

- 10.1 Examinations have not traditionally been a feature of the Centre's work but take-up is increasing. Where they are held on site, the venue will not be in an area that is less advantageous to a disabled student than that which prevailed for their tuition (e.g. if a class was held on the ground floor the examination would not be on a higher floor, or if a sign interpreter was needed for the teaching and an oral component existed in the examination then a signer would be provided). Additional time will be sought from the examining body for students with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia.
- 10.2 Where examinations are to be held off site, at a venue determined by the examining body, every effort will be made to ensure a student with specific requirements will not be at a disadvantage compared to a non-disabled student.

11 Funding arrangements for additional financial support

Courses which run at the Centre are mainly funded by the Skills Funding Agency. Fee remission is conditioned by a student's status which is determined by age, employment

status, receipt of benefits etc. When a student does not fit into prescribed categories, and cannot afford fees, the Centre encourages applications to the Hardship Fund. The Centre has the aim that no person will be turned away on the grounds that they cannot afford the tuition fees. The cost of additional financial support is borne by the Centre and some expenditure is recouped from the Skills Funding Agency and donated funds.

12 Age

The Centre includes age monitoring in all its main quality monitoring reports on staff and students. The Centre is known for its popularity with older students. During 2011/2012 a further review of our services to over 60s is being undertaken, and this will include discussion groups of students about age discrimination and ageism. We are equally concerned with the learning experience of younger students, and in ensuring the Centre is noted for its positive inter-generational relations experienced by staff and students.

13 Other “characteristics” as defined by the Act:

13a Faith

The Centre enjoys its reputation as a place where people of all backgrounds and identities feel welcome and can succeed. It monitors the relative satisfaction and success of students and staff by gender, race, disability and age. However, it does not collect data from students or staff about their faith, although, as mentioned earlier in this report, it may be required to monitor these characteristics in some way by April 2012 in accordance with the terms of the Equality Act 2010.

13 b Sexuality

The Centre enjoys its reputation as a place where people of all backgrounds and identities feel welcome and can succeed. It monitors the relative satisfaction and success of students and staff by gender, race, disability and age. However, it does not collect data from students or staff about their faith, although, as mentioned earlier in this report, it may be required to monitor these characteristics in some way by April 2012 in accordance with the terms of the Equality Act 2010.

14 Complaints – staff and students

- 14.1 The Centre will support members of staff or students who make substantiated claims of discrimination or harassment. Acts of discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation or abuse will be treated as serious disciplinary offences.
- 14.2 Staff who experience discrimination from other members of staff should raise the matter under the grievance procedure. If the allegation is upheld, it will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.
- 14.3 If, in the course of their work, Centre staff experience discrimination from members of the general public or Mary Ward students, the Centre will take appropriate action and provide appropriate support.
- 14.4 Any racist, sexist or otherwise discriminatory behaviour between students will be dealt with under the student disciplinary procedure.
- 14.5 Student complaints are summarised annually in a report to the Board and monitored according to categories of ethnicity, age, disability and gender - see paragraph 15.4 below.

15 Monitoring

- 15.1 The monitoring process will be used to ensure all staff and students are treated equitably and in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 provisions.
- 15.2 See chart at the end of this paper for a summary of our current and planned monitoring of students and staff. Quantitative monitoring is not currently undertaken on sexuality or faith although attention to these characteristics will feature in future reports showing how the Centre seeks to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- 15.3 Once the results of monitoring are available the Centre undertakes to consider targets and actions to reduce any disadvantage experienced by any employees or learners. The targets and actions will be published in the Annual Improvement and Development Plan.
- 15.4 Staff and student grievances and complaints will be analysed in respect of the race, gender, age and declared disability of complainants, and in respect of the nature of the grievance. An annual report will be produced for the QEC giving the results of monitoring. The report will also account for performance against any target, give conclusions about effectiveness and make recommendations for improvements and recommendations for target setting for the next year.
- 15.5 The Centre collects data from students on its enrolment form. Students are invited to indicate whether they have a disability or learning difficulty and to indicate any resulting specific requirement they might have. In reviewing the appropriateness of the present enrolment form, attention will be given to the eight protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010, and listed in paragraph 2 above. Information so gathered is collated and informs Centre practice.

