



**Buckinghamshire
College Group**

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2025-28

Responsible Officer:	Executive Director People and Purpose
Date of issue:	December 2025
Next review date:	December 2028
Policy available:	Intranet, MS Teams and website
Policy Authorised by:	Executive, UNIONS and Corporation

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1. Purpose

Buckinghamshire College Group is committed to encouraging diversity, equality, and inclusion for all, and preventing discrimination, as required by law. Buckinghamshire College Group celebrates and values the diversity of its learners and staff and is committed to equality of opportunity for all. The College operates a zero-tolerance policy in respect of all forms of discrimination.

The aim is to be truly representative of all sections of the community we serve, and for each staff member and student to feel respected and able to give their best.

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 members of the college community are expected to follow this policy, including when working or studying off campus. Behaviour outside college hours may also fall within its scope. Breaches will be taken seriously and may lead to disciplinary action. This is an evolving document, shaped by ongoing consultation with students, staff, partners, and community groups. It will evolve in response to new legislation and emerging issues.

The College recognises the serious nature of any discriminatory incidents on individuals and witnesses. All incidents will be handled sensitively, and where appropriate, may involve multi-agency response under safeguarding procedures.

This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with the trade unions.

3. Definitions

Under the Equality Act 2010, nine protected characteristics are safeguarded from unlawful discrimination:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Equality Act 2010 outlines several types of discrimination, including:

- Direct and indirect discrimination (including associative and perceptible)
- Harassment and victimisation
- Discrimination arising from disability
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires the College to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

This duty also applies to marriage and civil partnership in employment contexts.

The aim of this policy is to set out how Buckinghamshire College Group will meet its responsibilities under the Equality Act and the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring a fair, inclusive and respectful environment for all.

4. Buckinghamshire College Group Commitment

Commitment to Staff, we will:

- Recruit, retain and develop a diverse workforce that reflects our community and learners.
- Promote equality and inclusion throughout recruitment, employment, and professional development.
- Provide reasonable adjustments for disabled staff in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- Foster a workplace free from discrimination, harassment, and victimisation.
- Embed EDI in all aspects of workforce practice and service delivery.

Commitment to Students, we will:

- Promote EDI in all learner-facing materials, admissions, and induction.
- Deliver inclusive teaching and learning that respects individual needs and backgrounds.
- Provide tailored support services, including Additional Learning Support (ALS).
- Celebrate diversity across the learner journey—from curriculum design to enrichment.
- Ensure learners have multiple opportunities to shape their experience through learner voice mechanisms.

Commitment to Stakeholders, we will:

- Ensure our services are accessible to all.
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination wherever it occurs.
- Investigate all allegations of discrimination fairly and sensitively.
- Treat breaches of EDI policy as potential disciplinary matters.
- Build partnerships with community organisations to promote inclusion locally.

5. Performance and Monitoring

In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the College publishes its EDI policy at renewal and sets equality objectives every four years. Progress is reviewed annually and reported to Corporation, with oversight from the EDI Committee.

The College monitors anonymised student and staff data across protected characteristics including age, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, and race. Course level monitoring is embedded in quality reviews. Student data is analysed in Curriculum Quality Reviews with targeted actions included in curriculum and College Quality Improvement Plans to address gaps for underrepresented groups.

Termly reviews of enrolment, retention, achievement, surveys, and complaints inform the annual Self-Assessment Review. Student voice is captured via surveys, reps, and the EDI Committee.

Staff data is monitored through the HR system and annual staff survey, with findings reported to the Executive Team and Board of Governor.

6. Responsibilities

All staff, students, service users, governors, employers, contractors, and volunteers are expected to uphold and support this policy. Anyone may raise concerns about unfair or discriminatory treatment, either informally or formally. Breaches will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action in line with College procedures.

The Governing Body will:

- Exceed statutory EDI responsibilities through its conduct and decision-making.
- Strive for diverse representation within its membership.

- Approve and review the College's EDI policy and EDI objectives.
- Monitor progress against agreed EDI targets.

The Principal and Executive team will:

- Lead visibly and actively on equality matters.
- Approve and oversee the EDI Action Plan.
- Promote the EDI Policy internally and externally.
- Ensure full implementation across the College.

EDI Steering Group, chaired by the Executive Director – People and Purpose and co-chaired by the Assistant Principal - Student Engagement & Support, the group will:

- Monitor policy effectiveness and impact.
- Produce the Annual EDI Report.
- Oversee implementation of the EDI Action Plan, resolving barriers.
- Engage regularly with stakeholder feedback.
- Promote and coordinate EDI related events and activities.

College Leadership Team will:

- Share examples of good EDI practice across the College.
- Identify and address areas for improvement in EDI through self-assessment and quality improvement processes.

Staff will:

- Operate in line with this policy and report concerns.
- Participate in regular EDI training relevant to their roles.

Students will:

- Follow the policy and report concerns.
- Uphold the College's behaviour standards: *Ready, Respectful, Safe*, ensuring fairness and respect for all.

