

## **Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure**

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## 1. Scope and Purpose

Wiltshire College recognises and encourages the valuable and enriching contribution of all who work and learn within the College and the rights of all individuals who come into contact with the College, such as prospective students, job applicants, visitors and other stakeholders.

- 1.1 The College will not discriminate because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation. It will not discriminate because of any other irrelevant factor and will build a culture that values meritocracy, openness, fairness and transparency.
- 1.2 The policy is applicable to all students, employees, clients, communities, suppliers and contractors, whether permanent or temporary. The policy applies to all processes relating to teaching and learning, and employment.
- 1.3 The policy will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in the law, demographics and internal requirements.
- 1.4 The publication of an Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure enables the College to send out a strong message of commitment, both internally and externally. Although the policy is a fundamental part of the College's equality and diversity strategy, it will be brought to life only if it is reinforced by a focused and structured action plan.
- 1.5 All College students, staff and stakeholders will be made aware of Wiltshire College's Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure, through the Student Handbook, student, staff and governor induction programmes and visitor arrangements.
- 1.6 The Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure of Wiltshire College is underpinned by principles to which all College staff, students and stakeholders should adhere, namely:
  - The creation and maintenance of an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff and students are recognised and valued.
  - That successful implementation of the Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure is the responsibility of all College staff, students and stakeholders.
  - All students, staff and other stakeholders of the College will be treated with fairness, respect and sensitivity.
  - The creation and maintenance of a working and learning environment where all will have the opportunity to fully participate in order to achieve their full potential in a climate free from discrimination, bullying or harassment.
  - Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all students and staff.
  - This policy is fully supported by Senior Managers and has been approved by the Governing Body of the College.
- 1.7 The College actively promotes British Values through tutorial and classroom delivery using the key themes: democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and respect and tolerance.

## **2. Accountability**

2.1 The Governors are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of and take ownership of the College's responsibilities as outlined in this policy and equality legislation.
- They review College equality and diversity information and consider this with regards to setting targets for the College.
- They consider the diversity of the Corporation and how this compares to the student population.
- Before any major strategic decisions are made, the Corporation considers equality issues.

2.2 The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that:

- The College's Strategic Plan encompasses our commitment to equality of Opportunity and action plans deliver equality.
- The quality improvement plan has equality at its core.
- The College recruits and retains an inclusive and diverse workforce, which is appropriately developed to ensure individuals have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

2.3 The College Management Team is responsible for ensuring that:

- They promote this policy amongst their staff and ensure compliance.
- Actions within their departments contribute towards the College meeting its Public Sector Duties.
- All programmes of learning offered, will be regularly reviewed through the SAR and curriculum planning processes. They will examine how far they meet the needs of all students with particular reference to equality of opportunity.
- Students' participation, attendance and success is monitored throughout the year and early remedial action is taken.
- They take appropriate action where necessary to assist minority or under-represented groups to increase participation, retention and achievement tailored to any patterns within curriculum areas (e.g. gender bias).
- Teaching observation reports include an evaluation of how successfully equality and diversity is embedded and advanced.
- Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources of staff within their areas are reviewed against the commitments within this policy and take action to make improvements or adjustments accordingly.
- Business Support areas analyse their service and resources against the commitments within this policy and take action to make improvements or adjustments accordingly, accounting for equality in their SAR.

### **3. Process/ Procedure**

#### **3.1 Audit**

3.1.1 The College will:

- Undertake a full audit in relation to policies and procedures, practice of policy and perception of policy and process;
- Obtain metrics and compare them with sector and best practice organisations; and

3.1.2 Student and staff opinion is sort and considered in review of the policy.

#### **3.2 Policy Development**

3.2.1 The College will:

- Benchmark existing policy statements from other Colleges and advisory groups;
- Develop human resources and other policies (outlining vision, scope, responsibility, accountability and measurements); and
- Cascade new policies with SMT endorsement through staff briefings.

3.2.2 Equality impact assessments are conducted for major decisions and changes and to ensure that all policies have been written and maintained so that their outcomes are fair and non-discriminatory.

#### **3.3 Training and Education**

3.3.1 The College will:

- Consult key stakeholders and players on the learning requirements;
- Evaluate training and secure budget for training design and delivery;
- Integrate diversity into mainstream training and development programmes;
- Establish education programmes for all staff (including programmes that move from awareness to behavioural change); and
- Integrate diversity competencies into development programmes and assessment and selection processes.

