

Coleg Menai Meirion Dwyfor

Busnes@LlandrilloMenai

Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2027

A Welsh language version of this document is also available











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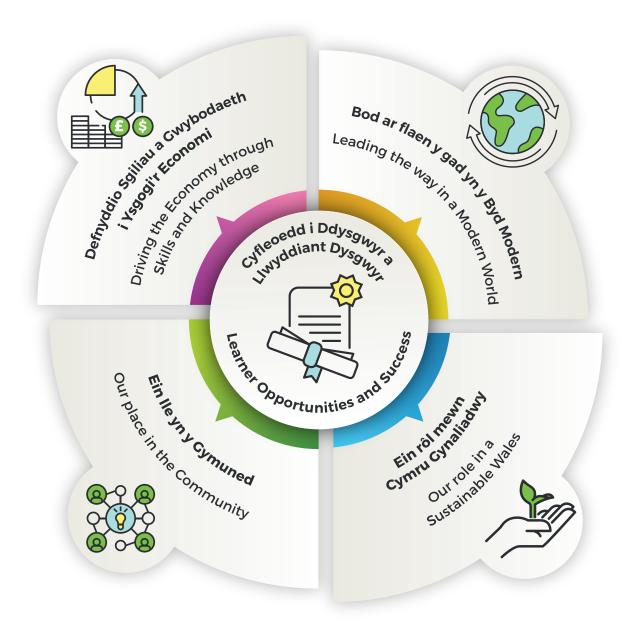
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Our Mission, values and Aims

This equality strategy has been written to align with the Grŵp's 2022-27 Strategic Plan.



The Grŵp is committed to providing the best outcomes for both our learners and employees through ongoing best practice with regards to equality, diversity and inclusion ensuring this becomes an integral part of our everyday service.

Context and Background



At Grŵp Llandrillo Menai (the Grŵp), we are committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse learning and working environment, where every person is treated with dignity and respect. The Grŵp is dedicated to promoting equality, celebrating diversity, and challenging discrimination in all of its forms.

The Grŵp was established in 2012 as a result of mergers between Coleg Llandrillo, Coleg Menai and Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor. It employs 1,500 staff and delivers courses to around 21,000 students, including over 1,500 higher education students, across Anglesey, Conwy, Denbighshire and Gwynedd.

The Grŵp aims to support the economy of North Wales by equipping local people with the skills and qualifications needed to ensure the

competitiveness and success of the region.

The Grŵp's wide range of courses, high quality learning experiences, first-class facilities and talented staff all contribute towards the achievement of these goals.

Our previous Equality Strategy 2019-24, carried the Grŵp through periods of recent history which had a significant impact on our day to day lives. Namely, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Black Lives Matter movement, the cost of living crisis, and the economic, political, emotional and psychological impact of various conflicts. These changes to the world have required organisations, businesses, and the education sector to become more resilient, and put in place policies which can stand the test of time.

Key success factors for the 2019-2024 strategic plan include:

and enriching group tutorial sessions. The resources align with the equality and inclusion dates

By implementing the Grŵp Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-27 and adhering to aims set out within the document, we strive to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Therefore, all individuals will be able to thrive and reach their full potential, whilst also adapting to external factors in our local community, Wales as a whole or internationally.

Legal and Policy Framework

Public Sector Equality Duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on public sector organisations (including further education colleges) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic.*
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Grŵp must meet this general duty both as an employer and as an education provider and show due regard to the duty across all of our functions.

The specific duties regulations are intended to support institutions to meet the requirements of the public sector equality duty. They are specific actions which public authorities need to do to comply.

Colleges are required to:

- Gather and publish information on staff, students and services.
- Agree equality objectives.
- · Publish the objectives.

The Grŵp will therefore continue to publish information demonstrating compliance with the general duty annually by 30 March.

*Table 1. The 9 'Protected Characteristics' under the Equality Act:

Age	Disability	Sex
Gender reassignment	Marriage and civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity
Race	Religion or belief	Sexual orientation



Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018

The Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act (ALNET) and ALN Code will be adopted for some post 16 college students from September 2023 as outlined within Welsh Government's implementation plan.

