

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy



Reference No

Department/Area: Student Services

Approved by: Corporation **On:**

Issued by: VP: Strategic Partnerships and Professional Services

Responsibility: VP: Strategic Partnerships and Professional Services

Next Review Date: 31st July 2018

The **purpose** of this policy is to:

- To promote equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination within the College community, and to give guidance to staff, student and apprentices on what it means to have due regard for the Public Sector Equality Duty

The **scope** of this policy is:

- All College staff, students and apprentices

Related documents:

- All other College policies and procedures

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Policy Statement

Central Bedfordshire College celebrates and values the diversity of its students, apprentices and employees and is committed to equality of opportunity for all. The College is committed to achieving a working environment which provides equality of opportunity and freedom from unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation. This Policy aims to remove unfair and discriminatory practices within the College and to encourage full contribution from its diverse community. The College is committed to actively opposing all forms of discrimination.

The College also aims to provide a service that does not discriminate against its students, apprentices and customers in the means by which they can access the services supplied by the College. The College believes that all employees and College users are entitled to be treated with respect and dignity. Subject to the overriding consideration of protecting children and vulnerable people, we will make every effort to prevent unfair discrimination against those with criminal records.

The Overall Aim of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

- To have due regard for the three Public Sector Equality Duties, and to stop all forms of unlawful discrimination and in line with the Equality Act 2010

The Objectives of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy

- To have due regard of the need to promote the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnicity, colour or nationality), religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships
- To have due regard of the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and any other unlawful conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- To have due regard of the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- To have due regard of the need to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- To ensure that recruitment, promotion, training, development, assessment, benefits, pay, terms and conditions of employment, redundancy and dismissals are determined on the basis of capability, qualifications, experience, skills and productivity.

Designated Officer

Name: Lita Bird
Position: Head of Human Resources
Telephone Number: 01582 477776 ext 272

Definition of Discrimination

Discrimination is unequal or differential treatment which leads to one person being treated more or less favourably than others are, or would be, treated in the same or similar circumstances on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation. Discrimination may be direct or indirect, and includes discrimination by perception and association.

Types of Discrimination

Direct Discrimination

This occurs when a person or a policy intentionally treats a person less favourably than another on the grounds of race, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

Indirect Discrimination

This is the application of a policy, criterion or practice which the College applies to all employees, students and apprentices, but which is such that:

- It is detrimental to a considerably larger proportion of people from the group than that of the person the College is applying it to represents
- The College cannot justify the need for the application of the policy on a neutral basis
- The person to whom the College is applying it suffers detriment from the application of the policy.

Harassment

This occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating their dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

Victimisation

This occurs when a person is treated less favourably because they have brought or intend to bring proceedings or they have given or intend to give evidence.

The Nine Protected Characteristics

The College acknowledges the following nine protected characteristics, and has due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination with regard to the protected characteristics, and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it:

Age

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their age. This applies to people of all ages. It does not currently apply to the calculation of redundancy payments.

Disability and Learning Difficulty

It is not permissible to treat a disabled person less favourably than a non-disabled person. Reasonable adjustments must be made to give the disabled person as much access to any services and ability to be employed, trained, or promoted as a non-disabled person.

Gender Re-assignment

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the ground of gender re-assignment. This applies to men, women and those undergoing or intending to undergo gender reassignment.

Pregnancy and Maternity

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because they are pregnant or have young children.

Race

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of the culture they subscribe to, their race, the colour of their skin, their nationality or their ethnic origin.

Religion or Belief

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their religious beliefs, their religion or their lack of any religion or belief.

Sex

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of sex. Sexual harassment of men and women can be found to constitute sex discrimination.

Sexual Orientation

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably because of their sexual orientation.

Marriage and Civil Partnerships

It is not permissible to treat a person less favourably on the grounds of marital status, civil partnerships or other personal arrangements.

Staff Recruitment, Training and Development

Positive Action in Recruitment

Under the Equality Act 2010, positive action in recruitment and promotion applies as of 6 April 2011. 'Positive action' means the steps that the College can take to encourage people from groups with different needs or with a past record of disadvantage or low participation, to apply for positions within the organisation.

If the College chooses to utilise positive action in recruitment, this will not be used to treat people with a protected characteristic more favourably, it will be used only in tie-break situations, when there are two candidates of equal merit applying for the same position.

Reasonable Adjustments

The College has a duty to make reasonable adjustments to facilitate the employment of a disabled person. These may include:

- Making adjustments to premises
- Re-allocating some or all of a disabled employee's duties
- Transferring a disabled employee to a role better suited to their disability
- Relocating a disabled employee to a more suitable office
- Giving a disabled employee time off work for medical treatment or rehabilitation
- Providing training or mentoring for a disabled employee
- Supplying or modifying equipment, instruction and training manuals for disabled employees
- Or any other adjustments that the College considers reasonable and necessary provided such adjustments are within the financial means of the College. If an employee has a disability and feels that any such adjustments could be made by the College, they should contact the Designated Officer.