3.3.2 Access to the Curriculum and College:

- Integrate diversity competencies into development programmes and assessment and selection processes.
- Course programmes, syllabuses and resources are regularly examined to ensure they do not discriminate, directly or indirectly, against any group.
- Syllabuses and resources include positive acknowledgement of the contributions made to society by a diversity of cultures.
- Courses are available to as wide a range of students as possible by enhanced flexibility in both delivery and timing.
- After due process of assessment of need, Learning Support is made available to all students requiring it.
- Ways of modifying curriculum delivery to allow access to classes for individuals with learning difficulties and/or disabilities continue to be sought.

- Assistive technologies will continue to be developed and deployed to assist and enhance the participation of students with disabilities and impairments in their use of learning opportunities.
- Procedures for accreditation and assessment will, wherever practicable, be flexible and responsive to the needs of the whole range of students who attend the College.
- The College supports the entitlement, for the whole College community, to information, guidance and wellbeing, which will enable individuals to manage their personal development.
- By adapting and modifying the environment and facilities, the College will strive to make all groups feel welcome.
- Offensive material of a discriminatory nature will not be displayed in any part of the College.
- Wherever possible, a facility at each of the main College centres will be made available to meet religious needs.
- The College will comply with the requirements of all current legislation pertaining to the access rights of people with mobility problems to ensure reasonable adjustments are made.

### **3.4 Communication and Consultation**

#### **3.4.1 The College will:**

- Establish key lines of communication across the College through consultation with key stakeholders;
- Undertake an audit of existing communications channels so that compliance and inclusiveness are assured;
- Ensure that communication imagery and graphics are inclusive, and reflect and reinforce the words within the documentation;
- Distribute a top-level communications plan to senior management for team briefings, and develop "reporting back" communication lines to ensure feedback; and,
- Ensure that mainstream communications reinforce the inclusive messages and become mainstreamed into day-to-day processes.

### **3.5 Students**

#### **3.5.1 Students are responsible for ensuring that:**

- Ensure that mainstream communications reinforce the inclusive messages and become mainstreamed into day-to-day processes.
- They attend induction, enrichment and tutorial activities to expand their knowledge of equality and diversity.
- Their coursework reflects sensitivity to issues of equality and diversity and does not include any discriminatory content.
- They do not use any College equipment or resources to produce or research material in such a way that could be considered.
- Discriminatory or in opposition to the commitments within this policy.
- They refer cases of inappropriate behaviour by any staff, visitors or fellow students to a member of staff, act as good role models to peers and challenge inappropriate behaviour where they are confident in so doing.

#### **3.5.2 The Student Complaints Procedure is available for all students to report any concerns. The complaints will be documented, and the complainant will receive a response in accordance with the Complaints Procedure. Any complaints relating to equality and**

diversity are monitored separately and referred to the equality and diversity group for consideration.

### **3.6 Staff**

3.6.1 Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- They refer cases of inappropriate behaviour by any staff, visitors or fellow students to a member of staff, act as good role models to peers and challenge inappropriate behaviour where they are confident in so doing.
- They are aware of this policy and their duties in relation to all of the protected characteristics and the College's Public Sector Duties under the Equality Act.
- They demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity and that they attend and complete staff training to help their understanding of the issues in this area.
- Whatever their role, they challenge, within their ability, inappropriate behaviour of any person wherever it might occur within the College or during its activities.
- Visitors and contractors are made aware of and comply with the policy.
- They conduct themselves throughout their employment in a way that positively supports this policy and protects the College's reputation.
- Allow students the opportunity to comment on equality and diversity issues.

3.6.2 All employees are responsible for the promotion and advancement of this policy. Behaviour, actions or words that transgress the policy will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in line with the College's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

3.6.3 Discussions relating to fair and inclusive practices will form an integral part of performance development reviews throughout the year.

3.6.4 All staff will be required to attend development opportunities to ensure that they are aware of and adhere to the College's Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure.

3.6.5 The College will pursue non-discriminatory practices relating to pay and conditions.

3.6.6 All staff will have access to induction, regular performance development reviews, training and development reviews and appropriate staff development in equality and diversity, to equip staff to recognise and embed diversity and to challenge any form of discrimination.