This follows five years of transformation work where post 16 colleges have endeavoured to enhance the services provided, train staff and develop relationships with Local Authorities (LAs), health boards, and others.

The ALN system promotes enhanced collaboration and information sharing between organisations, which is essential for ensuring that needs are identified early and that appropriate support is in place to enable learners to achieve positive outcomes.

Colleges are required to maintain, prepare and review learner's Individual Development Plans to ensure appropriate outcomes and targets are identified and agreed to support their individual needs.

The learner experience has already seen enhancements and will continue to evolve through:

The development of a 'Universal and Additional Learning Provision' offer; providing schools and local authorities with a clear post 16 provision map.

Strengthened transition procedures for learners transitioning from school to college.

Enhanced availability of information for improved accessibility.

Continuous professional development opportunities for staff, particularly addressing Autism, Specific Learning Difficulties, Attachment, Trauma, and Mental Health.

Emphasis on inclusive teaching practices, facilitated through staff development sessions and initial lecturer training programmes.

Ongoing training opportunities centred on ALNET for all staff, with a strong emphasis on fostering a collective responsibility towards ALN

Increased focus on individualised reviews; developing a more person-centred approach.



The Wider Context in Wales

The Welsh Government

The Welsh Government's proposed principles and objectives for the Strategic Equality Plan 2024 to 2028 aim to create a Wales where everyone can prosper, with a particular focus on reducing poverty. They emphasise the importance of promoting human rights, ensuring equitable access to high-quality public services, and preventing discrimination, harassment, and abuse in all forms. Additionally, the plan aims to facilitate inclusive participation in the workplace, and representation in leadership positions. Furthermore, there is a commitment to fostering fair and equal opportunities for employment and treatment in the workplace, while also addressing the inequitable impacts of climate change to ensure an environmentally sustainable future for all. (Consultation on the Strategic Equality Plan 2024 to 2028: proposed principles of approach and objectives, WG, 2023).

The Welsh Government's dedication to promoting inclusivity and combating discrimination is demonstrated through its comprehensive antiracist and LGBTQIA+ action plans. These initiatives aim to address systemic inequalities and uphold social justice across Wales. The anti-racist action plan focuses on challenging racism in all its forms, implementing measures to tackle discrimination, and fostering a culture of equality and respect. Simultaneously, the LGBTQIA+ action plans strive to create safer and more supportive environments for LGBTQIA+ individuals, with targeted strategies to address specific challenges faced by the community, such as healthcare disparities and hate crimes. Through these proactive measures, the Welsh Government endeavours to create a more equitable and inclusive society where everyone can thrive regardless of their race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission

The EHRC report Is Wales Fairer? (2023) was published in November 2023 and provided substantial fresh evidence to drive and underpin the work of all policy makers and delivery agencies seeking to build a more equal Wales. This helps ensure our decision-making is robust and that our policies and services take account of peoples' needs and are accessible to all. Some of the key findings of the report will have a direct impact on our strategic priorities in this area moving forward. Namely;

Welsh Language Trends	The proportion of Welsh residents with Welsh language skills and proficiency has slightly decreased from 2011 to 2021. Additionally, the number of Welsh residents born outside the UK has increased by 28.3% since 2011.
Educational Disparities	Children eligible for free school meals achieve lower GCSE attainment rates compared to their non-eligible peers. This attainment gap has remained consistent and is higher than in England. Moreover, there are approximately 8,200 young carers in Wales, often facing educational disruptions. Gender distinctions persist in apprenticeship subject choices, with females dominating healthcare and public services learning, while males are more prevalent in construction, engineering, and manufacturing apprenticeships.
Employment Challenges	While 57.2% of Welsh residents aged 16 and over were employed in 2021, pre-pandemic employment growth has stagnated. The 16–24 age group experiences the highest unemployment rates, though there was notable improvement between 2010/11 and 2019/20.

