

Equality and Diversity Policy

Version control	
Version	Final Version
Author	Director CEO's Office/Assistant Principal: Employer and Student Experience
Date of origin	September 2015
Review Requirements	Annually
Date of review	September 2020
Date of next review	September 2021
Approval Body	Equalities, Strategic Review Group
Date of Approval	September 2020
Document available	Staff Intranet

This policy and procedure is subject to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation, Disability, Socio-economic Disadvantage

1. Policy Statement

Milton Keynes College recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and is committed to the promotion and advancement of equality and diversity for its staff and students. We believe in the power of difference and we aim to provide a learning and working environment which values individuals equally and does not disadvantage individuals on any grounds including age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex(gender) and sexual orientation.

Definitions:

The Equality Act 2010 (the 'act') legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society including education. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, making the law easier to understand strengthening protection in some situations. It sets out the different ways in which it is unlawful to treat someone.

The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender/gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Direct Discrimination is defined as being where a person discriminates against another because of a protected characteristic or treats a person less favourably than they would others because of the protected characteristic.

Indirect Discrimination is defined as being where a person discriminates against another in that they apply a criterion or practice which is discriminatory in relation to a relevant protected characteristic.

2. Responsibilities

ALL STAFF AND STUDENTS

Staff and students are responsible for their own conduct and should ensure that their behaviour does not make any other person feel uncomfortable. Every member of staff and every student have a responsibility to question their own prejudices and assumptions. It is the duty of all staff and students to avoid unfair discriminatory practices, to challenge them in others and to accept personal responsibility for abiding by this policy.

THE CORPORATION

The College Governors are responsible for ensuring that the College complies with the Equality Act 2010. The Corporation members are responsible for setting the policy framework for the College and for monitoring the College delivery against the policy.

THE GROUP PRINCIPAL AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Group Principal and Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for the operation of the Policy. The Group Principal is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the College's Single Equality Scheme Action Plan. The Group Principal and Chief Executive may nominate a member of the Senior Leadership Team to support the operation and implementation of the Policy

EQUALITIES STRATEGIC REVIEW GROUP

The key responsibilities of the Equalities Strategic Review Group which is chaired by the Principal and Chief Executive and attended by members of the Senior Leadership Team, representatives from Schools and Business Partner areas are:

- Setting the College's actions for advancing equality and diversity on an annual basis
- Reviewing progress against these actions on a termly basis
- Receiving assurance that the College is meeting its public sector duties
- Receiving reports and updates, including analyses of student participation and success measures, and staff demographics
- Ensure policies, processes and projects have been assessed to advance equality and diversity
- Keeping up to date on changes to the law and best practice in this area.
- Ensure that an annual Equality and Diversity Report is presented to the Governing Body.

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Designated members of the Senior Leadership Team are responsible for providing and interpreting student data and providing the data to the Equalities Strategic Review Group and to Assistant Principals for monitoring purposes.

These roles also have overall responsibility for the implementation of strategies which will contribute to equality and diversity for students, for example through the cross

college events calendar and key elements of the personal development entitlement that are delivered within the curriculum.

CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER

The Chief People Officer has overall responsibility for monitoring and interpreting employment data and for staff development related to Equality and Diversity

LINE MANAGERS

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff have completed the mandatory Equality and Diversity training. They are also responsible for ensuring their staff understand equality and diversity issues and how to report any perceived discrimination or unfair treatment. They are also responsible for allocating development opportunities for their staff on a fair, objective basis based on individuals' and College needs. In addition, they are responsible for ensuring their part-time staff are not disadvantaged in any way and that complaints of discrimination or offensive behaviour are dealt with promptly.

All Managers are responsible for ensuring pro-active dialogue about equality opportunities issues and practice with partner organisations, contractors, customers, students and employers providing work experience to students.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

External partners with which the College work must comply with this policy and share the College's commitment to it. Before any agreements are drawn up the College will ensure that external partners are made aware of the requirements and that appropriate policies and procedures regarding equality and diversity are in place.

VISITORS, CONTRACTORS AND SUB-CONTRACTORS

Visitors, contractors and sub-contractors must comply with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.

