

Equality & Diversity

Date 10 January 2023

Version 4.1

Document Authorisation

Prepared by: John Stirling

Authorised by: Tony Basham



Document Control

Title	Equality & Diversity
Authors	John Stirling
Doc Ref	PRO 007

Owner (Responsibility for Approval of Issued Versions)

Name	Role	Date	Version
John Stirling	Head of Quality & Compliance	10/01/2023	4.1

Change History

Issue	Date	Author/Editor	Details of Change

Other Policies linked or changes will impact on

Policy	Link or impact



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1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Colleges' Partnership actively promotes equality and diversity for all, including staff, learners, contractors, and any stakeholders who have direct or indirect contact with the Colleges' Partnership, by removing barriers to education, training, and employment opportunities, thereby widening access through a flexible and inclusive culture. The aim of The Colleges' Partnership is to create, maintain and promote an environment in which people treat each other with mutual respect, value each other's contributions and which is free of discrimination. This document is intended to give a common-sense approach to the rights and responsibilities of all members of the company community.

2. REASONS FOR THE POLICY

- 2.1 The policy will demonstrate The Colleges' Partnership commitment to ensuring it implements and meets the equality duties for the nine protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Appendix A). The work and activities of the company will always reflect this commitment.
- 2.2 The purpose of the policy is to establish clear guidance regarding all aspects of equality and diversity. Further the policy will provide guidance on the key principles, structures, and monitoring arrangements for The Colleges' Partnership.

3. POLICY OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 To ensure and confirm that the company fulfils its statutory obligations in relation to equality and diversity, embracing the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Appendix A) and to effectively implement the Act and this policy.
- 3.2 To promote awareness of all aspects of equality and diversity across The Colleges' Partnership. This policy is to outline The Colleges' Partnership approach to fulfilling a commitment and to make it clear to all parties what they may expect from The Colleges' Partnership and equally what The Colleges' Partnership expects of them.
- 3.3 To ensure that procedures are in place to clarify and support implementation of compliance with and promotion of equality and diversity (Appendix B).
- 3.4 To ensure monitoring and review systems are in place and utilised by the E&D Committee and E&D Champion, to inform progress against all aspects of equality and diversity, and to report statistics which reflects activity of The Colleges' Partnership.
- 3.5 The policy will ensure all its members enjoy and respect equality of opportunity. We will ensure that:
 - The ability of people to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination.
 - There is respect for and protection of each individual's human rights.



- There is respect for the dignity and worth of everyone.
- Everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in society.
- There is a mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing diversity and on shared respect for equality and human rights.

3.6 The Equality and Diversity Policy document is intended to give a common-sense approach to the rights and responsibilities of all members of the company and community.

4. POLICY

The Company will:

- 4.1 Champion and advance equality and diversity.
- 4.2 Consult with stakeholders on the implementation of this policy.
- 4.3 Take positive action to promote equality of opportunity.
- 4.4 Provide appropriate training and support to staff to create a positive, inclusive ethos.
- 4.5 Routinely and regularly impact-assess its policies, procedures, and publications.
- 4.6 Investigate complaints and any incidents related to equality and diversity and take prompt and appropriate action.
- 4.7 Monitor and report on learner and staff profiles at recruitment in terms of the protected characteristics in comparison with local, and where available, national benchmarks.
- 4.8 Publish progress data which demonstrates The Colleges' Partnership Equality and Diversity aims and impact measures.
- 4.9 Inform all members of The Colleges' Partnership, visitors, and learners of their duty in complying with this policy and that discrimination in any of the following forms will not be tolerated:
 - Direct discrimination (including by association e.g., Carer and perception).
 - Indirect Discrimination.
 - Harassment.
 - Victimisation.
 - Failure to make reasonable adjustments.

(See Appendix C for definitions).

- 4.10 Take positive action to stop discrimination, victimisation, or harassment.
- 4.11 Ensure that the policy is applied to all The Colleges' Partnership activities, services it uses, visits and to all The Colleges' Partnership sites.