16. Sharing information: arrangements for publishing the results of assessments and monitoring

- 16.1 To the public (including learners, work placement providers and staff):
- Our commitment to equality will be highlighted in our prospectus, annual reports and annual financial statements.
- 16.2 To learners:
- All learners will have access to the SEP. Copies of the equality statement will be on display in the Centre, on the website and in the Student Handbook.
 - The induction programme for learners will highlight the Centre's commitment to equality, the action to be taken by learners who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against those who discriminate.
 - Tutors will reinforce this information during induction.
- 16.3 To staff:
- All staff will have access to or receive a full copy of the SEP.
 - The staff induction programme will highlight the Centre's commitment to equality, action to be taken by staff who experience discrimination and the actions to be taken against those who discriminate.
- 16.4 The arrangements for publishing the results of monitoring and assessments will be as follows:
- Data relating to student profile, retention and achievement will initially be published as part of the data produced annually under the Centre's quality

assurance arrangements. The data will be sent as a report to the Centre Board of Trustees. Full copies of any report relating to student profiles will be available for inspection along with other committee papers in the Café.

- Student profile and achievement reports are first submitted to and considered by the QEC.
- Data relating to the ethnic composition of staff, recruitment arrangements and ethnic profile by grade of post are reviewed annually by the QEC.
- An annual report on complaints received in the preceding academic year is produced for consideration by the QEC and is then received by the Board.

17. Division of responsibilities

17.1 Trustees are responsible for ensuring that:

- the Centre's strategic objectives, aims and plans include a commitment to equality
- they have considered appointing an Equality and Diversity Champion. (The Quality, Equality and Curriculum (QEC) Committee of the Board has recommended to trustees that they should not appoint a champion, but rather all the members of the QEC regard themselves as champions, as indeed should all trustees)
- the Single Equality Policy is in place and capable of implementation
- Equality Impact Assessments are prepared for all major strategic decisions taken by the Board which could impact differentially on particular groupings of students or staff
- Equality Impact Assessments are robust and that effective/efficient action is being taken in respect of their conclusions
- they are aware of the statutory responsibilities in relation to all equality groups
- they receive and respond to equality and diversity monitoring information on learners and staff
- equality training features as part of the Centre's staff development plans and
- the QEC carries out its role according to its terms of reference.

17.2 The Centre Principal and Management Team are responsible for taking the lead in creating a positive, inclusive ethos that challenges discrimination on the part of managers, staff and learners. Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- they are aware of the Centre's statutory duties in relation to equality legislation
- all aspects of Centre policy and activity are sensitive to equality issues
- monitoring information is collected and analysed
- performance in curriculum areas is assessed in relation to equality issues and action is taken as appropriate
- the procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff enshrine best practice in equality
- the Centre's publicity materials present appropriate positive and non-stereotypical messages and images
- learner induction programmes and tutorial programmes reflect the Centre's commitment to promoting equality and

- training and development is provided to support an appreciation of the benefits of diversity.

17.3 Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- they are aware of the Centre's statutory duties in relation to equality legislation,
- their schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources promote equality of content and diversity of representation
- they challenge discriminatory behaviour by learners, work placement providers, outside contractors or other members of staff and
- the Centre and each of its individual staff confront discrimination, whether witting or unwitting, whenever it occurs.

17.4 Students are responsible for ensuring that they comply with our Student Charter (see appendix) which makes clear the Centre's determination not to tolerate abuse or harassment between students or between students and others at the Centre.

APPENDIX 1

Summary table of aspects monitored annually by the Centre.

Key

√ = currently reported and trends monitored

P = reporting plans under way

Blank = not currently recording equality data

ANNUAL REPORTING (except where indicated)	RACE	GENDER	DISABILITY (includes mental health)	AGE	SEXUA LITY	FAITH	CONC ESSIO NARY FEES	When and where annually monitored
Students								
<i>Student Profile</i>	√	√	√	√			√	QEC - Oct
<i>Student Retention</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC - Oct
<i>Student Achievement (Accredited)</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC - Nov
<i>Student Achievement (Non- accredited)</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC - Nov
<i>Student Complaints</i>	√	√	√	√				Board - Oct
<i>Student Feedback via anonymous Comments Form (termly summary report)</i>								Termly report shared with students
<i>Student Learning Support Report</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC - May
<i>Students – Benchmark Survey</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC - SAR Dec
<i>Students – Anonymous end of course feedback</i>								QEC – SAR Dec
<i>Students – Applications to accredited courses</i>	<i>Data not currently collected – but under discussion</i>							
<i>Students – enquiries about all courses, attempts to enrol for non-accredited courses</i>	Not currently reported.							
Staff								
<i>Staff Profile</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC - May
<i>Staff applications for jobs and appointments</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC - May
<i>Staff Satisfaction Survey (bi-annual, next report in 11/12)</i>	√	√	√	√				QEC -May
<i>Staff development take up</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>				QEC -Oct
Trustees and committee members								
<i>Profile</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>p</i>				Board - annual

APPENDIX 2

Summary of Single Equality Policy THE MARY WARD CENTRE SUMMARY STATEMENT ABOUT OUR SINGLE EQUALITY POLICY (SEP)

