

Policy Title: Equal Opportunities and Celebrating Diversity
Policy and Procedure

Created By: Director of Student Services

Approved By: Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality

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Responsible Manager: Student Services and Safeguarding Manager

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Related Policies: Gender Reassignment Policy and Procedure
Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

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1. Introduction and Scope

This policy gives a general outline of the College's intentions and actions in relation to Equality and Diversity. Detail of the College's work on Equality and Diversity is published on the College website. It applies to all who work and study in the College, governors, applicants, visitors and all those involved in college activities.

2. Policy Objectives

This policy outlines our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, and details the actions taken to ensure the College's compliance, providing guidance on individual and organizational rights and responsibilities so that we comply with our legal duties and good practice is promoted.

3. Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people with protected characteristics from discrimination, replacing previous laws. The Public Sector Equality Duty means that public bodies have to consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The Specific Duties require public bodies to publish information showing compliance with the Equality Duty annually and to set and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

The protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act and Public Duty are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership (but only in respect of eliminating unlawful discrimination)
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

OFSTED will assess the extent to which the College complies with the Equality Act 2010 during inspection.

4. The New College Swindon Environment

The College provides accessible buildings, with additional support services and resources to support students with disabilities, learning differences or difficulties and other conditions. In the event of New College Swindon or partner organisations using premises which are not fully accessible for disabled people, individual needs will be assessed and met where possible or alternative provision will be offered.

5. The New College Swindon Culture

Policies, procedures and codes of conduct in the college are in place to ensure personal safety and promote a respectful, harmonious working and study environment for all. Staff and student opinion, canvassed through surveys and group discussions, confirms that the college succeeds in this aim.

Students and staff are informed of College standards and what to do if they encounter problems. Records of complaints, safeguarding incidents, disciplinary events and staff grievances are reviewed so that equality related issues can be identified. Few incidents of equality related discrimination or harassment are reported. Disciplinary measures are enforced where required.

Managers are required to consider the Equality Impact of policies and procedures. Student Representatives are encouraged to take an active interest in this area.

6. Marketing, Publicity and Public Engagement

New College Swindon marketing initiatives, publicity materials, student recruitment, and public engagement activities are designed to be inclusive, accessible and to encourage participation from all. Particular efforts are made to recruit students who are underrepresented in education and those who have had limited opportunities for educational achievement.

7. Education and Training Provision

Equality and diversity are embedded into teaching and learning and evidenced in course documentation, learning observations and student opinion surveys. The college promotes teaching techniques and resources which encourage inclusive learning, advance equality of opportunity, and recognise diversity. All students are made aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to equality during their induction.

Student participation, achievement and progression rates are analysed by age, gender, ethnicity, and disability status, and compared with local and national information in order to inform recruitment and narrow achievement gaps between different groups.

8. Employment

Staff recruitment and selection procedures, agreed by the Principalship and shared with trades unions, follow best practice to ensure equality of opportunity. New College Swindon is registered with the government's Disability Confident Employer scheme which promotes the recruitment and retention of disabled staff. Analysis is undertaken of the age, gender, ethnicity and disability status of applicants, successful candidates and the workforce as a whole in order to identify underrepresentation.

Decisions on recruitment, selection, pay, training, promotion and termination of employment are based solely on objective and job related criteria. Gender pay gaps are identified and plans are in place to eliminate them.

Employees are required to undertake Equality and Diversity awareness training at induction and equality of opportunity is included in the staff performance review system.

9. Recruitment of Ex-Offenders

Information on the processes of recruitment of ex-offenders is available from the College's 'New College Employment of Ex-offenders' policy, which is included as an attachment on all job adverts for job applicants to review.

10. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Committee (EDISC)

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Committee (EDISC) is made up of staff representatives from across the college. The group review current data and practices and make recommendations. They also recruit and support the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champions.

11. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champions

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Champions are volunteers who lead on a particular area of EDI. They drive forward an action plan to break down barrier and celebrate differences for their chosen area. They are supported by, and report to EDISC.

12. Monitoring and Reporting

The results of equality data analysis and monitoring are used to inform decision making and set objectives throughout the college, included in the college's annual Self Assessment Report and Quality Improvement Plan, and reported to Senior Managers. As required under the Equality Act 2010, information is published annually on the college website to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

13. Responsibilities

The Principal has overall responsibility for the operation of this policy, on behalf of the Corporation. The Head of Human Resources is responsible for all aspects of the employment relationship. All Managers must implement this policy and ensure that employees and contractors for whom they are responsible understand and implement the policy. All employees have personal responsibility for the practical application of the policy.

14. Version Control

Document Location

*This document if printed can only be considered up to date on the day that it was printed.
For a current version of this document please see the Central Storage Library.*

Revision History

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Date of next Revision: Mar 2023

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
1.0	Dec 2008	Equality and Diversity Coordinator	Document Created
1.1	Mar 2012	Equality and Diversity Coordinator	Content Check and Update
1.2	Dec 2013	Equality and Diversity Coordinator	Content Check and Update
1.3	Jun 2014	Equality and Diversity Coordinator	Content Check and Update
1.4	Nov 2016	Equality and Diversity Coordinator	Content Check and Update
1.5	Oct 2017	Equality and Diversity Coordinator	Content Check and Update
1.6	Jan 2020	Equality and Diversity Coordinator	Content Check and Update
1.7	Mar 2022	Student Services and Safeguarding Manager	Content Check and Update
1.8	Mar 2022	Office Manager to the Principal	Template Update and proof read

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Committee/Principalship	Date
Principal and CEO	March 2022

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Title/External Organisation/All Staff	Date of Issue	Version
All Staff	Mar 2022	1.8