The Company will fulfil its specific duties by:

- 4.12 Preparing and maintaining an Equality and Diversity Framework and Equality Action Plan.
- 4.13 Assessing the impact of its policies on learners and staff.
- 4.14 Monitoring the admission and progress of learners and the recruitment, and career progress of staff.



Teaching and Learning

- 4.15 The Colleges' Partnership will make its courses accessible to a wide range of learners and adapt delivery and assessment methods to provide flexible learning opportunities.
- 4.16 The Colleges' Partnership will provide access to impartial educational careers guidance to learners and ensure that appropriate systems are in place to provide support for learners with additional learning needs.
- 4.17 Support to learners will be available through their Assessor/Apprenticeship Coordinator (ACO), appropriate Team Leader and the Apprenticeship team. Specific support will be provided and/or barriers removed where reasonably practical to enable learners with a difficulty/disability to access The Colleges' Partnership services.
- 4.18 All delivery and learning activity provided by The Colleges' Partnership will have equality and diversity embedded in its delivery where appropriate. Resources, learning materials and activities will promote equality and diversity where applicable.
- 4.19 Planning documentation will reflect the consideration of equality and diversity and the differentiation needs of all learners.
- 4.20 Individual learners will have their learning and personal support needs identified and met through effective planning, reasonable adjustments, and collaborative working with specialist colleagues.
- 4.21 The quality of the promotion of equality and diversity in teaching and learning will be assessed through the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), internal and external verification and the Observation of Learning and Teaching (OLTs).

Complaints

- 4.22 Alleged acts of discrimination will be investigated under the disciplinary policy and offences and will be dealt with in accordance with PRO 026. Investigations of this nature will be dealt with seriously, in confidence and as soon as possible in line with the appropriate procedures.

Reporting

- 4.23 The Colleges' Partnership Annual Report to the Board will summarise the key actions that The Colleges' Partnership has taken towards the achievement of the equality objectives throughout the year. This publication will be made available to all staff.
- 4.24 The Equality and Diversity Champion will inform annual Quality Improvement Plans (QIP) to inform the subject area SARs and the Annual Report to the Board.

Reviewing

- 4.25 The Equality Framework will be formally reviewed every year to assess its effectiveness. Regular monitoring of the Equality Action Plan will take place to ensure the company completes impact assessments and complies with equality legislation and codes of practice.

Guidance and Support

- 4.26 The Colleges' Partnership employs an Equality and Diversity Champion to provide training, guidance and support to staff and learners to ensure The Colleges'



Partnership commitment to equality is fully achieved. Support may include training events or the provision of information.

5. DEFINITIONS (See Appendix C)

6. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Safeguarding policy (PRO060)

Prevent policy (PRO 061)

Data protection policy (PRO 033)

Staff Bullying and Harassment (PRO 049)

7. WHO WILL NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THIS POLICY?

- Prospective learners
- Current learners
- Former learners
- Visitors
- Staff
- Executive Group
- Board members
- Employers
- Stake holders

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 All staff are responsible for:

- ensuring that they are aware of The Colleges' Partnership statutory duties in relation to all E & D legislation and that they work within The Colleges' Partnership Equality and Diversity policy
- carrying out all mandatory training and to engage actively in personal professional development related to equality and diversity.

8.2 All learners are responsible for:

- treating everyone with respect, fairly and with understanding
- abiding by the requirements of The Colleges' Partnership E & D policy
- using appropriate language and behaviour
- reporting any concerns that they have for themselves and/or others

9.3 The Executive Group is responsible for:

- ensuring that The Colleges' Partnership Business Plan includes a commitment to Equality and Diversity
- ensuring that equal opportunities training features as part of The Colleges' Partnership Business Plan



- ensuring that the QIP has equality and diversity at its core
- monitoring information provided by the Equality and Diversity Committee

9.4 The Executive Director is responsible for:

- ensuring that The Colleges' Partnership meets all the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and meets all its duties, including the general and specific duties
- taking the lead in creating a positive, inclusive ethos that challenges discriminatory behaviour on the part of managers, staff, and learners
- giving a consistent and high-profile lead on Equality and Diversity
- promoting Equality and Diversity within and externally to The Colleges' Partnership
- ensuring that there is a clear and visible link between the E & D policy and the Company Business Development Plan
- ensuring that the Equality and Diversity policy and its procedures are followed by all to whom it applies

