

Equality and Diversity Action Plan 2007 - 2009

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R	D	G	Objective	Actions needed	Owner	Desired Outcome	By When	Completed	Comments
			Governance						
•	•	•	Governance structures	Establish appropriate governance structures for overview of equality and diversity issues	Chief Executive	Effective mechanisms and tools for active monitoring and audit of the E&D Scheme and Action Plan	Apr-08	ongoing	Staff member appointed to oversee, manage and monitor the E&D scheme and Action Plan. Will report back to Registrar on a regular basis. The E&D leader has met with SMT to review the plan and revised completion dates where necessary. The E&D leader attends the health regulatory forum meetings and is in the process of developing a questionnaire to assess the quality of the work the team are doing.
•	•	•	Assessment and reporting	Annual report to Council on the impact of the Action plan on the work of the GOC	Chief Executive	Council and the GOC's wider audiences have a clear picture of our progress in implementing the Action Plan	Jun-08	Apr-09	Paper to Council in April 09 on holding the Executive to Account agreed reporting mechanism to Council on E&D Scheme implementation.
•	•	•	Equality impact assessment	Develop and pilot an equality and diversity impact assessment process, ensuring adequate specialist training for those involved in developing and implementing assessment tools	Director of Standards	Assessments will draw attention to any potential inequality before policies are put into operation, and identify opportunities to promote diversity	Jul-08	Yes	Developed and in the process of piloting a E&DIA tool. 1 year trial; revise yearly and review
•	•	•	Equality evidence base	Develop/commission information required to inform policy and decision-making (eg population ethnicity data, risk factors for eye disease)	Director of Standards	Core data is available for impact assessment and other purposes across all GOC functions	Oct-09		

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			Standards						
•	•	•	Guidance to registrants on promoting equality and diversity	Review codes of conduct to consider inclusion of equality and diversity duties and responsibilities	Director of Standards		Sep-08	Yes	Consultation completed. Proposals being finalised and brought to Council in Nov 09
•	•	•		Review competencies to consider inclusion of skills and knowledge relating to equality and diversity	Director of Standards	Optometrists and dispensing opticians are aware of their responsibilities to treat all patients fairly and with respect	Mar-09		Delay in making proposals. Completion expected in Jan 10
•	•	•		Review guidance of professional bodies to ensure that they reflect equality and diversity	Director of Standards		Nov-09		
			Education						
•	•	•	Access to GOC approved training and assessments	Include a statement of our equality and diversity commitments in accreditation handbooks, and a requirement for education and training establishments to demonstrate an appropriate equality and diversity framework	Head of Education	Access to GOC approved courses free from discrimination; GOC approved education training establishments actively promote equality and diversity	Apr-08	Apr-09	COMPLETED The Handbooks have been updated to include a statement on equality and diversity and have been re-published on the GOC Website and re-issued to all training institutions.
•	•	•	Monitoring equalities data from GOC training and assessments	Collect and analyse available data from all GOC approved training and assessment providers as part of an annual monitoring submissions	Head of Education	Data available (internally) to highlight any issues in relation to equality and diversity in access to optometry and dispensing optics education and training	Jun-09	Apr-09	COMPLETED. The Annual Monitoring Form includes a section for submission of E&D data where applicable e.g. in respect of admissions. In addition as part of the accreditation process the institutions must provide a statement on their equality and diversity policy.

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			Registration						
			Monitor gender, age of registrants	Analyse and publish data showing the age and gender of registrants	Director of Comms and Information	Data available to assess trends, issues in relation to age and gender balance of registers	ongoing		Data has been collated and initial analysis undertaken. Summary results are being published in GOC Annual Report. Further analysis of student retention and cross-referencing with fitness to practice data is ongoing.
			Accessibility of the registers	Continue to improve the accessibility of the registers through improvements to the website search options and telephone enquiry service	Director of Comms and Information	Greater access to information on our registers for people with disabilities	ongoing		The Registration team is currently reviewing content and access issues regarding the Register. A series of consultation events are being held in September and October, focused on Register issues.
			Monitor ethnicity and disability of registrants	Develop a monitoring form and systems for data collection and analysis	Director of Comms and Information	Effective, manageable system, consistent with other regulators to allow comparison across healthcare regulatory sector; high response rate; data available to analyse trends/issues	Dec-07	Yes	
		Consultation on new monitoring form/systems		Jan- Mar 08			Yes		
		Send form to existing registrants and new applicants (including overseas); promote and publish benefits		April 08 and ongoing			Yes		
		Collect, analyse and publish data		Aug-09				Data has been collated and initial analysis undertaken. Summary results are being published in GOC Annual Report. Further analysis of student retention and cross-referencing with fitness to practice data is ongoing.	

