

*“Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another’s uniqueness.”*

*Ola Joseph*

*“Diversity: the art of thinking independently together.”*

*Malcom Forbes*

*“People perform better when they can be themselves.”*

*Stonewall*

# Single Equality Scheme 2017-2019

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# Principals Introduction

Our Single Equality Scheme sets out how we will meet our statutory duties contained in the Equality Act 2010 and ensure that equality of opportunity and respect for diversity is at the heart of all we do. It sets out how the College will work to eliminate discrimination and promote good relations between people of different groups regardless of:

- Race
- Disability
- Sex
- Age
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Faith, Religion and Belief

At Accrington and Rossendale College we believe in working positively to celebrate diversity and advance equality of opportunity and embrace the fact that we work in a multi-faceted and diverse community

We are committed to the active pursuit of an equality and diversity policy which addresses the need and right of everyone in college to be treated with respect and dignity, in an environment in which a diversity of backgrounds experience is valued. We aim to ensure that all staff and learners, whether existing or potential, receive fair and equal treatment when applying to, or working as, members of the College community. We are committed to challenge and eliminate any attitudes and behaviour which deny these fundamental rights.

The principles of Equality and Diversity are central to the College strategic ambitions that are agreed on an annual basis by the Board of Governors. These are reflected across a range of strategies, policies and processes. Our Single Equality Scheme confirms not only our compliance with the present legislation for equality of opportunity, but our commitment to excellence in this area, above and beyond what is required of us by law.

The College also recognises that truly embracing and respecting diversity means more than complying with equalities legislation and the strands protected by it, so it also takes into account issues such as:

- Individuals abilities and access to education
- Cultural and economic backgrounds
- Physical and Social environments
- Health

## **Our approach to Equality and Diversity is grounded in the following cross College arrangements:**

- An Equality and Diversity steering group with responsibility for the SES, the annual monitoring report and strategic leadership for Equality and Diversity across the College led by the Senior Leadership Team. The Principal will ensure that regular reports are made to the Corporation on progress.

- Operational sub groups, and task and finish groups, to ensure that the key principles of equality and diversity continue to be advanced throughout the organisation with a focus on key aspects of the action plan.

## **We will judge our success each year by:**

- The achievement of the objectives in our annual Single Equality action plan.
- Our progress in improving participation, retention, achievement and success of learners identifying themselves as belonging to different groups.
- Our progress in ensuring a positive experience and environment for all our learners measured through learner perception surveys and the mechanisms within our Learner Voice Strategy.
- Recognition through nationally recognised accreditation frameworks of our work around Equality and Diversity.
- The thoughts and perceptions of our employees, measured by the results of staff perception surveys and outcomes of employee consultation and communication events.
- Our progress in recruiting a diverse workforce.
- Our progress in addressing learner recruitment to non-traditional curriculum areas.



**Lynda Mason, College Principal**

# Our Strategic Aims and Equality Objectives

The Single Equality Scheme is very much a living document and should be read in conjunction with the Equality and Diversity action plan and the college's annual monitoring report. The College is committed to its continued advancement of Equality and Diversity across all areas of college through its commitment to consultation with stakeholders at all levels.

As our Strategic Ambitions and Equality Objectives change annually this change will be reflected in the Single Equality Scheme update.

## Our Strategic Ambitions:

- To be an outstanding College.
- To provide inspirational teaching, learning and support which equips our learners for their future careers.
- To increase participation from our community and to add value economically and socially.
- To be an employer of first choice for talented and innovative staff.
- To maintain financial stability.

Our principles of Equality and Diversity underpin all of our ambitions, and seek to ensure that all our learners, staff and visitors do not experience discrimination. It is our intention to create a positive and inclusive work and study environment where all learners and staff feel valued and respected.

## Our Strategic Ambitions with Key Equality Objectives for 2017/19

In order to meet or in many cases exceed the requirements of the equality duty, the promotion of British values and our own College values, we have 6 main objectives that are aligned to the Colleges Strategic Aims:

- 1. Strategy & Policy**
  - 1.1 Ensure that College meets the requirements of the Equality legislation.
  - 1.1 Ensure all staff are aware of the Single Equality Scheme, Annual Report and Action Plan.
- 2. Teaching and Learning**
  - 2.1 Narrow achievement gaps of key groups as per E & D Annual Report and the SAR.
  - 2.2 Raise learner awareness of E & D & British Values at induction.
  - 2.3 Improve the promotion of E & D, British Values and Prevent Agenda across the curriculum.
  - 2.4 Improve the promotion of E & D and British Values within the wider college student community.
  - 2.5 Challenge inappropriate attitudes and behaviours in students.
  - 2.6 Ensure learner voice processes and activities are representative of the learner population in terms of protected characteristics.