Poverty Dynamics	The proportion of Welsh residents with Welsh language skills and proficiency has slightly decreased from 2011 to 2021. Additionally, the number of Welsh residents born outside the UK has increased by 28.3% since 2011.
Vulnerable Groups	Children eligible for free school meals achieve lower GCSE attainment rates compared to their non-eligible peers. This attainment gap has remained consistent and is higher than in England. Moreover, there are approximately 8,200 young carers in Wales, often facing educational disruptions. Gender distinctions persist in apprenticeship subject choices, with females dominating healthcare and public services learning, while males are more prevalent in construction, engineering, and manufacturing apprenticeships.
Ethnic Minority Groups	In Wales, ethnic minority groups face significant disparities across education, employment, and living standards. They experience lower educational attainment (in some sectors), higher levels of insecure employment, workplace discrimination, and increased likelihood of living in poverty compared to White British counterparts. Additionally, racial aggravations in criminal offences persist, highlighting ongoing challenges in achieving racial equality and inclusion. Despite some progress in public appointments, concerted efforts are needed to address systemic barriers and promote equality for ethnic minority communities in Wales.
Gender and Identity Issues	Trans people in Wales fear workplace discrimination, with a significant proportion concealing their gender identity. Additionally, lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals face discriminatory behaviours in workplaces and educational settings.

The Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER)

The Tertiary Education and Research (Wales) Act 2022 established the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research (CTER) to promote equality of opportunity. The Commission will come into power on 1st August 2024. The Commission's Strategic Priorities were published in February 2024 and are summarised below:

Develop a dynamic and responsive tertiary system to equip learners for the evolving economy.

Aligned with the Commission's priorities, our 2024-27 Strategic Equality Plan aims to enhance inclusivity, access, and support for learners of all backgrounds. By implementing initiatives focused on equality, diversity, and inclusion, such as targeted support for marginalised groups, promoting accessible learning environments, and cultivating a culture of respect and acceptance, the college contributes to creating a more equitable and excellent tertiary education system. Additionally, by prioritising learner wellbeing and personalised support, the college ensures that learners feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed academically and professionally in a rapidly changing society and economy.



We have outlined objectives on a three-year basis with specific improvements and outcomes. In doing this we aim to meet both our legal compliance requirements and our wider vision - as outlined in the Grŵp's overarching strategy, 'Improving People's Futures' - We aim to be at the heart of our communities and to be the skills engine that drives the success of North Wales. In setting objectives, the following were considered:

Feedback from consultation on the process of setting objectives;

Equality issues raised by learners, staff and the community;

Evidence indicating underrepresentation or differential outcomes;

Potential for short, medium- or long-term objectives in different areas;

Objectives that could remove barriers, promote equality, promote good relations or improve performance;

How progress against the objectives will be measured.

The objectives take influence from the priorities defined by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, the expectations of the Welsh Government, the anticipated expectations of CETR and findings from internal data. Our Plan is informed through consultation with learners, staff and the wider community and is a continuation of work from previous Strategic Equality plans. The Plan will be published and reviewed every year in a report monitoring progress against actions. The overarching objectives will be reviewed every four years.

Strategic Equality Objectives

Below are the new equality objectives we have set out until 2027. The objectives have been split into six key areas:

Objective 1	Further develop inclusive environment that ensures all learners and staff, including those with additional learning needs (ALN) and disabilities, have equal opportunities to access, participate, and succeed
Objective 2	Develop staff and learner capabilities to support the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) community.
Objective 3	Be an anti-racist college that promotes and celebrates cultural differences.
Objective 4	Identify and remove the Socio-Economic barriers to learning
Objective 5	Promote gender equality, ensuring women's equitable representation and advancement across all departments.
Objective 6	Understand our own organisational prejudices and create change

Responsibility For This Plan

This plan is approved at the Board and is supported at an executive level by the Executive Director for Academic Services. At strategic and operational level, responsibility for this plan will lie with our Director for Bilingual Development, Learning Resources and Skills and Bilingual Development and Equality Manager with support from our Senior Equality Officer. The team will also provide advice and guidance about progress against the actions in the Plan. Figure 1 provides information about the groups and networks that exist within the Grŵp to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, together with the reporting lines to senior levels.

Management staff should actively champion the strategic equality plan, ensuring its integration into all organisational policies, procedures, and decision-making processes. They should lead by example, promoting an inclusive culture and holding themselves and others accountable for upholding equality and diversity.