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Fitness to Practise									
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor gender, age of registrants involved in FTP processes 	Record gender and age of registrants for statistical analysis; analyse and publish data	Director of Legal and FTP	Data available to analyse trends which may require further investigation/action	May-09		<p>This data has been collected by the Registration team during the retention process. The FTP team have not requested this information separately from registrants, as that would be duplicative. The process of collating the information that relates specifically to registrants involved in FTP processes has not yet been undertaken by the FTP team due to other demands on resources, but it should be possible to collate that information before the end of 2009.</p>
•	•		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor ethnicity, disability status of registrants involved in FTP processes 	Record ethnicity, disability status and other diversity information relating to registrants for statistical analysis; analyse and publish data	Director of Legal and FTP	Data available to analyse trends which may require further investigation/action	May-09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dependant on Registration project at line 24 above 	<p>This data has been collected by the Registration team during the retention process. The FTP team have not requested this information separately from registrants, as that would be duplicative. The process of collating the information that relates specifically to registrants involved in FTP processes has not yet been undertaken by the FTP team due to other demands on resources, but it should be possible to collate that information before the end of 2009.</p>

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•	•	•	Monitor ethnicity, disability status of complainants involved in FTP processes	Record ethnicity, disability status and other diversity information relating to complainants for statistical analysis; analyse and publish data	Director of Legal and FTP	Data available to analyse trends which may require further investigation/action	Sep-09	Forms have been sent out by the FTP team since April 2009. Some forms have been returned. The process of collating and analysing the information has not yet been undertaken by the FTP team due to other demands on resources, but it should be possible to collate the information before the end of 2009.
	•		Review complaints procedures	Review complaints procedures to identify any actions needed to improve accessibility	Director of Legal and FTP	Complaints information is easy to understand and available in suitable formats for service users with disabilities	Mar-10	The Communications team have published a new leaflet explaining how to make a complaint, which includes a revised version of the investigation form that complainants are asked to complete, following liaison with the FTP team. An FTP project to improve complainant and witness support has been delayed until 2010/2011 due to other demands on resources.
			Hearings					
•	•	•	Encourage diverse pool of applicants to Hearings panel appointments	Consider recruitment plan to encourage diverse applicants to apply for positions	Hearings Manager	Hearings panel members reflect diversity of registers and service users	from Jul 10	The tenure of the Hearing panel is 5 years, they were appointed in July 05. The panel are from a diverse background. When the tenure comes up for renewal the likelihood and timing of possible movement of function to OPHA will be clearer and a decision can be made on the term of the existing panel.

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			Human Resources						
•	•	•	Update HR policies and procedures	Review all HR policies and procedures to ensure they reflect the statutory duties and commitments in respect of equality and diversity	Director of HR &OD	GOC HR policies, procedures and practice reflect changes in legislation and support our approach to diversity (encouraging diverse applicants, family-friendly policies etc.)	Jan-08	Yes	
•	•	•	Equality and diversity training for staff and members	Review training needs and develop an equality and diversity training plan	Director of HR &OD	Staff and members understand equality and diversity issues in relation to their roles and have the skills and knowledge to deliver a service free from discrimination on any grounds	Staff from 07; members from Aug 08	Yes	A training programme for all staff will be held in the autumn of 2009. It will be carried out by ACAS. The last E&D training was completed in 2007 (also by ACAS). In addition, a training DVD and short questionnaire will be used for FTP members, Visitors and any new members and staff that fall outside of the training period. The use of the DVD will keep training costs to a minimum.
•	•	•	Monitor recruitment and selection and employment/promotion of staff, members, hearings panel and visitors	Introduce monitoring as part of GOC recruitment/appointment procedures and annual monitoring of staff,	Director of HR &OD	Data is available to assess any issues in relation to equality and determine priorities for action	Jan-08	Yes	
				Report monitoring data as part of the annual equality and diversity report to Council	Director of HR &OD		Jun-09	Yes	Equality and Diversity Forms are part of the 'application pack'. It will become mandatory that all posts are recruited using the application form from August 2009. This will allow us to monitor the applications we receive.

