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CURRICULUM AND QUALITY COMMITTEE REPORT

Subject: Access and Inclusion Strategy 2016-2920 – Update August 2018	**Purpose:** **For Approval** ☐ **For Discussion** ☐ **For Information** ☒
Prepared by: H Anderson	**Date:** 9 October 2018

Purpose:

To provide the Committee with a progress report on the Access and Inclusion Strategy.

Linked to Strategic Goal 2: Deliver successful outcomes for all our learners.

Executive Summary:

The new Equalities and Inclusion Committee considered that twice-yearly reporting on the Access and Inclusion Strategy was required to SLT and CQC, with annual reporting to the Regional Board.

The updates from January are shown in blue on the attached monitoring document and the most recent updates are in red.

Recommendation:
None

Previous Committee Approvals:
N/A

For publication ☒	**For publication with redactions** ☐	**Not for publication** ☐

3.1 Learning Support

3.1.1 Provide a learning support service that recognises the needs of individuals within the context of their difficulties or disabilities, chosen subject and level.	Review undertaken and new team established and in place Feb17. Referral process for learning support embedded in processes. 2018-19 session drop in learning support and group options established in Room 19 base.
3.1.2 Provide appropriate assessment of need at the point of identification or request and make interventions that support the individual to gain independence in learning.	Referral process in place. Diagnostic testing and needs assessments carried out. Learning support plans (LSPs) established to meet need. Continuing as above.
3.1.3 Agree learning support plans where necessary with the individual learners and teaching staff, setting out the goals and techniques to be used to support and promote their independence in learning.	Learning specialists and department specific learning advisors available to determine interventions and put in place LSPs. Shared area for LSP's established with controlled and appropriate access for teaching staff. Continuing as above.
3.1.4 Review individual learning support plans with the learners and teaching staff ensuring that progress is being made and interventions are optimised to promote independence in learning.	Block reviews are carried out. Development area – setting learning objectives CPD planned.
3.1.5 Agree with the supported learner to the sharing of relevant information with other training or educational organisations and awarding bodies involved with their studies.	Consent agreed for additional/specialist assessment and/or examination arrangements. Continuing as above.
3.1.6 Conduct assessment of need, and data and information gathering to judge the requirements of the individual for assessment arrangements and to make application to the awarding body where this is necessary.	DAST and JCQ assessments carried out by Learning Specialists and Advisors. Identified assessment arrangements agreed and verified through regular verification meetings. Continuing as above.
3.1.7 Adapt assessment conditions to comply with any assessment arrangements put in place to ensure that learners have fair access to assessment.	Ongoing. Needs identified and arrangements agreed including separate accommodation, reader scribe etc as per individual requirements. Continuing as above.
3.1.8 Comply with the requirements of regulators and awarding bodies ensuring the continuing integrity of qualifications while meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010.	Ongoing. Meet all awarding body requirements. Verification meetings held. Continuing as above.

3.1.9 Maximise the use of technology to promote independence in learning for learners with a learning disability or difficulty.	Large range of technology being utilised. Incl Reading Pens, Penfriend, Dragon Software, Live Scribe, My Study Bar. Various Apps and self help strategies. Using student funding where eligible to resource equipment for support for learning. Development of assistive technology bank planned for Room 19 LS base to enable students to pilot differing technologies (innovation fund)
3.1.10 Ensure all learners entitled to access learning support funding for either non-medical support or equipment through bursaries or DSA are actively supported and advised to do so.	Ongoing. Students being advised and supported to access these by Welfare and Learning support staff. Continuing as above.
3.1.11 Participate proactively in the transitions process with the local authority education and social work services for all students with a recognised learning support need.	Active liaison ongoing between LS team and school learning support. Networking/Sharing practice event held for 1 Mar18. Continuing as above; seeking to make the practice event annual.
3.1.12 Create and implement data sharing protocols with the local authority education and social work services for all students with a recognised learning support need.	Data sharing process developed and has stalled with local authority for sign off. Now signed off for sharing information to support transitions for care experienced young people. Seeking to expand this to include all our at risk groups.
3.1.13 Ensure that services for students with sensory impairment meet their needs and comply with the requirements of the British Sign language (Scotland) Act 2015.	Draft BSL Plan developed including BSL translated version for publication in October 18. Assistive technology such as Jaws/Dolphin software and Mobile link/loop systems.