9.5 The Strategic Management Team (SMT) are responsible for:

- ensuring that they lead on The Colleges' Partnership statutory duties in relation to the Equality and Diversity policy and Equality Framework
- putting the policy and its strategies and procedures into practice
- ensuring that all the staff and the SMT themselves know and understand their responsibilities and receive support and training to enable their compliance with the policy
- ensuring learner monitoring information is collected, analysed, and responded to where appropriate
- ensuring that data relating to the protected characteristics is recorded, stored, processed and readily available particularly on the Management Information System.
- setting targets for recruitment, retention and achievement of learners based upon the analysis of the data that is brought to the Equality and Diversity Committee
- ensuring internal verification procedures include sampling of protected characteristic groups
- ensuring that learner induction programmes and assessment programmes reflect The Colleges' Partnership commitment to promote equality of opportunity
- following the relevant procedures and acting against staff, learners, visitors, and stakeholders who discriminate for reasons relating to the protected characteristics
- reviewing teaching and learning observation reports, which include criteria on equal opportunities where appropriate
- ensuring that the Colleges' Partnership Self-Assessment and Quality improvement processes utilise data, record and make judgements of performance against E & D criteria
- ensuring that all marketing, displays, and course information promote



equality of opportunity, are free from explicit or implicit unfair discrimination, challenge stereotypes and promote diversity

- ensuring that marketing materials are provided for specific groups; alternative versions will be provided when required
- ensuring they challenge stereotyping and foster diversity through the decoration and displays within Colleges' Partnership premises

9.6 The Equality and Diversity Committee (EDC) will:

- promote practices that ensure an environment of equality and diversity flourishes in The Colleges' Partnership
- ensure all relevant policies used by The Colleges' Partnership meet the criteria established in this policy
- arrange for equality audits / health-checks / data monitoring of working practices to take place
- ensure consultation is carried out on the experiences of staff and learners in terms of equality and diversity and use feedback to inform target setting
- benchmark best practice
- Set targets to accomplish legislative duties
- Report annually on The Colleges' Partnership compliance of this policy
- The Equality and Diversity Champions will offer advice to areas of The Colleges' Partnership that require positive action projects to meet the targets and legislative requirements

9.7 The Human Resources Team are responsible for:

- ensuring that they are aware of The Colleges' Partnership statutory duties in relation to E & D legislation and employment
- ensuring that the procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff always enshrine the best practice within equal opportunities
- ensuring recruitment policies and procedures actively support equality of opportunity
- monitoring and analysing employee data
- setting the targets on the recruitment and promotion of staff based upon the analysis of data monitoring information
- sourcing appropriate training and development to support the appreciation and understanding of equality and diversity across The Colleges' Partnership
- ensuring The Colleges' Partnership's staff disciplinary procedures make provision for wilful or recurrent non-compliance with the Equality and Diversity Policy
- monitoring overall staff opportunities, performance, and satisfaction in relation to diversity profiles and for providing regular reports to SMT, the Executive Group, the Board and the Equality and Diversity Committee
- checking that as part of their induction, all staff will be made aware that any discrimination of individuals or groups will be treated not



only as a breach of company regulations but may also be a breach of civil or criminal law

- making sure that existing staff within the protected characteristics will be encouraged to compete for appointments and promotions
- ensuring that staff are invited to attend training offered by The Colleges' Partnership and that these training opportunities are monitored.
- making certain that newly appointed staff attend an induction programme that incorporates equality and diversity awareness training within the first 3 months of service
- ensuring that every member of staff attends equality and diversity and protection from discrimination training every five years.

9.8 Stakeholders, Contractors and Service Providers will:

- adhere to The Colleges' Partnership Equality and Diversity Policy, and any equality conditions in contracts or agreements.

Signed

Date: 21st January 2021

Tony Basham
Chief Executive Officer