7. Complaints

Any individual who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination, or unfair treatment may raise concerns through:

- Staff: HR or line manager.
- Students: Student Services or designated safeguarding lead.
- Contractors/Visitors/work placement providers: College contact or HR. All complaints will be handled confidentially and in line with relevant procedures.
- Governors: through the Director of Governance.

8. Other Policies and Procedures in Support

Buckinghamshire College Group supports the implementation of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy through a range of related policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- Dignity in the Workplace Policy (staff)
- Grievance Policy (staff)
- Complaints Policy (all)
- Supportive Performance Management Procedure (students)
- Student Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy
- Work Experience & Employability Policy
- Professional Boundaries and Standards Guidelines (staff)
- Recruitment Procedure
- Flexible Working Policy
- Digital Learning Strategy

These policies are reviewed regularly to ensure alignment with EDI principles and legal duties.

The College will embed equality, diversity and inclusion across all aspects of College life and business. All policies and procedures will be developed and reviewed to actively promote and support EDI, ensuring they reflect the needs of our diverse community and comply with statutory obligations.

9. Equality Impact Statement

Section One	
College:	Buckinghamshire College Group
Departments Effected:	Whole College
Who is responsible for the Equality Impact Assessment?	Executive Director People and Purpose
Title (of the policy/practice/decision)	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Description (Provide a brief description of the policy/practice/decision)	This policy encourages diversity, equality, wellbeing and inclusion 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. The College operates a zero tolerance policy in respect of all forms of discrimination.

Section Two – Stakeholder Consultation		
2	Who are the main stakeholders and what consultation exercise are you planning to undertake, if required (eg, consultation with Employee Voice, Trades Unions, Staff groups, Student groups?)	Students, Apprentices, Staff, partners, trade unions, board
3	Are there concerns that this could result in differential or adverse impact on any Equality Groups (Protected Characteristics as identified by the Equality Act 2010)	No

Section Three

Please identify how the policy may impact the following protected characteristics:

- Identify any positive impacts the policy/practice/decision may have on equality groups.
- Identify any negative impacts the policy/practice/decision may have on equality groups.
- Propose measures to mitigate or eliminate identified negative impacts.

Protected Characteristics	Impact High/Me dium/ Low/N/A	Action(s) you will take to mitigate or remove the negative or adverse impact if identified? <small>Propose measures to mitigate or eliminate identified negative impacts</small>
1. Age <i>(eg, are there ways older or younger people may find it difficult to engage?)</i>	Low	No adverse impacts identified. Promote age-inclusive recruitment and development; monitor age diversity in workforce data; offer flexible working options.
2. Disability <i>(eg do you need to consider large print or easy read?)</i>	Low	As above. The separate SEND Support policy and High Needs strategy ensure that all students, including those with hidden disabilities, receive appropriate support.

		Provide assistive technologies, accessible formats, and workplace adjustments; ensure inclusive recruitment practices.
3. Gender identification <i>(eg is your language inclusive of LGBTQ+ groups?)</i>	Low	Update HR systems to reflect preferred names/pronouns; deliver training on gender identity and inclusion.
4. Gender Re-assignment <i>(eg is your language inclusive of trans and non-binary people?)</i>	Low	Provide guidance for managers; ensure access to gender-neutral facilities; protect confidentiality.
5. Marriage and civil partnership <i>(eg does it treat marriage and civil partnerships equally?)</i>	Low	Review benefits and leave policies for inclusivity; monitor for bias in promotion and progression
6. Pregnancy & Maternity <i>(eg with this have an impact on pregnant or those on family leave; breastfeeding services?)</i>	Low	Offer flexible working, phased return, and access to parental support; ensure non-discriminatory practices.
7. Race / Ethnicity <i>(eg does it take into account the needs of people from different groups)</i>	Medium	Monitor recruitment and progression data; provide anti-racism training; engage with diverse staff networks.
8. Religion or Belief <i>(eg do people from faith groups experience any specific disadvantage)</i>	Medium	Accommodate religious observances; provide prayer spaces.
9. Sexual Orientation <i>(eg is your language inclusive of LGBTQ+ groups?)</i>	Low	Celebrate diversity through events; enforce anti-discrimination policies; support diverse staff networks.

Section Four – Monitoring and Review

Does your criteria and procedure promote fairness and equal opportunities? <i>Utilize relevant data sources, such as demographic information, student feedback, or staff surveys, to inform the analysis as necessary</i>	Yes
How will you monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these measures to determine whether it has been effectively and fairly applied	Through the EDI Committee, Employee Voice, Student Engagement Team, staff and student surveys.

Section Five – Outcome, Sign-off and Authorisation

Equality Impact Assessment Outcome Select one of the four options below to indicate how the policy will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision	
Option 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy is robust.	X
Option 2: Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.	
Option 3: Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be mitigated/or justified	
Option 4: Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.	
Name & job title of authorised person	Ruth Osgood Executive Director People and Purpose
Equality Impact Assessment was completed on:	October 2025
Date of next review, and by whom? This may include regular reviews, data analysis, and stakeholder feedback	October 2028 Executive Director People and Purpose