

Treating People Fairly and Respecting Differences - Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Policy

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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.

Alternative Format

This policy is available in alternative formats, to request this, please email marketingcampaigns@mkcollege.ac.uk

Version Control

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Change log

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1. Policy Statement

Milton Keynes College Group (MKCG) recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and is committed to the promotion and advancement of equity, equality, diversity and inclusion for its staff and learners. 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, 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.

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 a situation 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 a situation where a person discriminates against another in that they apply a criterion or practice which is discriminatory in relation to a relevant protected characteristic.

Equity is defined by the offering of differing levels of support based on individual need, but to reach an outcome on a par with others. It recognises that different characteristics may present their own unique barriers to each individual person, and so the support offered needs to be tailored to that person, rather than the same support for each characteristic.

Diversity is the range of people in an organisation or profession. For example, this means people of different ages, ethnicities, genders, religions, sexualities and people with disabilities.

Inclusion is about individuals and groups belonging to – and being valued by – an organisation or profession. It means the thoughts, contributions, presence and perspectives of different people are actively valued and integrated into the working environment.

An inclusive workplace is characterised by active cultures, processes and practices which ensure individuals and groups are psychologically safe, free from discrimination, properly supported, empowered to collaborate and inspired to innovate. This allows everybody to perform at their highest level.

MK College Group (MKCG) includes all college campuses, prison services, and commercial enterprises.

2. Responsibilities

ALL STAFF AND LEARNERS

Staff and learners 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 learner has a responsibility to question their own prejudices and assumptions. It is the duty of all staff and learners 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 MKCG complies with the Equality Act 2010. The Corporation members are responsible for setting the policy framework for MKCG and for monitoring the 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 and CEO is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the actions listed in the Equality Strategy Action Plan (ESAP). The Group Principal and Chief Executive may nominate a member of the Strategic Leadership Group to support the operation and implementation of the Policy.

EQUALITY STRATEGIC REVIEW GROUP

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

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

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

Designated members of the Senior Leadership Team are responsible for providing and interpreting learner and staff data and providing the data to the Equalities Strategic Review Group and to the Executive Leadership Team and Group Directors for monitoring purposes.

These roles also have overall responsibility for the implementation of strategies which will contribute to equity, equality, diversity and inclusion for learners and staff. Examples include the cross-college and cross-group events calendar and key elements of the personal development entitlement that are delivered within the curriculum, and staff experience.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: People Services and Marketing

The Executive Director for People Services and Marketing has overall responsibility for monitoring and interpreting employment data and for staff development related to equity, equality, diversity and inclusion.

GROUP DIRECTORS/HEADS OF SCHOOL AND LINE MANAGERS

Group Directors/Heads of School and Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that all staff have completed the mandatory Equality, Diversity & Inclusion training. They are also responsible for ensuring their staff understand equity, equality, diversity and inclusion 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 the College's 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 proactive dialogue about equality opportunities issues and practice with partner organisations, contractors, customers, learners, and employers providing work experience to learners.

EXTERNAL PARTNERS

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

VISITORS, CONTRACTORS AND SUB-CONTRACTORS

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

3. Statutory Duties

The College will abide by its statutory duty for both learners 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. Learners

RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS

MKCG will ensure that:

- Recruitment and related 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 and sexual orientation
- Applicants are interviewed on the basis of their academic ability and/or potential to succeed
- Application and enrolment procedures give learners 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 learners are made aware of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and behaviour expected of them during induction, the information on the student online platforms and through the tutorial and Personal Development programme
- Links with local community groups and relevant organisations are established

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The College will ensure that:

- All aspects of teaching and learning actively promote equality, diversity and inclusion, including the language used, delivery methods, learning activities, and assessment practices. Staff will be supported to embed inclusive pedagogy through ongoing professional development.
- Curriculum design and delivery are inclusive and accessible, avoiding stereotypes and bias, and reflecting the rich cultural, social and regional diversity of learners. Teaching materials will be regularly reviewed to ensure they represent a broad range of perspectives and lived experiences.
- Adaptations and support strategies are embedded, ensuring that learners with additional needs, including those with SEND or facing disadvantage, are identified

early and supported effectively. This includes meaningful curriculum adaptations and differentiated teaching approaches.

- Resources are available in formats appropriate to individual learner needs, including the use of assistive technologies, specialist equipment, and alternative formats. Staff will be trained to use these resources effectively and to understand their role in supporting learners with diverse needs.
- Inclusive practices are visible and sustained across all learning environments, fostering a culture of belonging, respect and high expectations. Learners and staff will feel safe, valued and empowered to contribute fully to the learning community.
- Learner voice is central to inclusive practice, with regular opportunities for feedback and co-creation of learning experiences. The College will ensure that feedback from learners, particularly those from underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, informs continuous improvement.
- Impact of inclusive teaching is monitored and evidenced, not just through achievement data, but also through learner engagement, progression, wellbeing and retention. The College will maintain robust systems to track and evaluate the effectiveness of support and inclusive strategies.

SUPPORT SERVICES AND FACILITIES

MKCG will:

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

5. Workforce

WORKFORCE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

MKCG 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

MKCG 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 equity, equality, diversity and inclusion training forms a mandatory part of all staff induction programmes

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

MKCG 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

MKCG will not tolerate harassment, victimisation, discrimination or bullying.

Learners 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 learners whose conduct breaches this policy will be subject to the appropriate policy and procedures.

7. Monitoring

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

The profile information is reported through the Equality Strategic Review Group and to MKCG annually.

Monitoring at the course level is the responsibility of the 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 Strategic Leadership Group and by the Head of School.

8. Equality Accessibility Impact Assessments

MKCG guidance on Equality Accessibility Impact Assessments states that due consideration must be given to the potential impact of the Group's policies on different groups of staff and learners.

9. Linked Policies and Procedures

This policy should be read in conjunction with a range of policies that cover Admissions, Bursaries, Higher Education, Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying policies for learners and staff, Learner and Staff disciplinary and grievance policies and Safeguarding Policies. These can be found here: [Policies and procedures - MK College](#)