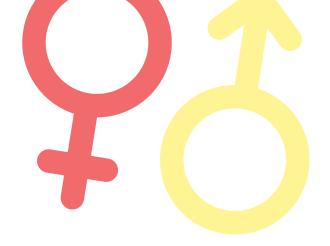
Academic staff (including lecturers and assessors) play a vital role in creating an inclusive learning environment where all students feel valued and supported. They should integrate principles of equality and diversity into their teaching practices, curriculum development, and student support services, promoting a culture of respect and understanding.

Business support staff, including administrative, technical, and operational personnel, are responsible for implementing the practical aspects of the equality plan within their respective departments. This includes ensuring equal access to resources, facilities, and opportunities for all staff members, as well as actively promoting diversity and inclusion in their day-to-day operations.

Sub-contracted staff are integral to the functioning of the organisation and should be included in the implementation of the equality plan. Contract agreements should include provisions for equal treatment and opportunities, and organisational oversight should ensure adherence to equality standards in their employment and working conditions.

Staff Wellbeing Tîm Polisi **User Group Local Social** Tîm Strategol **Partnerships** CPD **Board of** Governors **User Group Equality** Academic **Panel laith** Services **Panel Class Reps Estates** Corporate **Student Union** Services Human Resources

Figure 1. Groups and networks to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Grŵp



Equality Objective 1

Further develop an inclusive environment that ensures all learners and staff, including those with an ALN and disabilities, have equal opportunities to access, participate, and succeed.

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Timeline (a detailed annual action plan is implemented and is available on request)

Continue to develop an inclusive and diverse curriculum presented through the Welsh lens. This will consider the learning environment and the content of programmes and will ensure learners have knowledge of the protected characteristics they will need to support within their chosen profession.

Early phase work

Build criteria for a review into existing good practice within the College for inclusive curriculum. Establish where there are challenges within specific programme areas.

Medium term goals

Establish a consensus of what inclusive curriculum means for the Grŵp, to be in a position to respond to external scrutiny of our approach. Create methodology for how existing good practice can be adopted across the Grŵp.

Long term goals

Each Programme Area within the Grŵp has initiated baseline work on inclusive curriculum development through training provided by the Black Leadership Group and an Anti-Racist/Welsh lens presented at the 2024 Teaching and Learning Conference. This is to be developed throughout the timeline of this strategy.

Monitor and review the implementation of ALN learners' Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

Early phase work

Committee/ advisory group established chaired by senior leadership to monitor the implementation of learners' IDPs.

Medium term goals

Learners and staff involved in providing feedback on the support provided to those with an ALN by the Grŵp.

Long term goals

Establish an integrated system for implementing IDPs using effective transition data from schools.

Build on the work undertaken to support staff wellbeing and retention. This should include the collection and analysis of equality data to help evaluate whether provision is supporting staff with different protected characteristics

Early phase work

Conduct a comprehensive assessment to identify potential areas where neurodiverse, disabled or ALN staff may require support. Identify a disability link in each programme area for staff support and deliver training for managers on supporting neurodiverse staff.

Medium term goals

Identify potential barriers to inclusion and propose updates to policies to remove those barriers.

Long term goals

The wellbeing user group has begun implementing actions focusing on improving the wellbeing of staff and the Grŵp is able to demonstrate progress. The Grŵp will continually evaluate the differential experience of staff with other protected characteristics, considering intersectionality.