3. STATUTORY DUTIES

The College will abide by its statutory duty for both students and staff, in line with stated duties under the Equality Act 2010:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different groups

4. Students

RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS

The College will ensure that:

- Recruitment and publicity materials are designed in a range of formats to ensure they are free from bias and stereotypes, and encourage applicants from all groups in the community
- Applicants for courses are considered on the basis of their ability to meet the entry criteria, as specified in the course information
- Applicants are not treated less favourably because of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation
- Applicants are interviewed on the basis of their academic ability and/or potential to succeed
- Application and enrolment procedures give students the opportunity to identify any additional learning support available for their needs
- Where assessment(s) form part of the application process for a particular course, all applicants will take the same assessment(s), with adjustments being made for identified additional learning needs
- New students are made aware of the Equality and Diversity Policy and behaviour expected of them during induction, the information on the Student Moodle and through the tutorial programme
- Links with local community groups and relevant organisations are established

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The College will ensure that:

- All aspects of teaching are sensitive to, and promote, equality and diversity, including language used, delivery methods and activities
- Teaching and learning materials and delivery methods avoid stereotypes and bias, and promote the rich cultural diversity of the local community

- Resources are available in formats appropriate to the needs of individual students, including the use of specialist equipment where appropriate
- There is an ethos and learning environment which is inclusive and enables students and staff to feel comfortable and valued as individuals.

SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The College will:

- Provide support services and facilities that enable all students to participate fully in college life. This support will include a Personal Development curriculum, additional learning support to enable students to access work experience, English and maths where appropriate.
- Provide additional learning support for example for those students with learning difficulties, disabilities and/or challenges with their mental health
- Provide bursary and welfare advice
- Counselling (referrals made to external agencies to provide long term support where necessary)
- Social and catering facilities
- Prayer facilities
- Ensure that students and staff are aware of the support that is available

5. Staff

STAFF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The College will:

- Ensure that a Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures is in place and adheres to the Equality Act 2010
- Ensure that all vacancies have person specifications identifying the essential and desirable levels of qualifications, skills and experience required for the job
- Ensure that all jobs are advertised appropriately to attract applicants who meet the person specification
- Ensure that applicants are interviewed solely on the basis of their suitability for the job and their ability to meet the person specification.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The College will:

- Through regular 1:1 meetings with line managers, the training and development needs of all staff will be identified and supported.

- Make available a range of training opportunities to meet identified needs
- Ensure that equality and diversity training forms a mandatory part of all staff induction programmes

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

The College will:

- Make reasonable adjustments to premises or working arrangements to ensure that employees are not disadvantaged on the grounds of any protected characteristic.

6. HARASSMENT, VICTIMISATION AND DISCRIMINATION

The College will not tolerate harassment, victimisation, discrimination or bullying.

Students who feel that they have been affected by any of these, or otherwise treated unfairly within the scope of this policy should raise their concerns with the Course Team Leader for their course, or the relevant Deputy Head of School in the first instance.

Staff who feel that they have been unfairly treated within the scope of this policy should raise their concern in accordance with the staff grievance policy.

Staff or students whose conduct breaches this policy will be subject to the appropriate disciplinary policy and procedures.

7. MONITORING

The profile of both staff and students by age, gender, disability and ethnicity is monitored. The collection of this data is the responsibility of the Director of Funding and Data team and the Head of People Services

The profile information is reported through the Equalities Strategic Review Group and to the College's Corporation annually.

Monitoring at course level is the responsibility of Course Team Leader and Deputy Heads of School. The information is evaluated and included in self-assessment reports and where there are differences in the data for different groups of people, actions are identified to eliminate these differences. These actions are monitored through the Senior Leadership team and by the Head of School.

8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

The College guidance document on Equality Impact Assessments states that due consideration must be given to the potential impact of the College's policies on different groups of staff and students.

9. LINKED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Milton Keynes College Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan
- Admissions Policy
- HE Admissions Policy
- Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (Staff)
- Student Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Disciplinary Policy
- Staff Grievance Policy
- Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Safeguarding Policy