Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Policy 2020-21

1.0   Policy Statement

1.1   City of Wolverhampton College is committed to embedding equality and diversity in all of its activities and encourage access to the College, irrespective of background or personal characteristics.

1.2   The College is working to create an environment in which individual difference is positively valued in an atmosphere free from bullying, discrimination, harassment, and victimisation. The College takes legal and moral obligations to equality seriously and welcome engagement and dialogue with groups and individuals to continually enhance Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy and practice.

1.3   The College will ensure that equality is embedded in all of our activities, policies and decisions. Ensuring fairness and respect for all students, staff, contractors, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the College's work.

2.0   Scope

2.1   This policy applies to all current and potential students and staff who work at the College on a paid or voluntary basis along with visitors or contractors. The policy also applies to ESF project/contracts that City of Wolverhampton College is engaged with.

2.2   The Equality Act 2010 introduces common definitions of discrimination. The nine 'protected characteristics' under the Act are: Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Gender reassignment (people undergoing gender reassignment or who are trans-gender), Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and maternity, Religion or belief, Sexual orientation (gay, lesbian, bisexual and heterosexual orientation).

2.3   Students and staff must be protected from discrimination and harassment on these grounds. The Act also protects against discrimination by association and perception, e.g. a partner or carer of someone with a protected characteristic should also be protected from discrimination and harassment.

2.4   The Public Sector Equality Duty is set out in section 149 of the Act. The Equality Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

1. eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
2. advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and
3. foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2.5   City of Wolverhampton College will have due regard to these duties in the carrying out of its functions. Having due regard means consciously thinking about the three aims of the general duty as part of the process of decision-making.

3.0   Commitment

3.1   The College will take active steps to fulfil our responsibilities and promote good practice by:

- Creating an environment in which individual differences and contributions of all students and staff are recognised and valued.
- Creating a learning environment that promotes dignity and respect to all students, staff and service users.
- Not tolerating any form of intimidation, bullying, harassment and unlawful discrimination.
- Encouraging anyone who feels they have been subjected to discrimination to raise their concerns so we can take the appropriate measures.
- Ensuring that existing staff and students, as well as applicants to work or study, are treated fairly and judged solely on merit.
- Making sure reasonable adjustments are made, as appropriate, to enable disabled staff and students to overcome barriers in the working, learning and social environment.
- Taking action to redress any gender, racial or other imbalance including monitoring the recruitment and progress of all students and staff, collecting and collating equality information and data and publishing this on an annually basis, and acting on any inequalities revealed by the data.
- Engaging and involving students, staff, local community and stakeholders in the development and delivery of our service.
- Actively using data to review policies and procedures and promote inclusion.
- Making sure our employment policies and practices are fair and transparent.
- Complying with the legal obligations in a transparent manner.
- Promoting awareness and understanding of EDI matters amongst staff and students through policies, training, guidance and campaigns.

3.2   The College will ensure it promotes an inclusive institutional culture that values a diverse learning community for students, staff and the development of the organisation.

4.0   Student Recruitment and Admissions

4.1   Under-represented groups will be encouraged to participate in all College courses and activities, also ensuring the provision meets the needs of the people from our City.

4.2   Interviews for courses/places will be sympathetically conducted, with due regard to equality, the diverse experiences of different types of student and the expressed needs of students.

4.3   Understanding the student profile and their particular needs, the College can provide the best possible service and learning environment. The College will aim to ensure:

- Monitoring of applications and enrolments will be conducted in a comprehensive and sensitive way.
- Identification of financial barriers preventing access to disadvantaged students and exploration of sources of funding to help overcome such barriers.
- Assessment of additional support/special educational needs and strategies to meet these.
- Equal access for all students to general College facilities and to appropriate social or extracurricular activities offered by the College.
- Entrance qualifications for College courses will relate to standards laid down by the appropriate validating body, or to objective criteria relating to course content and outcomes.

5.0   Curriculum, learning and teaching

5.1   The College's curriculum and delivery will address the variety of experiences, socio-economic backgrounds, cultural backgrounds, skills and needs which students bring to the College. Thus ensuring that the curriculum offer and support is accessible and relevant to all students. The College will aim to ensure that:

- All students will receive an induction so that they are made aware of the College's policies and commitment to EDI.
- EDI will be fully integrated into the learning experience, and will be evident in curriculum planning, developing schemes of work and delivering teaching, learning and assessment.
- Managers and tutors will monitor student performance by protected characteristic and set Equality Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) to narrow any achievement gaps between different groups of students.
- All tutors will use resources and activities that are free from discriminatory or stereotypical assumptions or images.
- Tutorials will include a variety of EDI topics to raise awareness, celebrate diversity and promote equality.
- Work based students will be supported to challenge practices and behaviours in the workplace, which they feel contravene College policy in relation to EDI.

6.0   Marketing

6.1   Wolverhampton is a diverse City with a broad range of people from diverse backgrounds. The College will strive to reach the various communities in Wolverhampton by ensuring our marketing strategy reflects the diverse population of the City. The College will aim to:

- Avoid all types of negative stereotyping and publicity material will reflect the diversity of the City of Wolverhampton.
- Target use of inclusive language in College publicity materials.

- Use appropriate media to attract under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
- Implement marketing strategies to support outreach work in the community.
- Encourage joint marketing approaches with organisations that have specific interest/expertise in supporting disadvantaged groups.
- Make available key documents on request in other formats such as Braille, audio or large print.

7.0 Community Links

7.1 The College will widen participation and strengthen links with all sections of the population of Wolverhampton through targeting people who are unemployed, young people at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) and build positive links with employers by:

- Analysing of the demographic profile of Wolverhampton in order to inform planning regarding the needs of all groups in the community and to assess the relevance of current provision.
- Networking with statutory, voluntary and private organisations to secure the provision of education in the community.
- Engaging of community organisations and members in the College's advisory and governance structures.