Develop staff and learner capabilities to support the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA+) community.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (a detailed annual action plan is implemented and is available on request)
	Early phase work Continue to enhance the tutorial programme and learner calendar (resources for learners and staff) so that trans and non-binary learners are celebrated and are supported by their peers.
	Establish and further promote staff and learner LGBTQIA+ support groups.
Continue to develop a programme of	Utilise external groups and speakers to support educating learners and staff in their capabilities to support the trans and non-binary community.
enrichment and extracurricular activities that develop staff and	Medium term goals Review and update policies and operational procedures as appropriate, i.e. Operational Procedures on Trans Equality.
learner capabilities to	Review, modify and extend staff training based on initial evaluation.
support the LGBTQIA+ community	Long term goals Training and online resources established for all staff and learners to access that provide the tools to empower individuals to build and maintain relationships and have the core value of inclusion built into their personal development in line with the wider Grŵp culture.
	Embed learning opportunities within the curriculum to foster good relations and build team dynamics.
Ensure that the quality improvement process monitors delivery of an inclusive and diverse curriculum which reflect the impact of transphobia and homophobia	Early phase work QIA process to be reviewed in order to establish how best to ensure that examples of best practice of inclusivity and diversity in the curriculum, specifically around LGBTQIA+. Medium term goals Integrate the lived experiences of our own staff and learners into the promotion and support of trans and non-binary community - which can be integrated into the curriculum delivery, where appropriate. Long term goals Review staff and student satisfaction surveys on the environment and culture to review ongoing impact against baseline data.
Establish an inclusive learning and teaching environment for staff and learners based on a culture of trust that empowers and equips individuals to build relationships and challenge discrimination against trans or nonbinary individuals (or any other type of discrimination)	Early phase work Commitment from all senior staff as well as key stakeholder engagement on adopting the values and behaviours required to ensure a culture of inclusion. Work with an external provider on initial training and strategic briefing to these groups on the vision for cultural change. Establish baseline staff and learners satisfaction from existing surveys on the current environment and culture to enable measurement of impact. Grŵp community behaviours aim to respect the views and opinions of others with a commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion that values difference. Medium term goals Support the integration of the new Grŵp values. Equality Panel to review new values and how they contribute to creating an inclusive college environment. Long term goals Build a community based on partnerships between staff and learners Embed practice within staff and learner policy across the organisation. Review staff and learner satisfaction surveys on the environment and culture to review ongoing impact against baseline data.

Be an anti-racist college that promotes cultural differences.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (a detailed annual action plan is implemented and is available on request)
Ensure under-represented groups are involved and at the forefront of all delivery services, ensuring equity of access for all	Early phase work Build relationships with external groups, seeking input as to how we can better serve learners and staff. Ask learners and staff for feedback on what we are doing. Medium term goals Explore how best to understand and share the lived experiences of our staff and learners in order to better educate their peers. Understand the barriers to communication and how we can better engage with ethnic minority staff and learners in the Grŵp. Actively recruit and promote staff and leaders from diverse backgrounds, ensuring representation at all levels of the institution. Long term goals The Grŵp has already implemented a significant anti-racist action plan which has outlined a substantial amount of work we need to undertake in this area. The action plan should continue to be implemented and evaluated. Improve representation of ethnic minority individuals in staff and learner groups through wider involvement and reaching ethnic minority individuals and communities in Gwynedd, Anglesey, Denbigh and Conwy. Regularly assess the effectiveness of anti-racism initiatives and
	strategies, and be willing to adapt and improve based on feedback and outcomes.
Diversify the curriculum creating opportunities to celebrate, highlight and raise awareness of multiculturalism and antiracism across all subject areas	Early phase work Provide staff development opportunities in anti-racist curriculum development. Medium term goals Observations, learning walks and other quality improvement methodologies to identify best practice and areas for development in the diversification of the curriculum.
	Long term goals Deliver an inclusive and actively anti-racist curriculum offer.

Identify and remove socio-economic barriers to learning.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (a detailed annual action plan is implemented and is available on request)
Continue to provide support to learners who need it the most	Early phase work Continue to provide means tested digital equipment to learners who need it the most.
	Ensure provided digital equipment is accessible to learners with disabilities, including those who may require assistive technology, to guarantee equitable access.
	Medium term goals Establish feedback mechanisms for learners and their families to express their needs and preferences regarding digital equipment, ensuring that the distribution aligns with the evolving needs of the recipient.
	Long term goals Continue to work towards addressing differential attainment and retention for some protected characteristic groups who are less likely to succeed.
Review success of current support strategies for most disadvantaged learners	Early phase work Pinpoint the specific obstacles that hinder the success of disadvantaged learners.
	Medium term goals Comprehensive review of whether the existing support strategies are achieving their intended outcomes.
	Develop and implement evidence-based interventions that address the identified challenges and improve the support provided to disadvantaged learners.
	Long term goals Evaluate the availability, accessibility, and quality of support services, such as study support, counselling, mentorship to identify gaps and areas for improvement.
	Understand which learners are immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers with a learning offer in place which supports their needs and their progression to higher-level learning and work.