2.7 Ensure E & D and British values are embedded in to each stage of the work based learning process.

### 3. Corporation Board

3.1 Ensure Governors are kept up to date with E & D and British Values

### 4. Training and Development

4.1 Improve staff knowledge and competence in promoting E & D and British Values.

4.2 Improve manager knowledge and competence in E & D and British Values.

### 5. Data Collection

5.1 Improve access to E & D student Data

5.2 Produce annual E & D staff reports relating to the work force profile, length of service, leavers, disciplinary, grievance, capability, recruitment and selection.

5.3 Ensure that complaints and compliments are monitored by E & D themes and any emerging trends identified.

### 6. Environment

6.1 Ensure that College environment and offsite facilities are as safe as possible for all student and staff in the event of an evacuation.

6.2 Improve multi faith provision.



# The Public Sector Equality Duty

## The General Equality Duty:

- We will eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- We will advance the equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic.
- We will foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

## Specific Equality Duties:

- The provision of sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the general duties.
- The provision of evidence to show that analysis of all information has been undertaken.
- Details of the engagement and consultation that has taken place and publish annual equality information.

## Protected Characteristics under the Law:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage / Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy / Maternity
- Race
- Faith, Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

The following principles explain what is essential in the organisation for the Equality duty to be fulfilled when making decisions:

### Knowledge:

All staff should be aware of the requirements of the Equality duty in order to comply. It is essential that all staff understand what is required of them.

### Timeliness:

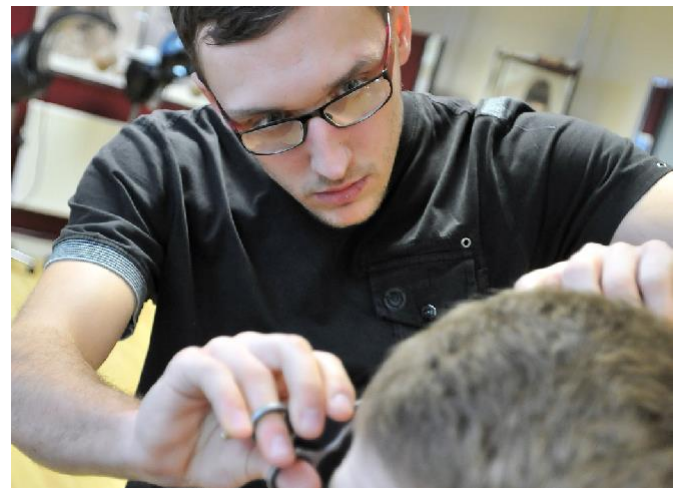
The Equality duty must be complied with before and at the time that a new policy is under consideration, in the development, and in making the final decision.

## Real Consideration:

Consideration of the three aims of the Equality duty must form an integral part of the decision making. We must prove that we have given serious and rigorous consideration and applied 'due regard'. We must also show that the process has influenced the final decision.

## Sufficient Information:

The decision maker must consider what information they have and what further information they need to give a policy proper consideration.



# Purpose of the Single Equality Scheme

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- To provide guidelines for excellence in all matters relating to the treatment of staff and learners and other members of the College community, and in the provision of, and access to, the facilities, benefits and services that the College provides.
- To outline the legislative framework for the general and specific duty, but to bring with that greater transparency to our ambitions in relation to advancing Equality and Diversity in our organisation.
- To set within the context of our strategic ambitions our approach to Equality objectives, and form the basis of our four year action plan.
- To inform our cross college strategies and processes for the elimination of discrimination, and the promotion of an environment in which people feel safe, valued and respected.

