



**Buckinghamshire  
College Group**

# **Equality and Diversity Policy 2017/2018**

Responsible Officer:	Executive Director of Human Resources
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Policy Authorised by:	Executive / Corporation

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## 1. Purpose

- **Buckinghamshire College Group** is committed to encouraging equality and diversity 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.

## 2. Scope

- This policy applies to all members and potential members of the college community, including but not limited to:
  - Staff
  - Students
  - Governors
  - Applicants for jobs
  - Applicants for courses
  - Contractors
  - Employers
  - Work placement providers
- 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 proceedings.

## 3. Statement of Policy

The policy's purpose is to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all.
- Not unlawfully discriminate in line with the 9 protected characteristics as detailed in the Equality Act 2010:
  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
- Commit to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, and fostering good relations between all who work or learn at Buckinghamshire College Group, or use its services.
- Recognise 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 is intended to continuously adapt to new developments and legislations, and to reflect our growing understanding of existing and emerging issues.

#### **4. Policy Aims**

- The aim is for our workforce to be truly representative of all sections of society. For our students, customers and for all stakeholders to feel respected and able to give their best.
- In particular, Buckinghamshire College Group strives to:
  - Encourage equality and diversity in the workplace.
  - Encourage the participation of learners of all abilities.
  - Provide a safe and welcoming physical and learning environment.
  - Develop its facilities and courses to improve access and widen participation.
  - Offer support to meet individual learner and employee needs.
  - Ensure its recruitment processes are fair and transparent.
  - Ensure that the College is an environment that is free from discrimination, bullying or harassment and victimisation.

#### **5. Buckinghamshire College Group's Commitment**

- Buckinghamshire College Group demonstrates its commitment to equality and diversity by:
  - i) The achievement of the Investors in Diversity (IiD) Award in 2015. This will be reviewed at the end of 2017. The IiD quality mark is awarded to institutions that can demonstrate an all-encompassing approach to managing equality, diversity and inclusion, effectively embedding equality and diversity at the heart of what they do.
  - ii) The two ticks scheme is a recognition given by Jobcentre Plus to employers based in Great Britain who have agreed to take action to meet five commitments regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees. The College is authorised to use the Disability symbol "Positive about Disability" by the Job Centre Plus because will it take action on these five commitments:
    - to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities.
    - to ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what can be done to make sure they can develop and use their abilities.
    - to make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment.
    - to take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make these commitments work.
    - each year to review the five commitments and what has been achieved, plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans.
  - iii) The College also displays the MINDFUL EMPLOYER symbol which was attained in 2016. MINDFUL EMPLOYER is aimed at increasing awareness of mental health at work and providing ongoing support for employers in the recruitment and retention of staff.
- This policy demonstrates how Buckinghamshire College Group will meet its commitment to equality of opportunity. In doing so it has three key functions: -
  1. Analysis of local/regional/national demographics (current trends and predictions).

2. Monitoring and action planning to identify issues and ensure that any negative impacts are eliminated, or minimised where possible.
3. Encourage through positive action, initiatives that will promote the full engagement of under-represented groups.

## 6. Performance and Monitoring

- Buckinghamshire College Group will monitor the effectiveness of the Equality and Diversity Policy through the following policies and guidelines, but not limited to:
  - Dignity in the Workplace (staff)
  - Grievance Policy (staff)
  - Compliments, Comments and Complaints (all)
  - Anti-Bullying Policy (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 Policy/Procedure
  - Flexible Working Policy
- Buckinghamshire College Group will consider equality and diversity 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 and diversity.
- Buckinghamshire College Group will develop links and partnerships with external community organisations to support the development of equality and diversity in our locality.
- Monitoring will also include assessing how the equality policy, and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing them annually, and considering and taking action to address any issues.

## 7. The Specific Duties

- Specific duties include the requirement of the college to:
  - Publish information annually, to demonstrate our compliance with the general duty as identified in this policy's *Statement of Policy* section.
  - Prepare and publish one or more objectives that seek to achieve the aims of the general duties under the Single Equality Scheme.

## 8. Responsibilities

Everyone has a responsibility to give full and active support, ensuring:

- The policy is understood and implemented.
- Their behaviour always takes into account the uniqueness of others.
- Everyone is treated with respect, courtesy and dignity.
- Behaviour not in accordance with the policy is challenged and acted upon.

The Governors of Buckinghamshire College Group have responsibility for:

- Promoting equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Ensuring the College meets all its duties under the legislation and that effective policies and procedures are established and effectively monitored.

- Ensuring that equality and diversity is a standard item on Corporation Board meetings.
- Reviewing the strategy, implementation plan and the progress that has been made to implement the College's aims on equality, diversity and inclusion.

The Principal has overall responsibility for (and delegates to the Executive team):

- Giving a consistent and high profile lead on all equality issues.
- Promoting the Equality and Diversity policy both internally and externally.
- Ensuring that the Equality and Diversity policy is fully implemented.

The Equality and Diversity Steering Group, chaired by the Executive Director Human Resources is responsible for:

- The co-ordination, monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Establishing and implementing an annual Single Equality Scheme action plan for the organisation, setting and monitoring equality and diversity impact measures.

The Executive Director Human Resources is responsible for:

- The implementation and monitoring of this policy.
- Ensuring that other organisations working within or for the College work according to the requirements of The Equality Act 2010.
- Ensuring that the College's employment policies, procedures and practices are implemented in accordance with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy.
- Working directly with the Vice Principal Learning and Quality to ensure the effectiveness of the Equality and Diversity Steering Group.

All employees of Buckinghamshire College Group are responsible for:

- Operating within this policy at all times.
- Advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations.
- Challenging inappropriate language and behaviours.
- Completing mandatory equality and diversity training.

## **9. Complaints**

Any member of staff or applicants for employment who believes they have experienced or observed discrimination should seek advice and support from the Executive Director of Human Resources or the Human Resources Business Partners. 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 believes they have experienced or observed discrimination, should raise their concerns with the Executive Director of Human Resources or the Human Resources Business Partners.

The Equality and Diversity Policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trade unions and/or employee representatives.

Details of the College's Grievance and Disciplinary policies and procedures can be found on the College Intranet/Human Resources. This includes with whom an employee should raise a grievance – usually their line manager.

Use of the College's Grievance and/or Disciplinary procedures does not affect an employee's right to make a claim to an employment tribunal within three months from the alleged discrimination taking place.

**Checklist:**

**Impact on Students/Staff:** This policy outlines College guidelines for staff and students when dealing with equality, diversity and inclusion issues

**Impact on Diversity:** The policy is the diversity policy

**Impact on PREVENT:** The policy outlines staff responsibilities re PREVENT in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion

**Impact on Health & Safety:** Potential impact in relation to issues concerning incidents

**Impact on Data Protection/Freedom of Information:** Outlines staff and student guidelines for collection of sensitive personal data for monitoring purposes

**Link with Strategic Plan:** helping to achieve excellence

**Communication/Consultation Plan:** The updated policy will be stored on the intranet for all

**Process of review:** Policy is reviewed annually

**Process of review of effectiveness:** As above

**Legal authority:** in line with the Equality Action 2010 and case law

**Responsibility for maintaining this policy rests with:** Executive Director Human Resources

**Links to other policies:** Dignity in the Workplace (staff); Grievance Policy (staff); Compliments, Comments and Complaints (all); Anti-Bullying Policy (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 Policy/Procedure; Flexible Working Policy;