

1 Introduction

Richmond and Hillcroft Adult and Community College is committed to providing a positive and supportive working and learning environment for all staff and students, consistent with an ethos of respect and tolerance. The College aims to promote best practice in the advancement of equal opportunities and carry out its functions in such a way as to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality, embrace diversity and tackle any persistent and long-standing issues of disadvantage.

The College is committed to eliminating discrimination and advancing equality on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation (the protected characteristics as laid down by the Equality Act 2010) and to foster good relations between different groups.

Other aspects of a person's identity, background or circumstances can cause them to experience discrimination, for example a person's socio-economic status, class or background. The College is committed to advancing equality and eliminating discrimination on these and other grounds. Equality and diversity is central to all we do and all College students, staff and stakeholders will be made aware of the college's Equality and Diversity Policy.

In line with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, the College believes that 'unacceptable behaviour' is behaviour that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated by anyone and will be challenged.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Safeguarding policy and Employee Code of Conduct.

2 Definitions:

'Equality' means ensuring everyone is able to participate in all our activities on an equal footing. **'Diversity'** acknowledges that there are differences between people that should be recognised, respected and celebrated.

3 Aims of the Policy:

- To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation whether direct, indirect, by association or perception, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- To advance equality of opportunity, between different groups and across all activities of the College.
- To foster good relations between people from diverse backgrounds.
- To ensure that the College complies with all laws and directives relating to equal opportunities.

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- To ensure that the College has a sound system of monitoring and reviewing progress so that good practice is identified, issues addressed, and a culture of equal opportunities is embedded in all aspects of the work of the College.
- To deal with all forms of discrimination consistently and effectively.
- To raise awareness of Equality and Diversity issues and to define responsibilities.

4 Scope:

- This policy applies to all staff, students, applicants (both staff and student), governors, stakeholders, employers, service providers and partner organisations.
- The policy operates within the framework of Equality and Diversity legislation.
- To support this policy the College will have a Single Equality Scheme and annual Equality and Diversity Action Plan to ensure that Equality and Diversity principles are translated into action.

5 Roles and Responsibilities

- **The Board** is responsible for:
 - Approving the Equality and Diversity Policy
 - Approving the Single Equality Scheme and monitoring the implementation of the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan
 - Ensuring the College is meeting the public sector equality duty
 - Receiving and responding to equality monitoring information, both as an employer and as a provider of education and services
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- **The Principal** is responsible for:
 - providing leadership in the operation and implementation of the Equality and Diversity Policy and the Single Equality Scheme
 - monitoring and reporting on the number of compliments, incidents and complaints relating to Equality and Diversity issues.
- **College staff** have a responsibility to:
 - actively work towards eliminating discrimination
 - challenge, and where appropriate report, any behaviour that fails to comply with this policy
 - undertake appropriate Equality and Diversity training
 - actively promote Equality and Diversity throughout all College activities
- **College managers** have a responsibility to:
 - investigate all matters of alleged discrimination, harassment and inappropriate behaviour promptly and thoroughly
 - ensure that selection and appointment procedures, performance management processes, staff development opportunities and disciplinary and grievance processes are fairly and consistently applied to all staff

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- ensure that selection and admissions procedures, assessment processes, career development opportunities and disciplinary and complaints procedures are fairly and consistently applied to all students
 - ensure compliance with the Single Equalities Scheme and that the actions in the related Action Plan are carried out
 - ensure that the course offer, teaching methods and resources are appropriate for a wide range of students, and that reasonable adjustments are made wherever possible.
- **Academic Managers** have a responsibility to:
 - provide a framework, advice and guidance to ensure Equality and Diversity is embedded in teaching and learning.
 - **HR** has a responsibility to:
 - provide appropriate Equality and Diversity awareness training to all staff
 - ensure that all policy and procedures/processes are fair and transparent and consistently applied
 - monitor employment equality data and publish the findings of monitoring activity as appropriate
 - provide advice and guidance to staff on Equality and Diversity issues
 - **Quality** has a responsibility to:
 - Monitor the performance of different learner groups and identify any gaps in performance, possible causes and to manage the action plan for closing the gaps, provide specific training on embedding Equality and Diversity in the planning of teaching, learning and support activities.
 - **Students** have a responsibility to:
 - actively encourage non-discriminatory practices and to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy.
 - listen to what others have to say and respect their point of view
 - understand that it is unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, or disability and that disciplinary action will be taken against those involved in discrimination, harassment or bullying on any grounds
 - question their own prejudices and assumptions
 - avoid using language and behaviour which might offend others
 - **Service providers** working on College premises are expected to:
 - operate within the law and to adopt the terms of this policy
 - **Communications (publicity, marketing, PR)** has a responsibility to:
 - provide information which is accessible to all sections of the community
 - use images and language to promote diversity

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6 Equality and Diversity Monitoring Group

The group is responsible for overseeing developments in the area of Equality & Diversity to ensure that the College works to advance the principles of equal opportunities and diversity.

The group will be chaired by the Principal, will meet termly and will submit recommendations to the Executive Team.

The specific duties of the group will be:

- To monitor progress of the College's equality Objectives as set out in the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan
- To make recommendations to the Executive Team to ensure that the Single Equality Scheme Action Plan is delivered to appropriate timescales
- To review learner enrolment statistics to identify trends relating to learners with protected characteristics
- To review success rates of different learner groups to determine any underperforming groups and to ensure the College QIP identifies how any achievement gaps will be addressed
- To review College policies to ensure learners with protected characteristics will not be disadvantaged
- To receive summary reports on complaints, incidents and compliments to identify any issues relating to Equality and Diversity, including the characteristics of learners submitting complaints, incidents and compliments
- To work with HR to ensure that appropriate training and development relating to Equality and Diversity is available, including PREVENT and other initiatives
- To review Marketing materials, including the website and to make recommendations on accessibility for all learner groups
- To review the workforce profile on an annual basis (including recruitment statistics)

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7 Complaints under the Equality and Diversity Policy

People using the College are entitled to be treated with respect and fairness. The College has a complaints procedure which is accessible on the website and in the Learning Resource Centres. Discriminatory or offensive behaviour, which breaches the Equality and Diversity Policy, will not be tolerated. Incidents of discrimination or harassment will be dealt with through the College's Complaints Procedure, the Anti-Harassment and Bullying Procedures, or the Disciplinary or Grievance Procedure as appropriate.

8 Related documents:

Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan
Anti-harassment and Bullying Policies and Procedures
College Complaints Policy and Procedure
Disciplinary Policy and Procedures
Safeguarding and Prevent Policy

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