

Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy/Procedure Title	Equality and Diversity Policy
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1.0 Introduction

Abingdon and Witney College are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all who learn and work here. We value and celebrate differences and believe that all forms of prejudice and discrimination are unacceptable and will take appropriate action to address this.

In meeting current legislative requirements, the College will ensure that all students, potential students, employees, potential employees, governors and partners are treated fairly regardless of the Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 (namely: Race, Disability, Gender, Age, Sexual Orientation, Religion / Belief, Gender Reassignment, Pregnancy and Maternity, and Marriage and Civil Partnerships). The College is legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments for anyone possessing one or more of these characteristics.

In terms of the Equality Act 2010, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a “substantial” and “long-term” negative effect on their ability to do normal daily activities. “Substantial” is more than minor or trivial e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task. “Long Term” means 12 months or more.

On 5 April 2011, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) came into force and Abingdon and Witney College are subject to this legislation, meaning that the College must have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people;
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

The College’s mission is to change lives and communities. It will do this through promoting equality and diversity and British Values in all activities, tackling discrimination, widening participation and increasing social inclusion, as evidenced in the action plan.

The College will engage in positive action measures to promote equality and diversity and to overcome barriers caused by disadvantages and inequalities revealed through monitoring.

2.0 Key principles and responsibilities

The College will challenge inequality, prejudice and discrimination. It is the duty of every member of staff, students and governors to avoid discriminatory practices and to accept personal responsibility for the application of the policy.

The College embraces diversity in all its aspects and aims to employ a workforce which reflects, at every level the community it serves and the student population.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for all.

The College recognises its duty to promote equality and diversity through curriculum delivery and the overall environment and ethos of the College.

For Students and Users of the College

The College will ensure that information about its programmes of study and services is made available and accessible to the widest possible audience. Publicity material will be available, on request, in a range of formats and media to avoid prejudice and stereotyping. Marketing activities will seek to encourage participation from those groups currently under-represented in the College as a whole and in particular areas of study.

In order to ensure that all students and potential students are treated fairly and that diverse needs are fully met, the College will ensure that best practice is embedded into all of its policies and procedures and measured through Impact Assessments. The College undertakes to work in partnership with student representatives and through the Student Satisfaction Survey and Student Conference.

The College will make appropriate arrangements for the assessment of students with disabilities. See Appendix 1 for full details.

For Employees of the College

In order to ensure that all staff and potential staff are treated fairly at all stages of the employee life cycle, and that their treatment is based solely on objective and job-related criteria, the College will ensure that equality issues are embedded into all policies and procedures, including:

- Terms and Conditions of Employment (including fixed-term and casual)
- Disciplinary Policy
- Job evaluation process
- Grievance Policy
- Induction
- Family Friendly Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Sickness absence
- Termination (including redundancy)
- Staff Development
- Dignity at Work

In ensuring that this policy is effective, and that college staff are committed to it, the College undertakes to work locally in partnership with the recognised trade unions (currently UNISON and UCU) and with staff in general in its development and implementation.

3.0 Implementation and Responsibilities

The responsibility for making the policy work in practice rests with all managers, supervisors, representatives, individual employees and students.

The College will undertake equality and diversity impact assessments on new policies to ensure that they are fit for purpose and so far as is reasonably practicable, meet the needs of all stakeholders.

The College will review recruitment, retention, success and achievement data to ensure that all possible measures are in place to ensure fair outcomes for all.

Student Monitoring

The gender, ethnic origin, disability and age of all applicants and enrollees will be monitored ascertain trends and support needs.

Admissions and enrolment procedures will be supportive, accessible and as straightforward as possible. The criteria for admissions will be as stated within the Admissions Policy.

The College will identify additional support needs, and as far as is reasonably practicable and within resource constraints, will endeavour to meet those needs.

The College will seek to make continuous improvements to physical access in all its buildings. Reasonable adjustments will be made to provision where learners with disabilities might otherwise be substantially disadvantaged. Where reasonably practicable, classes will be moved to allow access to the curriculum for all students.