3.2 Support for Learning, Achievement and Progression

3.2.1 Provide a wide curriculum with programmes from SCQF Level 1 to 9 allowing learners to study at a level commensurate with the current level of knowledge and skill and to progress through well planned and structured stages.	A learner journey booklet has been created to show the progression of courses available through the SCQF levels. http://www.borderscollege.ac.uk/upload/file/ Learner%20Journeys%20(from%20Prospectus).pdf Annually updated.
3.2.2 Provide a wide range of introductory and access level programmes ensuring that learners can commence study in a	A range of introductory level courses are available including those for school pupils, adult learners and full time students.

vocational area with no prior knowledge	Annually revised, dependent on recruitment numbers and learner success rates.
3.2.3 Ensure that assessment of learning will be well planned and learners will be well prepared prior to summative assessment.	All courses have assessment and teaching schedules to ensure students are prepared for final assessments. Continuing as above.
3.2.4 Ensure that all substantive full and part time programmes will have a course tutor who will provide guidance and support for learners related to their studies.	All full time and part time substantive programmes have an allocated course tutor who monitors student achievement. Continuing as above.
3.2.5 Provide all full time learners with a dedicated time to meet with their tutor on an individual basis at least once per College block.	All full time learners have an allocated time with a course tutor. Continuing as above.
3.2.6 Hold *Progression Boards* to prioritise opportunities for learners to progress to more advanced levels of study ensuring places are available and that learners clearly understand progression requirements.	Students are notified of the requirements and any conditions set on progressing to the next level of course. Continuing as above.
3.2.7 Negotiate and expand opportunities for entry to university with advanced standing from the College's Higher National portfolio of programmes.	Heads of Faculty and Vice Principal Curriculum & Student Services continue to negotiate with Universities to try to expand opportunities but this continues to be challenging as applicants are subject to interviews despite agreements. Annual process.
3.2.8 Monitor the progression into further study of our learners and use the data to inform future programme and portfolio planning.	The college continues to interrogate UCAS applications and the progress of these through our contacts at Universities. Annual process.
3.2.9 Ensure that provision for learners with profound and complex needs is designed around their needs and reviewed regularly.	The college continues to provide education for those with profound and complex needs both on a part time basis and a full time basis. Annual process.

3.3 Student Recruitment and Admissions

3.3.1 Maintain and publish a policy and procedure on student recruitment and selection that is fair, consistently applied, meets	The admission procedure has been updated for academic year 2017-18 which reduces the administrative burden on staff and enables

the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and is based on HR best practice.	faster processing of applications. The admission procedure continues to be refined using learning form 2018/19 for 2019/20.
3.3.2 Contextualise the admissions process where there is a need to prevent applicants experiencing disadvantage because of a protected characteristic.	The admissions procedure continues to enable contextualised admissions for those applicants with a protected characteristic. The Admissions process is being reviewed for the 19/20 intake to ensure this continue to be the case.
3.3.3 Monitor applications and enrolments by protected characteristic to ensure that the College is meeting its obligations under the Equality Act 2010.	Each year the Faculties provide an overview of how it is meeting the general duty to eliminate unfair discrimination and how it promotes equity between different groups. This includes access to courses for applicants, positive action to promote courses to underrepresented groups, positive action for people with disabilities and actions on the different success that groups experience.
3.3.4 Advertise our programmes in a way that is free from gender bias and promotes our programmes to all sectors of our community.	Marketing Department continues to promote programmes without gender bias. Continuing as above.
3.3.5 Provide an appeals process independent of the faculties to adjudicate in cases where applicants have not received a place on their chosen programme.	The Student Support Team continue to provide an appeals process independent of faculties. Continuing as above.

