

# Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy

## Procedure:

1. Ensure a statement of our equal opportunities policy is included in the contract of employment, teachers' handbook and staff handbook.
2. Ensure that at all times we are acting legally, avoiding any behaviour which is unlawful or unfair
3. Brief all staff who are in positions where they need to be aware of these issues
4. Ensuring any staff interviewing or selecting staff, trainees, students or others are mindful of company's EOP
5. Ensure opportunities for training and development are given according to need.
6. Develop a culture where issues of equal opportunities are not seen as simply contractual or legal matters but are basic to the culture of the company, by regularly sharing our experiences.
7. Consider advertising for new staff in minority press.
8. Draw up job descriptions and person specifications which avoid choices based on sex, sexual orientation, age (if under the age of retirement) race, colour, religion, political views.

## Foreword

Since its formation UKCE has been committed to working towards equality of opportunity for all staff and students. This version of College Policy is the result of much detailed work by the College and it represents our public declaration of our continued commitment.

We will support any member of the College community who is subjected to discrimination or harassment and we will not tolerate acts of discrimination, harassment or bullying anywhere in the College.

The achievement of our mission fundamentally requires that nobody should be denied their fair chance of success by the actions of others. We all have a responsibility to ensure that the Policy is implemented and to strive to achieve equality of opportunity throughout the College.

## Policy Statement

- UKCE exists to educate and train people to achieve their full potential.
- The College community comprises students, staff and host families. The College requires all its members to treat others with fairness and respect and to show openness and honesty in their dealings with others.
- The College aims to create the conditions whereby students and staff are treated solely on the basis of their merits, abilities and potential, without regard (except where the law specifically provides) to ethnicity, colour or national origin, gender, marital status or family circumstances, disability or learning difficulties, trade union

membership or activity, criminal record, socio-economic background, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation, or other irrelevant distinction.

- The College recognises its statutory responsibilities under United Kingdom and European Union legislation and seeks to combat any form of discrimination, either direct or indirect (see Appendix A for a summary of the key elements of antidiscrimination legislation).

## The Broad Principles

- **Ethnicity, Colour or National Origin**

The College is committed to a policy to eliminate discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, colour or national origin and to counter racist attitudes and behaviour. It is committed to a strategy of positive action, in accordance with the provisions of the Race Relations Act, to increase representation of hitherto under-represented ethnic groups in the workforce and in the student body.

- **Gender, Marital Status and Family Circumstance**

The College is committed to a policy to eliminate unlawful discrimination on grounds of gender, marital status or family circumstance and to increase equality of opportunity between the sexes for both students and staff.

- **Disabilities and Learning Difficulties**

The College is committed to developing positive employment policies in relation to people with disabilities and learning difficulties. It will strive to ensure that students with disabilities and learning difficulties maximise their learning potential and are able to participate fully and equally in all the learning and social activities on offer within the College.

- **Criminal Record**

The College is committed to meeting its statutory responsibilities under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1974) and will strive to ensure that no job applicant or potential student is unfairly disadvantaged on the grounds that they have a criminal record.

- **Trade Union Membership and Activity**

The College is committed to ensuring that no person is treated less favourably in employment because s/he is, or is not, a member of a trade union or on the grounds of trade union activity.

- **Age**

The College believes that prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of age ('ageism') have no place in an educational establishment. There should be no discrimination in employment on the grounds of age, subject to the normal arrangements for employees to

retire at age 65. The College will not discriminate against students on the grounds of age, except where age is an approved criterion for entry to a course.

- **Socio-Economic Background**

The College draws students and staff from widely differing social and economic backgrounds and will strive to ensure that no member of the College community is unfairly disadvantaged because of their social or economic background.

- **Religious or Political Beliefs**

The College believes that lawful preferences, privately held, on any matter, including religion or politics, are a matter for the individual concerned and should not influence decisions relating to employment or educational opportunities.

- **Sexual Orientation**

The College believes that lawful sexual orientation is a matter for the individual concerned and should not influence decisions relating to employment and education. We will strive to ensure that no member of the College community suffers from discrimination as a result of stereotyping or homophobia because of their sexual orientation.

## RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The College is responsible for the Equal Opportunities Policy and for ensuring that all College policies and procedures comply with statutory requirements and promote good practice.

Overall responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of this Policy lies with the Chief Executive.

All members of staff are responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy within their own work area at all times.

It is the duty of all members of the College community to be familiar with and to comply with the requirements of the law and of this Policy. Each individual is expected to exercise personal responsibility for the implementation of the policy within their own area of activity. No member of the College community should ignore, condone or collude with acts of discrimination.

## EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

### Recruitment and Selection of Students

The College strives through the implementation of its Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy to ensure that prospective students are not discriminated against on any of the



grounds referred to under the Broad Principles. Recruitment patterns across the whole College will be reviewed and the recruitment of under-represented groups in particular programmes will be encouraged.

### **Student Induction**

At Induction all students will be informed of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy in relation to their rights and responsibilities and what action to take in the event of perceived unfair treatment.