## Our Commitments and Aims of the Policy

This policy applies to all students, volunteers and visitors together with those contracted to work at or for the college. We are committed to the active pursuit of an approach to equality and diversity which addresses the need and right of everyone in College to be treated with respect and dignity, in an environment in which a diversity of backgrounds and experience is valued. We are committed to working in an inclusive way within the communities that we serve and to develop a learner community and workforce of the future that reflects East Lancashire's rich diversity.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that in carrying out its activities the college will work proactively to meet its responsibilities and recognise that truly embracing and respecting diversity means more than complying with equalities legislation and the strands protected by it, so we are also committed to working to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination.
- Eliminate bullying, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Celebrate what we have in common and capitalise on our diversity.
- Recognising and taking account of people's differences.
- An inclusive ethos and a culture of mutual respect for all people, staff and students alike.
- Removing barriers and actively encourage participation for all.
- Ensuring a workforce that reflects the local community and learner population.
- Consult with staff and students to ensure that our Single Equality Scheme is fit for purpose and reflects our learners, staff and local community.

## In order to meet our commitments, we will:

- Work to ensure equality of access and resources for our learners and staff.
- Provide an environment which promotes equality of opportunity and is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation of any kind.
- Take seriously any allegations of discrimination and investigate these quickly and sensitively.
- Educate our learners for life and work in a multicultural society.
- Encourage all of our local community to participate in educational activities.
- Work collaboratively with a range of national, regional and community organisations to promote diversity, address inequality and discrimination and ensure inclusion.
- Work towards a staff team that reflects and complements our communities and students.
- Equally respect, appropriately support and fairly reward each employee, learner and user of our services.
- Ensure that all staff and learners understand the significance of equality of opportunity and know how to implement it in their practice.
- Develop systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our process and practice around equality and diversity.
- Comply with all current equalities legislation as an employer and as a provider of education.
- Equality impact assess our College's policies, services, strategies, procedures and functions.

# Valuing Staff and Learners

## Our Learners:

We will provide an outstanding environment for teaching and learning and ensure that we work to ensure equality of access by:

- Using marketing strategies that target underrepresented groups to attract learners from a variety of backgrounds.
- Providing guidance for learners is sensitive to equality and diversity issues.
- Ensuring that the college offers a wide range of programmes that cater for all potential students.
- Delivering a curriculum that meets the needs and reflects the diversity of our student body and community.
- Acting in a robust manner to challenge and eliminate prejudice, bullying or harassment.
- Making reasonable adjustments for learners with particular needs.
- Complying with all equalities related legislation.
- Providing accommodation that creates an accessible, safe and secure environment for all learners.
- Providing a wide range of forums for learners to ensure that their voice is heard and issues raised are acted on.
- Encouraging open and frank discussions around issues that support learning, educational attainment and aspiration.

- Train staff in equality and diversity issues to enable them to carry out their role that reflects the ethos of the organisation.
- Make reasonable adjustment for staff with particular needs.
- Work to develop a workforce that is reflective of our local community.



## Our Staff:

To ensure that we are an employer of first choice for talented and innovative staff the college is committed to investment in its employees. To recruit and retain a motivated workforce which reflects the local community we will:

- Ensure that our HR policies are impact assessed.
- Have a swift, robust response in terms of challenging and eliminating bullying or harassment.
- Ensure that all new staff undertake a robust induction that includes the college equality and diversity ethos.
- Regularly review and report on workforce monitoring for equality and diversity and take action where needed.
- Use a variety of recruitment methods to ensure that we attract and retain staff from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Comply with all equalities related employment legislation.



# Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting

The college will produce an annual monitoring report that will set and monitor performance indicators against protected characteristics, where applicable, to ensure that all learners participate, achieve and progress in line with their peer groups. We will also monitor staff profiles, recruitment and leavers.

## Learners:

We collect, monitor and report on the following:

- Retention, achievement and rates for identified groups to ensure that all groups are progressing. Any under performance will be identified and appropriate interventions put in place to narrow any gaps.

We will be introducing monitoring by protected characteristics of the following from 2015 to ensure that no group is disadvantaged, or indirectly discriminated against:

- Attendance
- Progression
- Learner satisfaction
- Work placements and work related learning
- Complaints
- Disciplinary action
- Assessment appeals

## Staff:

We will collect, monitor and report staff profiles in relation to the following:

- Gender
- Religion and Belief
- Disability
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Sexual Orientation
- Gender Reassignment
- Race
- Age

Alongside this we will ensure that we break down and analyse the following:

- Staff disciplinary by group
- Promotion rates by group
- Grievances by group
- Leavers by group

## How the information will be used:

The information that we collect will enable us to ensure that no group is experiencing inadvertent discrimination, and will show any differences in the way that groups are treated. We are then able to put in place the following:

- Investigate the causes of any difference and identify where action is needed.
- Highlight any possible discrimination and take swift action.
- Compare our data to local and national statistics.
- Ensure that all our facilities remain accessible, diverse and inclusive.





