



**Buckinghamshire
College Group**

Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy 2022-25

Responsible Officer:	Executive Director - Human Resources
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Policy available:	Staff Intranet and website
Policy Authorised by:	Executive, UNIONS and Corporation

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1. Purpose

- 1.1** **Buckinghamshire College Group** is committed to encouraging diversity, equality, wellbeing and inclusion for all, and eliminating unlawful discrimination in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Buckinghamshire College Group celebrates and values the diversity of its learners and employees and is committed to equality of opportunity for all. The College operates a zero tolerance policy in respect of all forms of discrimination.
- 1.2** The aim is to be truly representative of all sections of the community we serve, and for each employee and student to feel respected and able to give their best.

2. Scope

- 2.1** This policy applies to all members and potential members of the college community, including but not limited to:
- a) Staff
 - b) Students
 - c) Governors
 - d) Applicants for jobs
 - e) Applicants for courses
 - f) Contractors
 - g) Employers
 - h) Work placement providers
- 2.2** All of these groups of people will be expected to adhere to this policy. Where staff or learners are working or studying in locations other than our campuses they will still be subject to the policy. Behaviour outside working time and outside our campuses may also fall within the scope of the policy. Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action.
- 2.3** This is an evolving document that will be reviewed and updated in light of continuing involvement of, and consultation with, both existing and potential Buckinghamshire College Group users, partners, community groups, voluntary organisations and individuals with interests in our work. This policy will adapt to new developments and legislations, and to reflect our growing understanding of existing and emerging issues.
- 2.4** The College recognises the serious nature of any discriminatory events and their impact on the individual/group involved including those who may witness the incident. All incidents will be taken seriously and consideration will be given as to whether a multi-agency approach using child protection procedures is required.
- 2.5** The Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions.

3. Definitions

- 3.1** The Equality Act 2010 introduced the term 'protected characteristics' to refer to aspects of an individual's identify specifically protected from unlawful discrimination with nine identified:
1. age
 2. disability
 3. gender reassignment
 4. marriage and civil partnership
 5. pregnancy and maternity
 6. race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
 7. religion or belief
 8. sex (gender)
 9. sexual orientation
- 3.2** The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination, including associative and perception discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments

3.3 The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty which requires the college to give due regard to:

- eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advancing equality of opportunity
- fostering good relations.

The duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination in the area of employment, also covers marriage and civil partnership.

3.4 The aim of this policy is to describe how the college intends to fulfil its responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty (a key measure of the Equality Act 2010).

4. Buckinghamshire College Group Commitment

4.1 Our commitment to staff

We will:

- strive to recruit, employ, retain and develop a diverse workforce which reflects the local community and learner population.
- make clear our expectations and commitments to equality and diversity during the recruitment and selection process and throughout employment
- provide ongoing continuous professional development in equality and diversity, to equip staff to recognise and embed diversity and to challenge any form of discrimination
- provide reasonable adjustments for staff who are or who become disabled
- embed equality and diversity throughout workforce practice, creating a working environment free from bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination
- embed equality and diversity in teaching and learning and providing a high-quality service for all

4.2 Our commitment to students

We will:

- make clear our expectations and commitments to equality and diversity in our marketing and recruitment materials and events, during admissions processes and again during induction
- strive to provide an inclusive teaching and learning environment that is personalised to the individual and which takes account of individual need, wellbeing and cultural backgrounds
- promote and celebrate equality and diversity within all aspects of the learner journey from curriculum planning through to marketing our provision, recruiting learners, teaching, learning and assessment, tutorial and enrichment activities.
- strive to provide support services for learners that meet diverse needs, including additional learning support (ALS) tailored to individual needs for learners who require ALS to support their learning and progression

- provide multiple learner voice opportunities for all learners to feed into the development of all aspects of the learner experience.

4.3 Our commitment to all stakeholders:

We will

- ensure all our services are accessible
- actively challenge and tackle all forms of prejudice, discrimination and stereotypical attitudes
- deal with all allegations of discrimination, harassment, and victimisation sensitively and investigate fairly and thoroughly
- treat any form of discrimination, harassment or victimisation carried out by an individual as a matter for possible disciplinary action in line with the College Grievance and/or Disciplinary Procedures.
- develop links and partnerships with external community organisations to support the development of equality, diversity and inclusion in our locality.

5. Performance and Monitoring

5.1 Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, the College externally publishes the policy at renewal point and publishes its equality objectives (College DEWI objectives) every four years. An annual report is compiled by the College analysing the data and progress made relating to the objectives and presented to Corporation. The DEWI steering group oversees the College's work to achieve its objectives.

5.2 The College monitors the profile of its students and staff by gender, age, race, sexual orientation, marital status, disability and ethnicity.

5.3 Monitoring at course level is integrated into regular quality reviews. Student analysis is reported in Success Panel meetings and specific targets are set in curriculum and college Quality Improvement Plans to reduce achievement gaps for under represented or under performing groups.