### **Counselling, Guidance, Advice and Welfare.**

Students and prospective students will be provided with appropriate access to counselling, guidance and advice, welfare advice and support to meet their needs. In our Student Handbook, we have included the addresses of a wide range of places of worship to cater for a diversity of cultures.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

Wherever possible, the College will seek to ensure that both curriculum and assessment will reflect ethnic diversity and the cultural background and traditions of the different groups in our community.

Learner management techniques will recognise diversity and will avoid stereotypical assumptions. All students will be encouraged to participate fully in the learning process.

### **Discipline and Grievance**

The College will ensure that in grievance and disciplinary procedures it complies with the laws regarding discrimination. Particular attention should be paid to ensure that no student is disadvantaged because of communication difficulties.

## **COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT AND FACILITIES**

The College is committed to maintaining a working and learning environment which encourages all staff and students to contribute fully and on an equal basis to the life of the College. Every effort will be made so that, insofar as is reasonably practicable, all parts of the College are welcoming, accessible and safe for all members and potential members of the College community.

When providing accommodation, the College will take account of the needs, including dietary needs, of all the groups listed under the Broad Principles.

## **COMMUNICATIONS AND COLLEGE PUBLICITY**

In planning and implementing its communications strategy covering all forms of internal, external written, visual and verbal communications, the College will:

- promote the use of positive, non-stereotypical images of all the groups listed



in the Broad Principles

- show respect for all persons and sensitivity to their individual needs
- avoid the use of inappropriate language or imagery which might constitute indirect discrimination
- create an atmosphere in which all members of the College community feel needed and valued

## **OTHER USERS OF COLLEGE PREMISES AND FACILITIES**

All users of College premises (e.g. those hiring facilities) will be expected to respect the law and to act in the spirit of the College's Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY**

The College is committed to monitoring the effectiveness of its Equal Opportunities and Diversity policy. The Policy will be reviewed periodically as required by the Corporation.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM**

If any member of the College community feels that there has been a breach of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Policy, they should draw this to the attention of a member of College management.

Information about the procedures to be followed in dealing with breaches of this Policy may be obtained from course tutors (for students) or Management (for staff).

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES LEGISLATION Appendix A**

The key elements of UK legislation which are relevant to this policy are:

- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended 1983)
- The Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974
- The Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992

In addition to these UK anti-discrimination laws, it is also important to be aware of the provisions of European Union law, whether or not they have been subsequently enacted in UK legislation. Examples of EU Directives on equal opportunities issues are those covering Equal Treatment and Pregnant Workers.

## **The Sex Discrimination Act (SDA) and the Race Relations Act (RRA)**

The SDA and the RRA render unlawful two types of discrimination:

1. Future Facing
2. Achievement through quality
3. Supporting a global community
4. Commitment to the individual

Direct discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably than another person is, or would be, treated, on the grounds of sex or race. Indirect discrimination, where a condition is applied equally to both sexes, or all races, and cannot be justified except on the grounds of sex or race, and has the effect of disproportionately disadvantaging one sex or racial group(s) because the proportion of one sex or racial group(s) which can comply with the condition is considerably smaller than the proportion of the other sex or racial group(s) which can comply with it.

The SDA and the RRA make it unlawful to discriminate, directly or indirectly, in employment, training and related matters, in the provision of education, in the provision of goods, facilities and services to the public; and in the disposal and management of premises.

Under the Acts the following are also unlawful:

- Instructions to discriminate
- Pressure to discriminate
- Segregation
- Harassment
- Knowingly aiding any unlawful act of discrimination.
- Victimization

An employer is responsible for any act of discrimination done by an employee in the course of her/his employment, whether or not it was done with the employer's knowledge.

The Codes of Practice of the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) and the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) contain recommendations and guidance for employers on how to avoid race and sex discrimination in employment. Although the codes do not have the force of law, they are approved by Parliament and their provisions are taken into account by industrial tribunals.

### **The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)**

The employment provisions of the DDA came into effect in December 1996. These provisions render it unlawful to discriminate against a disabled person either by refusing to offer employment on grounds of disability, or to discriminate against them in the course of employment (e.g. in respect of training, promotion, terms of employment, working conditions, etc.).

Under the DDA employers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments to working arrangements or premises in order to accommodate the needs of disabled employees and job applicants.

### **The Equal Pay Act 1970 (as amended 1983) (EPA)**

The EPA entitles an employee to equal pay (and other contractual terms and conditions) with an employee of the opposite sex if they are doing work which is the same or broadly similar; or which has been rated as equivalent by an analytical job evaluation scheme; or which can be shown to be of equal value in terms of the demands made on the worker.



## The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 gives ex-offenders the right to be rehabilitated and to regard their conviction as being 'spent' after a specified period of time, subject to certain conditions. It is illegal for an employer to discriminate against an ex-offender on the grounds of a spent conviction.

However, various kinds of employment are exempted from the provisions of the Act and these include certain posts at the College which involve substantial unsupervised access to students under the age of sixteen or under eighteen with special needs.

*Reviewed in November 2019*

*Reviewed annually or more often if required*