8.0 College Environment and Facilities

8.1 The College will provide a welcoming, safe environment which encourages access and participation by all sections of our community to high quality learning and support.

8.2 The College has carried out an access audit of all its premises, made appropriate adjustments and carried out building work to ensure that all visitors have access to services. The College will aim to ensure that:

- The College environment is safe, friendly and welcoming for all users and free from harassment.
- All practical steps will be taken to provide safe access and working conditions on College premises for staff, students and other users.
- The accommodation strategy seeks to develop the best possible learning environments and resources.

8.3 The College will source goods, facilities and services from external suppliers who are accountable to us and abide by our equality ethos.

9.0 Learner Support

9.1 The College will ensure it provides appropriate and relevant support to students so they can get the best out of the service and achieve the best learning outcomes. The College will aim to ensure that:

- Students have access to tutorial and pastoral support which is relevant to their needs and course of study.
- Students have access to relevant information advice and guidance.
- Counselling and welfare advice is available for students who require it.
- Specialist equipment and software is made available for students with disabilities.

10.0   Employment

10.1   The College is committed to ensure that staff are treated fairly and with dignity and respect. It is important that staff work in an environment that is inclusive and supportive, values the diversity staff bring and develop their skills to maximise the impact on student outcomes. The College will aim to ensure that:

- All prospective staff have equal and fair access to employment opportunities.
- Recruitment and selection processes and procedures do not discriminate.
- All staff have a job description that reflects their current role in the organisation.
- All staff have appraisal every academic year.
- Access to training, promotion and career development opportunities is available to all staff.
- To create a supportive and accessible working environment, based on mutual respect and trust.
- All staff will receive timely EDI training.
- Reasonable adjustments will be made to working arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for employees or potential employees who have a disability or a particular health concern.
- The Chairs of recruitment and selection panels are trained in EDI.

- Consideration is given to candidates' views of the recruitment process and that feedback is offered.

10.2   Human Resources (HR) will be responsible for the maintenance and reporting of equality data relating to the workforce.

10.3   The Safeguarding & Equality committee will review and monitor this data to identify any trends or differences between protected groups and agree actions.

11.0   Work Placement Providers, Partners, Contractors, Associated Employers, Visitors and Other Stakeholders

11.1   It is important that the College has effective relationships with partners in delivering the best service possible for students. It is crucial that students can be placed or work with employers that provide safe and inclusive environments.

11.2   All work placement providers, employers and partners will be required to adhere to the EDI policy, and where appropriate, support and advice will be provided.

11.3 The College will work with all stakeholders to highlight issues of under-represented groups.

12.0 Responsibilities

12.1 All members of City of Wolverhampton College have a responsibility to promote EDI. Whilst there is a collective responsibility to ensure the policy is implemented, there are also specific responsibilities as set out below:

- The Governors have the ultimate responsibility for ensuring EDI policy underpins all aspects of our work, in particular business plans and strategic key performance indicators throughout the organisation.
- The application of the policy rests with Senior Managers, including the Principal and Executive Management Team (EMT).
- Vice Principal – Student Engagement is responsible for ensuring that learner-related issues are addressed.
- Vice Principal – People Engagement is responsible for ensuring that staff related issues are addressed.
- Senior and Operational Managers are accountable for delivering the equality commitments in their designated areas of responsibility.
- All staff, students and others to whom this policy applies are responsible for ensuring that they have read and understood the policy.
- All staff, students and those carrying out work or delivering services on behalf of the College and our partners, are required to adhere to this policy.

13.0 Monitoring and Review

13.1 The College will collect, monitor and analyse diversity data, including information about protected characteristic of students and staff to make sure our process is fair and are achieving the aim of this policy. Where appropriate, these will be linked to Strategic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

13.2 The Safeguarding & Equality Manager will collect and analyse student data regarding recruitment, achievement and retention by Protected Characteristics and report this information annually to the Governors, EMT and the Safeguarding and Equality Committee.

13.3 Head of HR will collect and analyse monitoring data on staff with regard to recruitment, training, promotion, re-grading and complaints and report this information annually to the Governors, EMT and Safeguarding & Equality Committee.

13.4 This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects best practice and current legislation.

14.0 Training

14.1   It is mandatory for all staff to complete Equality and Diversity training. New staff are required to attend Equality and Diversity training as part of their induction.

15.0   Complaints

15.1   Students who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination; harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the students' complaints procedure. A copy of the Complaint Procedure is available through the induction process.

15.2   Staff who believe they have suffered any form of discrimination; harassment or victimisation are entitled to raise the matter through the appropriate grievance procedure. A copy of the grievance procedure is available through the HR.

16.0   Breaches of the Policy

16.1   Breaches of this policy, including direct and indirect acts of discrimination, harassment, victimisation, bullying and abuse will be treated as serious disciplinary conduct.

16.2   For staff, the College's grievance and harassment procedure will be applied to address conduct of this nature. For students, the students' disciplinary procedures will be applied.

16.3   The College will make sure that staff and students are aware of the relevant procedures for dealing with incidents relating to discrimination. In addition, the College will not work with contractors or service providers who fail to comply.

17.0   Making the Policy Accessible

17.1   The College will publish the policy through the College website and internal virtual learning platforms. It will also be made available in hard copy to any interested parties and in accessible formats, if requested.

18.0   Advice and Support

18.1   Students and staff requiring support/advice or information about related matters will be able to obtain this by contacting Safeguarding and Equality Manager.