As part of their induction programme, all students will be made aware of the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and of their rights and responsibilities according to the service standards, and the College's Complaints Procedures.

Schemes of work, lesson plans, and college originated curriculum materials and assessments will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that they promote best practice in terms of equality and diversity. Recruitment, attendance, participation, retention, achievement, progression destination, learner enjoyment, and wider outcomes will be analysed against a range of criteria such as by age, gender and ethnicity, and will be used to inform curriculum delivery. Equality and diversity will be promoted through individual and group tutorials, cultural awareness events and themed workshops.

Employment Monitoring

The College will ensure that all employees are recruited, selected, trained and promoted solely on the basis of ability and the requirements of the job. All staff will be made aware of this policy. The College will ensure that HR policies and practice fulfil the principles of equal opportunities.

The College will adopt best practice in Human Resources to monitor the equality and diversity of employees, including; Ethnicity, disability, age and gender profiles, full- time, part-time status, permanent, temporary status, length of

service, place of work, including campus, pay band, sickness and absence records, appraisals, promotions, re-grading and pay awards. Due regard will be taken of all Protected Characteristics when undertaking such monitoring.

4.0 Complaints Procedures

If a member of staff believes that they have not been treated fairly due to prejudice or discrimination, they can raise a complaint through the Grievance Policy or the Dignity at Work Policy available from HR.

If a student believes they have not been treated fairly due to prejudice or discrimination, they can raise their complaint through the College's Complaints Procedure.

Process for monitoring Equality and Diversity Policy

The Personal, Behaviour, Development and Welfare (PDBW) Committee chaired by the Assistant Principal, meets termly. Minutes will be available on the College's Office 365 site.

The PDBW Committee will regularly review the key issues for staff and students to ensure that equality of opportunity is monitored and achieved.

Additional key documents:

- [Safeguarding & Prevention of Terrorism Policy](#)
- [Whistleblowing Policy](#)

Appendix 1 – Access Arrangements

A Specialist Assessor is a specialist Lecturer with a current SpLD Assessment Practising Certificate. The qualification must be equivalent to Level 7 and must include training in all of the following:

- The theoretical basis underlying psychometric tests;
- The appropriate use of nationally standardised tests for the age group being tested;
- The objective administration of attainment tests which can be administered individually. This must include tests of reading accuracy, reading speed, reading comprehension and spelling. Appropriate methods of assessing writing skills, including speed, must also be covered;
- The appropriate selection and objective use of cognitive tests including tests of verbal and non-verbal ability and wider cognitive processing skills;
- The ethical administration of testing including the ability to understand the limitation of their own skills and experience, and to define when it is necessary to refer the candidate to an alternative professional.

They must:

- Have a thorough understanding of the current edition of the JCQ publication *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments* and the principles, procedures and accountabilities involved;
- Be familiar with the Equality Act 2010;
- Hold an appropriate qualification to teach and make recommendations for secondary aged or adult learners who have learning difficulties.

The following adaptations are examples of what may be considered for the purposes of facilitating access, as long as they do not impact on any competence standards being tested:

- Adapting assessment materials;
- Adaptation of the physical environment for access purposes;
- Adaptation to equipment;
- Assessment material in an enlarged format or Braille;
- Assessment materials on coloured paper or in audio format;
- British Sign Language (BSL);
- Changing or adapting the assessment method;
- Changing usual assessment arrangements;
- Extra time e.g. assignment extensions;
- Language modified assessment material;
- Practical assistant;
- Prompter;
- Providing assistance during assessment;
- Reader;
- Scribe;
- Transcript;
- Use of assistive software;
- Using assistive technology;
- Use of CCTV, coloured overlays, low vision aids;

- Use of a different assessment location;
- Use of ICT / responses using electronic devices.

Learners will be fully involved in any decisions about adjustments / adaptations. The College will consider any request for reasonable adjustments on a case by case basis and evidence will be required.