3.4 Student Support Services

3.4.1 Provide an advice service for all students that is easily accessible and covers a wide range of welfare issues.	One stop Advice Centre at main campus + drop in at NSB and on request at other sites. Covering general help and advice, financial advice, health, welfare and wellbeing, care experienced support, accommodation, transport, careers, articulation and progression as well as learning support. Continuing as above.
3.4.2 Support the functioning of an effective Students' Association to act as advocate for individual students and as the collective voice of students with regard to the quality of services provided.	Working closely with the BCSA to support their initiatives and events and to provide additional support, advice and guidance as per need. • Advocacy service available to students through the Students'

	Association. BCSA utilise a tracking document to demonstrate engagement with the service. • Buzz the Boss, Buzz BCSA and Ask Angela initiatives developed to provide a greater range of opportunities for students to feed back on their learning experience. • BCSA is working with the Principal to facilitate a series of focus groups to gather student opinion across all curricular areas. Focus groups to be led by Principal. • Development a new class representative system to provide a more accurate representation of the student experience to senior leaders.
3.4.3 Work in partnership with our Students' Association to ensure that the range of support services provided to students by the College and the Association collaborate and complement one another.	Part of the BCSA student support network – no longer in operation. Working collaboratively to provide additional welfare, wellbeing and advisory services in line with the Partnership agreement. The Students' Association is working closely with Student Services to develop a Mental Health Agreement to be implemented in Q1 2019.
3.4.4 Facilitate access to a wide range of third party welfare Services in collaboration with the Students' Association.	Students services staff liaise closely and have formed valuable partnerships with a wide range of third party community partners to offer access to appropriate services. New partnerships developed in year e.g. mental health service.
3.4.5 Develop a whole-college approach to mental wellbeing.	All front-line student and learning support staff including achievement coaches have undertaken Mental Health first-aid programmes. CPD is made available for other College staff. See Me pledge. #smash the stigma initiatives and events held. BCSA commit to running an annual smash the stigma mental health initiative. Signed up to Healthy Body Healthy Mind Award with plans to create working group under the auspices of Equalities & Inclusion Committee.
3.4.6 Provide mental health first aid where necessary and take action to direct the learner to appropriate ongoing support	All front-line student and learning support staff including achievement coaches have undertaken Mental Health first-aid programmes.

	Wellbeing and Welfare Advisors have an established network of community services whom we signpost students to. BCSA staff and full time sabbatical officers trained in mental health first aid.
3.4.7 Provide a C-Card service for sexual health in conjunction with NHS Borders and the Students' Association	C-Card initiative has been ongoing for a number of years supported through the Students Association. BCSA works with NHS Borders to provide Sexual Health drop in clinics on Galashiels and Newtown campuses.
3.4.8 Provide ongoing support an advice with financial (including benefits), transport and wellbeing issues.	Student Wellbeing and Welfare advisors provide front-line support and guidance on a wide range of finance, transport and welfare issues. Continuing as above.
3.4.9 Advise on applications for bursaries, EMAs, SAAS and DSA.	Wellbeing and Welfare Advisors provide ongoing advice, guidance and support to enable students to access the appropriate funding available. Continuing as above.
3.4.10 Provide support for application to university or other higher education providers through UCAS.	Welfare Advisor with experience in supporting UCAS and SAAS applications is available to provide any required support to students who are progressing to higher education. Continuing as above.
3.4.11 Provide help and advice on transport related issues in conjunction with Scottish Borders Council.	SBC Transport co-ordinator is embedded within the student services team providing ongoing support to students with transport requirements and procuring best value transport solutions. Continuing as above.
3.4.12 Administer bursaries, EMAs and transport services.	This service is provided by the Finance Departments within College and administers and disperses funds in line with national policies.
3.4.13 Procure transport services where no public service exists or where students are unable to use these services for reasons of disability.	In partnership with SBC Transport department, Transport Coordinator procures required services to meet requirements and special needs of students. Continuing as above.