Responsibility for the Implementation of this Policy

The Principal and Governors have lead responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy.

All employees, College users, subcontractors and agents of the College are required to act in a way that does not subject any other employees or College user to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation on the grounds of their race, sex, pregnancy or maternity, marital or civil partnership status, gender reassignment, disability, religion or beliefs, age or sexual orientation.

The Vice Principal with cross-college responsibilities for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion has responsibility for the strategic and operational development of this policy through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee; the Vice Principal is also responsible for monitoring and regularly assessing how effectively it is being implemented across the College. The co-operation of all employees and College users is essential for the success of the policy.

As part of the implementation of the policy, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion awareness will be an essential part of staff induction, in-service training and on-going development. Employees may be held independently and individually liable for their discriminatory acts by the College and in some circumstances an Employment Tribunal may order them to pay compensation to the person who has suffered as a result of discriminatory acts. The College takes responsibility for achieving the objectives of the Policy, and endeavours to ensure compliance with relevant Legislation and Codes of Practice.

Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all members of staff to ensure that

- The College values and norms are upheld as custom and practice in their everyday work
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion are promoted positively through the curriculum and through College services
- Discriminatory behaviour is challenged or reported

It is the responsibility of the Estates Manager to ensure that

- All College sites enable access for all staff and students
- All reasonable adjustments are made to enable access for all staff, students and apprentices

It is the responsibility of the Head of IT Services that

- All members of the College community have access to the College Intranet and email
- All staff, students and apprentices who attend College are able to access IT facilities
- All reasonable adjustments are made to IT equipment where necessary to accommodate staff, students and apprentices who have a disability or learning difficulty

It is the responsibility of the Vice Principal to ensure that

- EDI training is provided for all College staff
- All new members of staff are inducted into the College's EDI Policy
- EDI is systematically embedded in the College curriculum and the work of professional services
- Teaching and learning promote equality, diversity and inclusion

It is the responsibility of the Head of MIS to ensure that

- EDI data is published and provided to the College community.

Celebrating Diversity

The College will form each academic year a calendar to celebrate the diversity of its staff, students and apprentices. The calendar will be a consultative piece of work that draws on the ideas, interests and commitment of the College community. Events will include the celebration of: Eid, Devali, Christmas, Chinese New Year Human Rights Day, LGBT Month, International Women's Day and Refugee Day.

Acting on Discriminatory Behaviour

In the event that an employee is the subject or perpetrator of, or witness to, discriminatory behaviour, please refer this to the Designated Officer. In the event that a College user is the subject or perpetrator of, or witness to, discriminatory behaviour, please refer to this to a Learning Area Manager or Head of Student Services.

College Users, Recruitment, Learning and Development

Marketing and Access to Learning

- College publicity and learner recruitment procedures will be designed to encourage applications from all sections of the community and from all levels of ability.
- The College will make a determined effort to widen participation through partnerships and involvement with local community groups.
- The College will ensure that admission procedures are user friendly and avoid unnecessary barriers to access for intending learners.
- The College will continue to identify and respond to learning needs within the community and will encourage widening participation from under represented, disadvantaged or excluded groups.
- Equal opportunities data will be collected, analysed and used to inform the planning and decision-making process of our Admissions and Marketing policies.

The Learning Environment

- The College is committed to the development of learning environments that are welcoming and safe for all learners.
- The College will continue to develop its facilities and accommodation to improve access for people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Teaching and Learning

- Curriculum teams will ensure that course delivery is free from bias, stereotyping and discrimination and supports inclusion in all aspects of delivery.
- Curriculum teams and tutorial staff will encourage students and apprentices to explore issues of equal opportunities and diversity where such an opportunity exists within the curriculum.
- Raising awareness of equality, diversity and inclusion issues will be a part of the general induction programme for new students and apprentices.
- When it's available, the College will ensure that students and apprentices with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate additional support to meet individual needs.
- Curriculum teams will regularly review course design and delivery to meet various learning needs, learning styles and to improve access to learning.
- The College will ensure that the views and perceptions of students and apprentices are included in the process of curriculum review, self-assessment and curriculum development

Review

The policy will be assessed using student and staff EDI data, through staff and student surveys, and through staff and student compliments and complaints.

This policy should not be read in isolation, but cross referenced with all associated policies and procedures. The College reserves the right to amend and update the Policy at any time