5.4 Student enrolment, retention, and achievement, student survey and complaints are monitored termly, and the findings are used to inform the annual Self-Assessment Reviews. Students' views are identified by means of satisfaction surveys, student representatives and equality and diversity groups.

5.5 Monitoring for staff is undertaken by the HR team. This is carried out using information held on the College HR system (iTrent), as well as other data, such as the annual staff survey. Data collected for monitoring purposes will be reported to the Executive Team and annually to the Board of Governors.

6. Responsibilities

All staff, learners and service users, including contractors and volunteers, are responsible for following and supporting this policy. Any person can raise, either informally or formally, complaints of unfair and/or discriminatory treatment. Breaches of this policy will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

6.1 The Governing Body will:

- exceed its statutory responsibilities for equality and diversity through its own actions and behaviour in all aspects of its affairs
- ensure that the membership of the Governing Body strives to reflect the diversity of the communities served by the College
- approve and review the College's equality and diversity policy
- Agree Equality Objectives and relevant EDI targets, monitoring progress towards these

6.2 The Principal has overall responsibility for this policy and, together with the Executive Team, will:

- take an active and visible lead on all equality issues.
- approve the DEWI Action Plan in support of the Equality Objectives and relevant DEWI targets
- agree DEWI objectives with relevant managers
- promote the Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy both internally and externally.
- ensure that the Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy is fully implemented.

6.3 The Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Steering Group, chaired by the Executive Director - Human Resources will:

- monitor the effectiveness of this policy and measure its impact
- produce the Annual Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Report
- monitor the implementation and impact of the DEWI Action Plan unblocking challenges and barriers as needed and report to the Executive Team on a half termly basis.
- regularly seek out and respond to feedback from key stakeholder groups
- organise, promote and run celebrating diversity, equalities, wellbeing and inclusion activities for staff and students.

6.4 Members of the College Leadership Team will:

- Identify any specific areas of good practice and share throughout the College
- Identify, within relevant self-assessment reports, any specific areas for improvement in their work relating to DEWI and implement and monitor actions through the quality improvement process.

6.5 All employees of Buckinghamshire College Group will:

- operate within this policy at all times, reporting any concerns for themselves or others
- attend regular training opportunities to ensure they understand the principles of this policy and the implications for their job role and responsibilities

6.6 All students will:

- operate within this policy at all times, reporting any concerns for themselves or others
- follow the behaviour guidelines outlined in Ready, Respectful, Safe ensuring that everyone is treated fairly and with respect

7. Other Policies and Procedures in Support

7.1 Buckinghamshire College Group will support the effectiveness of the Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy through the following policies and guidelines, but not limited to:

- Dignity in the Workplace (staff)
- Grievance Policy (staff)
- Complaints Policy (all)
- Student Anti-Bullying Policy (students)
- Student Code of Conduct (students)
- Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy (students)
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy (students)
- PREVENT Policy (students)
- Work Experience & Employability Policy for Students
- Guidelines on Professional Boundaries and Standards for Staff
- Recruitment Procedure
- Flexible Working Policy
- Digital Learning Strategy

7.2 Buckinghamshire College Group will consider diversity, equality, wellbeing and inclusion issues in all aspects of College life and business and ensure that all College policies and procedures are developed to positively support and develop equality, diversity and inclusion.

8. Complaints

8.1 Any member of staff or applicants for employment who believe they have experienced or observed discrimination should seek advice and support from the Executive Director - Human Resources or an HR Representative. Any member of staff may raise their concerns through the College's Grievance Policy and/or Dignity in the Workplace Policy as appropriate.

Any governor who believes they have experienced discrimination should seek advice and support from the Clerk to Corporation.

Any other member of the College Community, including students or applicants for courses, contractors and work placement providers, who believe they have experienced or observed discrimination, should raise their concerns with the Executive Director - Human Resources or an HR Representative.

The Diversity, Equality, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions.

9. Equality Impact Statement

- 9.1 We have a duty to consider the impact of changes on groups with Protected Characteristics (race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership).

What are the overall aims of the change? Why are you proposing it?	This policy outlines College guidelines for staff and students when dealing with diversity, equality, wellbeing and inclusion issues
Given the aims of your proposal, what issues does your data/information highlight?	The policy enables data collection into DEWI issues that will be analysed.
How could the proposed change affect positively/negatively on groups with protected characteristics?	This policy allows for statistics to be collected, events to be organised, lessons to be learned and behaviour to be improved from all aspects of DEWI.
What actions will you take to mitigate any negative impact?	Potential impact in relation to issues concerning incidents. Monitored through complaints and employee relations cases.
Is there any potential negative impact justified in light of wider benefits of the proposal	None identified
Recording final decision	Executive and Corporation
Has the policy taken into consideration the requirements of GDPR regulations? Are there any actions that need addressing, eg; data sharing agreement; has data consent been considered; data retention timescales?	Yes, outlines staff and student guidelines for collection of sensitive personal data for monitoring purposes