Promote gender equality, ensuring women's equitable representation and advancement across all departments.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (a detailed annual action plan is implemented and is available on request)
	Early phase work Review and continually improve the method for designing and approving jobs and vacancies, i.e. develop the Grŵp's Post Approval Process
	Review Job Descriptions to ensure they are consistent, transparent and fair.
	Promote flexible working across the Grŵp (where appropriate) and clarify what 'flexible working' means.
	Medium term goals Review flexible and home working policies.
	Ensure a gender balance throughout selection processes and recruitment panels.
Close the gender pay gap	Provide transparency over pay scales across the Grŵp and consistency over how remuneration is advertised i.e. hourly rate or minimum annual salary.
	Long term goals Develop Management Information Systems to support improvements in job design and recruitment.
	Develop new tracker systems to understand the gender balance of applicants for roles across the Grŵp and identify where inequalities may exist.
	Design and launch questionnaires for females across the Grŵp looking to identify barriers to development and opportunities for improvements.
	Review PMAR processes across the Grŵp to ensure that they support and recognise development of lecturing staff in all roles.
Expand pathways and support systems to empower women's professional growth and leadership within the organisation	Early phase work Create a forum for women to connect and support each other.
	Medium term goals Create a mentorship programme, pairing women with leaders and/ or peers to provide support with their career development and professional goals.
	Long term goals Continuously monitor and evaluate progress towards gender equality goals, adapting strategies and initiatives as needed to ensure sustained progress over the long term.

Understand our own organisational prejudices and create change.

To achieve this objective, we need to	Timeline (a detailed annual action plan is implemented and is available on request)
	Early phase work Staff and learners are represented within advisory forums, groups or boards that develop, validate, audit/review and oversee effective implementation of curriculum and qualifications, wellbeing strategies or any other initiative that impacts the daily lives of our learners and staff.
	Increase the number of staff and students completing Equality and Diversity monitoring information through MyView and eDrac.
Understand and acknowledge the lived	Medium term goals A committee or advisory group established to address issues relating to discrimination
experience of our learners and staff	Support packages created to educate people who have discriminated against others in the Grŵp.
	Tutorial programme includes a session targeted at acceptable language, the impact of discrimination on the aggrieved person and the importance of celebrating diversity.
	Long term goals Create new mechanisms for learners and staff to share their lived experiences with us so that we can change any potential organisational prejudices.
	Annual reports incorporate learner lived experience data for the whole of the learner journey.
Embed equality, diversity and inclusion in our policy creation, reporting mechanisms and decision-making processes	Early phase work Utilise the 'I'm OK' survey and 'speak up' facility to inform whether support provision is creating a truly inclusive environment.
	Continue to provide the Equality Panel with reports from the 'I'm OK' survey relating to incidents of bullying broken down across protected characteristics.
	Establish whether incidents of harassment or bullying are related to learners' protected characteristics.
	Medium term goals Explore and establish a dashboard facility to provide data on incidents of harassment and bullying based on discrimination.
	Revise the EIA template and training session to incorporate user feedback and recent research by Audit Wales and ensure the template is user-friendly for key areas of work.
	Identify and take action to address gender, ethnicity, disability pay differences, occupational segregation and employment gaps.
	Long term goals The Grŵp responds and deals with incidents reported through the 'I'm OK' survey and the 'Speak Up' button (and/or other means of reporting) and has a true understanding of discrimination within the organisation and takes steps to remove discrimination in all forms.

Early phase work

Understand where we have gaps in how our EDI work is communicated with learners, staff, governors and other stakeholders. Further develop initiatives and campaigns to raise learners', staff, governors' and other stakeholders' awareness of EDI in the college.

Ensure accountability and transparency in our equality and inclusion

journey

Medium term goals

Further develop reporting mechanisms to communicate progress, challenges, and successes to learners, staff, governors and other stakeholders.

Improve data collection methods to gather more comprehensive demographic information about learners, staff and stakeholders, and regularly report on progress towards equality and inclusion targets.

Long term goals

Integrate equality and inclusion considerations into the college's strategic planning processes, ensuring that they are core components of decision-making at all levels.