# Roles and Responsibilities

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All staff will comply with the general duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Particular responsibilities in the organisation are listed below. The college recognizes that it also has moral and social responsibilities that go beyond the legislation and it will contribute to the wider process of change through all aspects of its work and practices in order to eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote Equality and Diversity.

## **The Board of Governors:**

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Single Equality Scheme is in place, and that the College meets its legal obligations including the general duty and the specific duty, and maintains an environment where there is a genuine inclusion and respect for diversity.

## **The Principal:**

The Principal is responsible for providing overall direction and leadership in advancing and monitoring the Single Equality Scheme.

## **The HR Manager:**

The HR Manager is responsible for ensuring that the college stays up to date and complies with Equality legislation relating to the college workforce profile. They are also responsible for the collection and analysis of workforce data which is published in the annual report.

## **The Assistant Principal Quality and Learner Experience:**

The Assistant Principal Quality and Learner Experience is responsible for ensuring that the Equality Objectives are embedded with the Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy and monitored through the cross college quality processes.

## **The Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality:**

The Vice Principal is responsible for giving a consistent and high profile lead, and ensuring the Equality Objectives are set in relation to the Strategic Aims, devising and implementing the annual action plan. They are also responsible for ensuring that the action plans are monitored and are embedded within the college's self-assessment and strategic planning processes, and providing reports to the Senior Leadership team and the Board of Governors.

The Vice Principal is also responsible for ensuring curriculum data is recorded and reported effectively to identify any areas of under achievement relating to protected characteristics so that appropriate and effective interventions can be made.

## **The Equality and Diversity steering group:**

The Steering Group is responsible for adopting a proactive and participative approach to the promotion and implementation of Equality and Diversity and ensure that the principles of Equality pervade all of our work. The steering group is supported by sub groups and task and finish groups, that work towards the targets set within the Equality Objectives.

## **All managers:**

All managers are responsible for ensuring that identified objectives, where appropriate, are embedded within their functional or curriculum action plans and for putting the scheme and related policies and procedures into practice. They are also responsible for ensuring that their staff know and understand their responsibilities with regard to this.

## **All teaching and learning staff:**

All Teaching and Learning Staff are responsible for embedding the principles of Equality and Diversity into their professional practice and using naturally occurring opportunities to promote and development our learners understanding of equality and diversity issues.

## **All staff:**

All college staff are responsible for ensuring that equality of opportunity and respect for diversity is at the heart of all we do. They are also responsible for working to eliminate discrimination and promoting the right of every individual to be treated with respect and dignity. They are responsible for keeping up to date with equality training. Contribute to an environment free of fear or intimidation and ensuring that their behavior and actions do not amount to unlawful discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation.

## **All contractors and service providers:**

All contractors and service providers are required to be aware of our Single Equality Scheme and to follow this in any contracts or agreements. Contractors or suppliers should also comply with equal opportunities legislation and if they are unable to demonstrate such compliance they should be excluded from consideration of the contract in question.

## **All Visitors:**

All visitors to the college will be expected to comply with this policy.

# Gender Reassignment

The College takes seriously its duty to address and eliminate the unlawful discrimination and harassment of transsexual people. This includes treating transsexual people less favourably for being absent because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured.

The Equality Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected – so a woman who decides to live as a man but does not undergo any medical procedures would be covered. It is recognised that there may be differences between physical sex and gender identity.



## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to gender reassignment.
- We welcome all people, in all areas, of all gender including those who identify as transgender.
- We will support and protect anyone who seeks to undergo gender reassignment, or who chooses to live full, or part, time as the gender that they identify with.
- We will ensure all staff receive training and understand issues relating to gender reassignment.

## Intended Impact:

- The advancement of gender identity equality.
- Elimination of discrimination based on gender reassignment.
- The fostering of good relations between gender groups.
- Positive progression for all learners.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.