Progress Monitoring – January 2018(Blue) August 2018 (Red)

3.5 Equality and Diversity

3.5.1 Set equality outcomes relating to access and inclusion and take action to achieve these outcomes as required by the Public Sector Duty of the Equality Act 2010.	This is referring to this action plan and this is in place and being updated. Equality Outcomes & Action Plan updated June 2018.
3.5.2 Through a gender equality action plan reduce gender segregation by vocational area.	This is continuing. For example, the proportion of full-time programmes where one gender makes up more than 75% of the enrolments is currently 80% against a target of 73%.
3.5.3 Monitor recruitment, retention and achievement by protected characteristic and take action to address discrepancies highlighted through the data.	Marketing activities address gender imbalance in traditionally skewed areas e.g. childcare.
3.5.4 Promote and provide opportunities for learning to the most deprived areas within our region and recruit a greater proportion of our learners from SIMD 10 – 40 than would be expected from population distribution alone.	This is continuing. For example, in 2016/17 134 SIMD1 students (all types) achieved 890 credits. In 2017/18 102 SIMD1 students (all types) achieved 951 credits, as full-time numbers increased whilst part time numbers decreased.
3.5.5 Retain its LGBT Charter Mark and actively support lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to work and study at the College free from discrimination.	Retained Valid until 2021.

3.6 Care Aware

3.6.1 Undertake its responsibilities as a corporate parent as required by the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.	Corporate Parenting plan published July 2016 and reviewed bi-annually by CQC. Under Review to align more closely with the local authority Corporate Parenting plan.
3.6.2 Provide a dedicated advisor to support young carers, looked after children and care leavers studying at the College.	Advisor role in place and actively providing support and guidance across College. Continuing as above.
3.6.3 Work collaboratively with other local organisations with	Advisor regularly attends the Local Authority Corporate Parenting

responsibilities as corporate parents to ensure that services and support to the young people are well coordinated and informed.	Operations group. Regular contact with schools/social work and TCAC/Continuing Care teams. Continuing as above.
3.6.4 Promote and provide opportunities for learning to looked after children and care leavers and recruit a greater proportion of our learners from these care experienced young people than would be expected from population distribution alone.	Promote care aware support at local and national events. Close liaison with schools/social work and TCAC/Continuing Care teams. Amended admissions-transitions support. Attending local School transition meetings will also aid the transition process.
3.6.5 Work with looked after children, care leavers and young carers to carefully plan and review their learning and pastoral needs, progress and achievements.	Support/Wellbeing plans are available and completed for students who wish to engage with the support available. Wellbeing Plans are available to the student through Office 365 – One Note.
3.6.6 Work with national agencies such as Who Cares? Scotland to improve staff understanding of the issues faced by looked after children helping to improve retention and achievement by these learners.	Continued liaison with Who Cares Scotland/CELCIS etc to improve staff awareness and an understanding. CPD on Trauma and Resilience available at staff T&D days. Corporate parenting Yammer page setup. – further work to make this a priority resource required. Member of CEECEF group allows for sharing practice with other FE/HE institutions.
3.6.7 Provide contextualised admissions, student funding accommodation and transport services for looked after children, care leavers and young carers to improve their chances of securing and maintaining a place at college.	Available and offered to all identified care experienced applicants. Not all wish to engage with the available support initially, however monitored and available at any time. Continued regular liaison with TCAC/Continuing Care teams for applicants under their supervision. Data protocol agreement would aid this support greatly. Data Protocol in place from March 2018.
3.6.8 Support looked after children and young carers in the final year of school through our Borders Young Talent mentoring programme.	First 18 months of this 2 years funded project running and making a valuable contribution. Further 2 year funding to support the programme has been agreed, and will take this through to 2018/19 and 2019/20 academic years. Increased numbers receiving support from 20 to 25 but programme is currently supporting in excess of 30.

3.6.9 Increase the number of looked after children, care leavers and young carers who progress on to higher education programmes and from the College to university.	Numbers remain relatively low in this area however continue to support young people who have aspirations for progression through the dedicated advice and guidance available. Refer progressing students to the Robertson Trust scholarship for additional support through university degree programmes.