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			Training for all departments						
		•	Equality and Diversity training for visitors	Review training requirements in light of the equality and diversity issues; arrange necessary training	Head of Education	Visitors are able to determine any equality and diversity issues when approving courses and examinations	Aug 08, ongoing	Ongoing	When new visitors are appointed they undertake E&D training. Going forward E&D to be included with the annual refresher training
		•	Equality and diversity training for Investigation Committee	Review training requirements in light of equality and diversity issues; arrange necessary training	Director of Legal and FTP	Investigation Committee members receive appropriate training to enable fair assessment of cases	Summer 2009	ongoing	All council members have undertaken E&D training within the last 12 months. The new Council members will take E&D training as part of their induction prior to the end of year. FTP and Visitor Members will be asked to watch a E&D DVD and answer a set of questions. This will be taking place in October.
•	•	•	Equality and diversity training for panel members	Review training requirements in light of equality and diversity issues; arrange necessary training	Hearings Manager	Hearings panel members receive appropriate training to enable fair hearings and remove any possible barriers or discrimination	Jan 08 - ongoing		The panel did undertake E&D training in Nov 07 and April 08.

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			Communications						
•	•		Involve diverse stakeholder groups in GOC work	Create links with BME and disability groups as part of stakeholder engagement strategy	Director of Comms and Information	Diverse stakeholder groups are engaged in the Council's work and able to provide their views	Jan 08 and ongoing		Implementation of the stakeholder engagement strategy is ongoing. A number of initiatives are already underway, and have been successful in encouraging wider involvement in GOC consultations.
•	•	•	Promote equality and diversity activities	Identify opportunities to feature articles relevant to equality and diversity in the GOC bulletin and Annual Report	Director of Comms and Information	Stakeholders, particularly registrants, are aware of the GOC's work and objectives in relation to equality and diversity	Ongoing		Articles have appeared in the Summer 08 and Winter 08/09 editions of Bulletin. Summer 2009 featured the perspective of a deaf member of the public giving his point of view on problems faced at an opticians
	•		Website accessibility	Ensure website is W3C AA compliant as a minimum and AAA compliant where possible	Director of Comms and Information	GOC website is accessible for people with disabilities	Nov-07	Yes	The website remains compliant with these standards. We are planning a Welsh section soon.
	•		Accessible Publications	Review GOC publications and consider the need for alternative formats	Director of Comms and Information	Publications available in accessible formats	Sep-08		The GOC is producing two new public information leaflets. They have been approved for their use of plain English and Welsh versions will be available online.
•	•		Positive representation of black and minority ethnic groups and people with disabilities	Monitor images in GOC publications for diversity	Director of Comms and Information		ongoing		Recent GOC publications such as Bulletin and Stakeholder Update have used a diverse range of images
•	•			Review and update GOC image library	Director of Comms and Information	Publications reflect the diversity of our registrants and service users	Jun-08	Yes	The GOC photo library includes images of a diverse range of service users and professionals.

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Administration/facilities								
	•		Accessibility of GOC premises for staff and visitors with disabilities	Continuous monitoring of work and public areas to ensure compatibility with requirements laid down in the DDA	Services Officer	No barriers to access for disabled employees for visitors	ongoing	
•	•	•	Equality and diversity considerations for GOC	Create and use a check list for GOC meetings to ensure the needs of different groups have been taken into account; encourage feedback from users	Services Officer	No inadvertent discrimination or barriers to attending GOC meetings	ongoing	Yes
Procurement								
•	•	•	Compliance of suppliers with equality legislation	Standard terms and conditions. Monitor compliance of suppliers, contractors etc with equality legislation prior to awarding contracts and on a continuous basis following the award of any contract	Director of HR &OD	GOC procurement supports best practice in equality and diversity	Sep-09	No Procurement strategy and policy has not yet been put in place due to capacity. This is likley to occur in the early autumn 2009.
•	•	•	Diversity of suppliers	Review tender process	Director of HR &OD	Tendering processes encourage diverse suppliers and ensure fair opportunities for all to win GOC contracts	Sep-09	No Procurement strategy and policy has not yet been put in place due to capacity. This is likley to occur in the early autumn 2009.