# Disability

The College takes seriously its duty to promote equality of opportunity between disabled and other people; eliminate discrimination and harassment; promote positive attitudes to disabled people; encourage participation by disabled people in public life, and take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on an individual's ability to do normal daily activities.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to disability.
- We welcome all people, in all areas, regardless of any disabilities.
- We will ensure all staff receive training and understand issues relating to disability.
- We will promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and will take steps to take to remove any barriers, even if that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than others.
- We will make reasonable adjustments wherever practicable to support staff with disabilities.
- We will provide support to learners with disabilities to overcome disadvantage and enable them to achieve their potential.
- We will monitor the impact of our success in improving the conditions and success of disabled staff and learners within our College.
- We will involve disabled learners, staff and stakeholders in consultation to improve our policy and practice.

## Intended Impact:

- The advancement of disability equality.
- Elimination of discrimination based on disability.
- Staff and learners to feel confident to declare any disability or learning difficulty and feel supported to do so.
- Retention, success and satisfaction remain high for learners with disabilities.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.



# Age

The College takes seriously its duty to protect those who share the protected characteristic of Age from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Age is defined by reference to a person's age group. It means a person belonging to a particular age group. An age group includes people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages. Where people fall in the same age group they share the protected characteristic of age.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to age.
- We will eliminate any criterion, provision or practice that disadvantages people of a particular age, unless it can be objectively justified.
- We will identify any learner achievement gaps between different age groups and work to close any gaps.
- We will promote positive attitudes towards people of all ages.

## Intended Impact:

- Elimination of discrimination based on age.
- Our curriculum offer, facilities and support services cater for the different needs of our learners.
- Achievement gaps between different age groups of learners are identified and closed.
- Younger employees are given the support they need to grow and progress.
- Older employees are not discriminated against because of their age.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.



# Marriage / Civil Partnership

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership.

Marriage covers any formal union of a man and a woman / man and a man / woman and a woman which is legally recognised in the UK. Civil partnership refers to a registered civil partnership of a same sex couple under the Civil Partnership Act 2004, including those registered outside the UK.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to marriage or civil partnership.
- We will eliminate any criterion, provision or practice that disadvantages people on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership unless it can be objectively justified.
- We will recognise the parity of marriage / civil partnership.

## Intended Impact:

- Elimination of discrimination based on marriage or civil partnership.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.



# Pregnancy & Maternity

The College takes seriously its duty to ensure that women are protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of their pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which they are entitled.

Pregnancy and Maternity covers the condition of being pregnant and subsequently the period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breast-feeding.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to pregnancy and maternity.
- We will promote our commitment to breast-feeding and provide appropriate support and facilities for staff or learners who choose to breast-feed.
- We will provide support to learners who are pregnant or return to study after pregnancy to ensure they are safe and enable them to achieve their potential.
- We will strive to support staff and learners to balance work, study and family life effectively.

## Intended Impact:

- Elimination of discrimination related to pregnancy or maternity.
- Retention, success and satisfaction remain high for learners who are pregnant or with young children.
- A high return to work rate for staff returning from maternity leave.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.



# Race

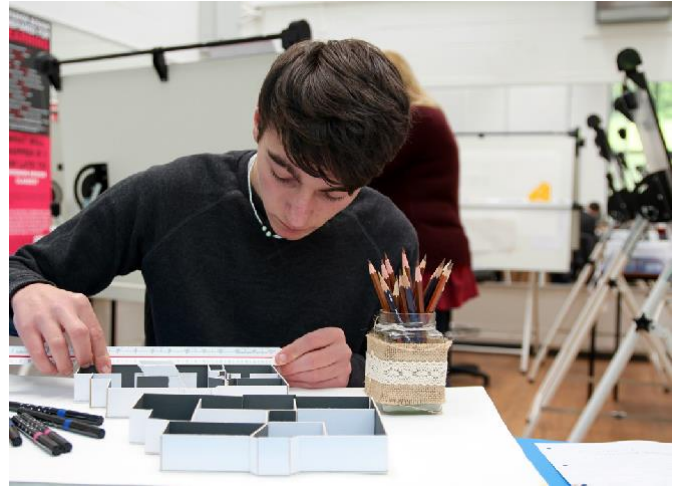
The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups. Race refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to race.
- We welcome all people, in all areas, regardless of their colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins.
- We will promote positive attitudes and raise awareness of different racial groups.
- We will identify areas where BME learners are underrepresented and take positive action in recruitment.
- We will strive to increase the number of staff from BME groups.
- We will eliminate any criterion, provision or practice that disadvantages people of a particular race.
- We will ensure all staff receive training and understand issues relating to race.