3.6.7 Any employee may use the grievance procedure to complain about discriminatory conduct. If the matter relates to harassment based on disability, then the grievance may be raised in line with the Dignity at Work Policy or directly with the Assistant Principal HR. The College wishes to ensure that staff feel able to raise such grievances and no individual will be penalised for raising such a grievance, unless it is untrue and made in bad faith.

3.6.8 Any employee who harasses any other employee on the grounds of any of the protected will be subject to the Discipline Policy and Procedure. In serious cases, such behaviour will be deemed to constitute gross misconduct and as such could result in dismissal.

3.6.7 Recruitment

3.6.7.1 Recruitment advertisements will indicate the College is an equal opportunity employer and will include the Disability Confident Scheme.

3.6.7.2 Neither recruitment advertisements nor post details will include conditions or requirements, which have an adverse impact in relation to the protected characteristics. Interview applicants will not be asked questions, which may be considered discriminatory, and members of the interview panel will have received specific equality and diversity training for this role

3.6.7.3 Job applicants' 'Equality of Opportunity' monitoring information will be kept separate from application forms and will remain anonymous. The interview panel will not be provided with this information.

3.6.7.4 All staff will be asked to complete a form denoting their protected characteristics. In addition, staff will be invited to disclose sexual orientation and their Religion and Belief. This information will be used for monitoring the effectiveness of policy, including the promotion of race equality, and, as above, will remain anonymous.

3.6.7.5 Short-listing of applicants and selection will be made against specified criteria. Those shortlisting and interviewing will indicate reasons for decisions against such specified criteria.

### **3.7 Resources**

3.7.1 The College will:

- Establish formal reporting lines for monitoring progress against targets and objectives;
- Select and establish a E&D working group with representatives from across all parts of the organisation;
- Secure financial sign-off from the Deputy Principal, corporate resources? to enable related activities to be undertaken (for example reasonable adjustments to comply with the Equality Act 2010, and communication and training programmes).

### **3.8 Measurement**

3.8.1 A set of Equality Objectives will be agreed and an action plan drawn up to help ensure that these are achieved.

3.8.2 The College will publish a College Equality Report on our website, which will summarise the outcomes of the monitoring activities, highlight progress towards the achievement of the objectives and report on the College's overall performance concerning equality and diversity.

### **3.9 External Profile**

3.9.1 The image the College projects of itself in its promotional material, advertising and public relations activity, sends messages about the College's approach to equality and diversity

3.9.2 College publicity will be regularly reviewed to ensure that:

- i) It is non-discriminatory to any group or individual.

- ii) Individuals with a range of needs provide it in hard copy and electronic forms to ensure that information is widely available and accessible.
- iii) It gives a positive image of a place, which welcomes all for education and training.
- iv) Where groups might be under-represented applications from members of disadvantaged/ underrepresented groups are actively encouraged.
- v) Every effort will be made to ensure that appropriate publicity reaches all groups in the community, enabling the widest possible recruitment.
- vi) All College users and potential College users should be made aware of:
  - o study support;
  - o support for child care;
  - o the services available within the College to support Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities;
  - o the College counselling and guidance services; v) the availability of careers guidance;
  - o financial support; and,
  - o the admissions process.

#### **4. Implementation**

- 4.1 The Governing Body carries the ultimate responsibility, under the law, for ensuring that the College meets the requirements of equality legislation. The authority for this is delegated to the Principal who in turn has designated the Assistant Principal for Curriculum and Campus to take the strategic lead for championing equality, diversity and inclusion. This role is shared with the Assistant Principal of Human Resources concerning the College as an employer. However, all staff have the responsibility to uphold the policy, comply with the law and support the College in fulfilling its duties and commitments.

#### **5. Associated Documents**

Equality Act 2010  
 Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001  
 Protection from Harassment Act 1997  
 Employment Rights Act 1996  
 Employment Relations Act 1999  
 Safeguarding Policy and Procedure  
 Admissions Policy  
 Information, Advice & Guidance Policy  
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 Staff Disciplinary Policy and Procedure  
 Staff Grievance Policy and Procedure  
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 Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure  
 College Complaints Procedure

#### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

Wiltshire College strives to ensure equality of opportunity for all students, local people and the workforce. As an employer and a provider of education, the College aims to ensure that none are placed at a disadvantage as a result of its policies and procedures. It is intended that this policy is fair to all. Where any part could potentially

lead to unequal outcomes, the policy then justifies why this is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.