3.7 Employability

3.7.1 Work with Community Planning Partners to tackle economic deprivation and unemployment through providing access to its wide range of programmes and where necessary creating bespoke programmes to tackle an identified need.	Developed Keys to Employment programme to reduce barriers to unemployment for young people under the threat of homelessness, funded by SBC.
3.7.2 Provide a range of employability programmes designed to support people who are not yet work-ready.	Developed programmes funded through DWP to build confidence, develop employability skills and provide work experience opportunities for those furthest from the labour market.
3.7.3 Respond to large-scale redundancy situations within our region in collaboration with SDS, the local authority and other relevant agencies through the Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE).	Working closely with partners as and when redundancies are announced to provide opportunities for re-training, government funded**.**
3.7.4 Develop programmes for specific sectors or employers where there is a need for specific skills and knowledge.	Working with Borders employers to identify skills needs in their sectors and develop provision to assist in the development of a trained workforce.
3.7.5 Ensure that our programmes develop employability skills through work experience and collaboration with employers.	All full time programmes have been designed to meet the requirements of the Work Experience Standards. This means that all programmes have either Inspirational, Simulation or Practical work experience. Annually updated course structures.
3.7.6 Be an important contributor to Developing the Young Workforce by collaborating with and support both schools and employers in delivering on this national strategy.	Two members of staff are board members on the DYW Industry Board and the School Academy programme offers a range of vocational and academic subjects at SCQF levels 3 – 6. DYW industry staff meet monthly with CLMs.

3.8 English for Speakers of Other Languages

3.8.1 Work in partnership with the local authority to provide ESOL programmes within local communities.	The Essential Skills Manager attends all ESOL meeting with partners from Community Learning and Development and Scottish Borders Council, including the third sector. The overall provision covers the Scottish Borders and small bespoke classes are run in the main towns. The service delivery is split between Community Learning and Development and Borders College and courses range from SCQF Level 2 to 4.
3.8.2 Provide assessment arrangements where necessary and permissible for learners whose second language is English.	All potential learners are guided towards a single point of contact based within Borders College where initial assessment arrangements are undertaken by qualified staff. Learners are then signposted towards the most suitable learning opportunity available.

3.9 Estates and ICT

3.9.1 Provide well equipped learning and study facilities that allow access to both physical and digital resources.	General provision of PC desktops across college classrooms BYOD support across approximately 20 courses with bursary laptop funding for eligible students. Specialist computing equipment provision for Art/Graphical Design courses (Macs) and Computing (high powered equipment and dedicated networking) Access to day loan laptops via library/ISLT
3.9.2 Provide an easily accessible estate for those with learning disability, physical disability or sensory impairment.	All areas of the estate are fully accessible with various aides including automatic doors, automatic door holders, fully accessible lifts, fixed and portable hearing loops, height adjustable desking, Personal evacuation plans, suitable and sufficient disabled parking, appropriately sized corridors and directions.
3.9.3 Provide adaptive learning technology that promotes independence in learning for learners with sensory impairment,	Specialist learning support staff identify technology need for students with particular requirements and pass this information to ISLT for

learning difficulties and disabilities.	provision. This includes specialist computing devices and equipment (e.g. Penfriend) as well as software solutions (e.g. Dragon Dictate). Continuing as above.
3.9.4 To periodically reassess our estate to ensure that it continues to comply with the requirements of equality legislation.	Capability Scotland Audit completed to ensure compliance with EQ legislation. Periodic review will be completed.

3.10 Developing our Staff

3.10.1 Provide an annual programme of CPD that develops staff understanding of factors that create barriers to learning or learners' engagement in learning and to promote staff skills to support people to overcome these barriers.	Equalities training is represented at the staff development days for example a session on Mental Health has been included in the February development day. Plan & activities updated annually.
3.10.2 Ensure that all staff undertake an induction programme inclusive of corporate parenting, safeguarding, equality & diversity.	Corporate Parenting is being developed and all other modules are part of the essential on-line training completed as part of probation. Now included as part of induction training; and additional material likely to be forthcoming from Who Cares? Scotland.
3.10.3 Ensure that annual CPD programmes address issues of equality, access and inclusion.	As 3.10.1 As 3.10.1