## Intended Impact:

- Elimination of racism.
- The fostering of good relations between different racial groups.
- Increase in learners from BME backgrounds in non- traditional vocational areas.
- Achievement gaps between different groups of learners are identified and closed.
- A staff team profile that matches that of our local communities.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.



# Religion or Belief

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate discrimination because of religion or belief.

Religion means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief affects life choices or the way people live their lives for it to be included.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to religion or belief.
- We welcome all people, in all areas, regardless of their religion or belief.
- We will provide facilities and opportunities for religious observance.
- We will facilitate time off / leave for religious festivals.
- We will promote positive attitudes and raise awareness of different religions or beliefs.
- We will eliminate any criterion, provision or practice that disadvantages people of a particular religion or belief.
- We will ensure all staff receive training and understand issues relating to religion and belief.

## Intended Impact:

- Elimination of discrimination related to religion or belief.
- The fostering of good relations between different religious groups.
- Involvement across the whole College in celebrating a range of faith days and festivals.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.





# Sex

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment – including for transsexual people and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women. Sex relates to the gender of an individual – i.e. whether a man or a woman.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of discrimination, harassment or and victimisation relating to sex.
- We will ensure that all employment related policies and practices are fair, transparent and free from gender bias.
- We will eliminate any criterion, provision or practice that disadvantages people of a particular sex.
- We will ensure that we have a well-developed curriculum that positively reflects gender identity, and gender contributions in the workplace.
- We will ensure that our staff recruitment process is free from bias and based on purely on merit. We may take positive action where necessary to abolish stereotyping.
- We will ensure that our recruitment processes for learners encourages participation in a wide range of careers regardless of traditional gender under representation.

## Intended Impact:

- Elimination of sexual harassment or discrimination.
- A staffing profile that provides role models for learners of their own gender irrespective of curriculum area or traditional under representation.
- A pay and recognition structure which prevents pay gaps between genders.
- Achievement gaps between learners of different genders are identified and closed.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.



# Sexual Orientation

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of someone's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation. This includes discrimination against someone because of their association with others who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Sexual orientation relates to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

## Our Commitment:

- We will be clear that we will not tolerate any form of homophobic behaviour.
- We welcome all people, in all areas, regardless of their sexual orientation.
- We will not make assumptions that partners of staff or learners are of a different sex.
- We will make every effort to ensure that workplace benefits will apply equally to same-sex partners as to different sex partners.
- We will provide support to staff or students who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual whilst understanding and maintaining their right to privacy and confidentiality.
- We will strive to be an organisation where the lesbian, gay and bisexual community is visible and valued.
- We will develop staff and learners to be more informed about sexual orientation issues.

## Intended Impact:

- Elimination of discrimination related to sexual orientation.
- An organisation where staff and learners feel confident and able to be open about their sexuality.
- A tolerant, inclusive environment in which to work and learn in which diversity is embraced.



## Implementation of the Policy

The successful implementation of this policy relies on the mainstreaming of Equality and Diversity issues within the college's strategic plan, which in turn, is supported by operational plans of its directorates, curriculum centres and support areas.

The college has also developed additional policies and procedures to support specific areas of Equality and Diversity such as bullying and harassment.

The college will assess the impact of this policy on staff and students to ensure it does not have an adverse impact for different groups of people, primarily in terms of race, gender and disability, as well as regarding age, religion/belief and sexual orientation.

## Breach of the Policy

The college will take seriously any instances or alleged incidents of non-adherence to the Equality and Diversity policy by students, staff or visitors. Such instances or allegations will be investigated and where appropriate will be considered under the relevant disciplinary procedure for staff or students.

With regard to any breach of the policy by visitors, the college will take appropriate action in relation to the nature of the incident.

## Complaints

Any complaint will be taken seriously and dealt with in a timely and sensitive manner as indicated in the How We Are Performing procedure (complaints, compliments and suggestions) and in accordance with the relevant grievance and disciplinary procedures.

## Review

This scheme will be reviewed bi-annually by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality.





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