1. The Mary Ward Centre values diversity. It is committed to opposing discrimination in its delivery of adult education and recruitment and employment practices. We believe that our adult education service should promote social justice and be free from unfair discrimination on any grounds. The Centre's commitment to equality is highlighted in the prospectus, annual reports and annual financial statements.
2. The Centre's Single Equality Policy (SEP) is available on our website or in hard copy from Reception at Queen Square. It has been produced in order to help the Centre comply with its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010, which aims to simplify, strengthen, streamline and harmonise the law and to support progress in promoting equality. The Act confirms and strengthens the duty of all public authorities and organisations to demonstrate their commitment to race equality, gender equality and disability equality. Organisations such as the Centre are required to work towards the elimination of discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to improve equality of opportunity and to foster good relations.
3. Initial consideration of the SEP and its outcomes is the responsibility of the Centre's Quality, Equality and Curriculum Committee (QEC) which reports to the Board of Trustees of the Mary Ward Settlement. Students and staff are represented on both this Committee and the Board. In reviewing the Policy on a regular basis, the QEC will ensure that wide consultation takes place, involving students and staff.
4. Nine "protected characteristics" are identified in the Act. Eight of these feature in the education duties under the Act, namely; race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion and belief, gender reassignment, and pregnancy and maternity. The ninth protected characteristic, marriage and civil partnerships, is covered in the employment duties of the Act, but not the education duties.
5. The SEP sets out how the Centre will meet its legal obligations by gathering information, assessing the equality impact of all of its decisions, acting on the findings and publicising policies, plans and outcomes. Annual reports on aspects of our performance, including on student profile, retention and achievement, will be submitted to the QEC and the Settlement Board. The Centre is obliged to publish by April 2012 and at four-yearly intervals thereafter a report of 'specific measurable equality objectives together with how progress towards these objectives will be measured.' The Centre monitors the profile of staff and students according to gender, race, disability and age. From April 2012 we may be asked to monitor according to sexual orientation and faith.
6. We aim to promote a culture of respect, inclusion, and positive relations between groups and individuals. All who study and work at the Centre are expected to subscribe to that aim. The Learning Support Manager, the Learning Support and Community Outreach Administrator and Heads of Department all have particular responsibilities for ensuring appropriate advice and support are available as needed by students. The Centre will give close and serious attention to complaints relating to discrimination or harassment by staff or students.

7 Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of the **Board of Trustees** to ensure that the Centre's strategic objectives, aims and plans include a commitment to equality and that the Single Equality Policy is implemented appropriately. The Principal and Management Team are responsible for taking the lead in creating a positive, inclusive ethos that challenges discrimination on the part of managers, staff and learners.
- **Staff** are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of the Centre's statutory duties in relation to equality legislation.
- **Students** are responsible for ensuring that they comply with the Student Charter which makes clear the Centre's determination not to tolerate abuse or harassment between students or between students and others at the Centre.

September 2011

APPENDIX 3



STUDENT CHARTER

Mary Ward Centre's Mission

Our mission is to develop and provide excellent and innovative Adult Education and Community Services.

Mary Ward Centre's Equality Assurance and Race Equality Statement

We are committed to providing a service which offers equality of opportunity. We believe that all adults have a right to education in an environment which promotes social justice and is free from unfair discrimination both in the delivery of our adult education service and in our recruitment and employment practices. The Centre's Single Equality Policy upholds these principles and legislation requires that we monitor and report on the effectiveness of our arrangements.

Mary Ward Students Can Expect:

- Courteous, helpful and friendly staff
- Impartial, relevant advice and confidential guidance
- Awareness by staff of when to refer you to more specialist help
- "Quality assured" teachers
- Well-planned courses
- A firm commitment to putting equal opportunities into practice and to ending unfair discrimination
- Formal and informal channels for expressing students' views

-
- Any abuse or harassment between students or between students and other people at the Centre to be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedure

If We Fail In This You Can Expect:

- A readiness to accept responsibility for our shortcomings
- A willingness to put things right
- Staff at all levels empowered to use their initiative to solve problems
- A straightforward complaints procedure
- A prompt response to any formal complaint
- Assurance that we learn from our mistakes

What We Expect From Our Students:

- Punctuality, to avoid disrupting fellow students
- Regular attendance, so that the class can proceed as planned
- Thoughtfulness, tolerance and respect for others
- Considering the needs of fellow students and not being over-demanding of time and attention to the detriment of others
- Participating, endeavouring to take full part
- Following safety instructions at all times, particularly in specialist classes, and fire evacuation procedures
- Co-operating with the class tutor
- Switching off mobile phones in class