

PLUMPTON COLLEGE

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

1. General aim

Plumpton College is committed to a policy of equal access and opportunity for all regardless of age, race, nationality, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, social background, religion, disability or special need. The College is committed to promoting equality and to removing of barriers that prevent members of the community from gaining access to and/or maximum benefit from provision offered by the College.

2. Purpose of this policy

This policy states how the College will promote equality and fairness in all its work, both as an employer and as a provider of education and training. It sets out how the College will work to value diversity, eliminate discrimination and promote good relations between people of different groups. It outlines the responsibilities of staff, students and others in promoting the policy and should be read in conjunction with the policies relating to specific facets of Equality and Diversity shown as appendices to this policy.

3. Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

The College believes that:

- All people have a right to work or study at the College with an equal chance of success, free from fear of discrimination, harassment or intimidation
- Promoting equality, fairness and diversity in the College is everybody's responsibility

The College places equality and fairness at the heart of all activities and believes that the following values are central to achieving its Mission:

- Embracing and celebrating diversity
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment
- Removing barriers to access
- Raising awareness of equality and diversity issues
- Combating all forms of discrimination and harassment

The College will strive to achieve these values by:

- working to ensure equality of access and resources for all
- providing an environment which promotes equality and diversity and is free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation and stereotyping of any kind
- preparing students for life and work in a diverse society
- working to establish a workforce which broadly reflects the local community
- respecting equally, supporting appropriately and rewarding fairly each student, employee, and user of its services
- training staff in equality and diversity issues and how to put them into practice
- monitoring and evaluating provision and policies
- fair recruitment processes
- complying with all current equalities legislation in employment and provision of teaching and services.

4. Responsibilities for Equality and Diversity

Under legislation and this policy, **every member of staff, student and third party has a responsibility to:**

- listen to what others have to say and respect their point of view
- understand that it is unlawful to discriminate on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability and that disciplinary action will be taken against those involved in discrimination, harassment or bullying on any grounds
- speak out, or report it, if they witness or are aware of bullying, harassment, vindictiveness, verbal or physical aggression – and not assume that it is someone else's responsibility
- question their own prejudices and assumptions
- avoid using language and behaviour which might offend others
- familiarise themselves with the responsibilities that equalities legislation places on them
- be sensitive to issues of cultural diversity in their work

The Corporation is responsible for setting the policy and monitoring its implementation.

The Principal and Senior Management Team have overall responsibility for:

- the implementation and operation of this policy
- approving an E&D annual report to governors
- ensuring the College works to widen participation in education and meet the learning needs of students

Heads of Department are responsible for:

- ensuring that their staff understand equal opportunities issues and how to report any perceived discrimination or unequal opportunity
- apportioning development opportunities for their staff on a fair, objective basis based on individuals' and College needs
- ensuring that part-time staff are not disadvantaged in any way and that complaints of discrimination or offensive behaviour are dealt with promptly
- ensuring proactive dialogue about equal opportunities issues and practices with partner organisations, contractors, customers, students and employers providing work experience to students.

Service providers working on College premises and work placement providers are expected to operate within the law and to adopt the terms of this policy.

Appropriate action may be taken against anybody who does not comply with the requirements of this policy.

5. General principles

- **College publicity:** an equal opportunities statement will appear in appropriate College literature. Publicity material relating to the College will be designed to reflect the diversity of the College community.
- **Student trends across the whole College:** will be reviewed and the recruitment of under-represented groups in particular programme areas will be encouraged. This will be monitored in programme team meetings, programme team/Senior Management Team review. Annually, the Management Information Systems Officer will produce a College summary for the Governors' Academic Committee.

- **Staff recruitment:** the College will follow the principles of this policy in the recruitment, advertisement, shortlisting, interviewing, selection and appointment of staff.
- **Staff and recruitment trends:** will be reviewed and monitored, with annual reports submitted to the Governors' Finance & General Purposes Committee.
- **Staff and student induction:** all students and staff will be advised about the College's Equality and Diversity policy and of the complaints procedure that they can undertake in the event of perceived unfair treatment.
- **Counselling, guidance and careers advice:** the College Student Services Team and Development Tutors will provide counselling, guidance and careers advice to help address the needs of all students.
- **College facilities:** these are regularly reviewed to ensure that the needs of all students and staff are considered and met within the limitations of the College's financial and other resources.
- **Work placement and work experience:** College staff will encourage employers to adopt a positive approach to students on work placement, regardless of learning difficulties, special need, age, gender, race, marital status, sexual orientation, social background, religion or disability. Employer and work placement providers will be given copies of the College Equal Opportunities Policy, and the implications of the Policy and the operational consequences will be discussed with employers or workplace providers.
- **Curriculum review and development:** the College's teaching teams will regularly review the content of their courses to reflect and incorporate the tenets of the Equal Opportunities Policy via programme team meetings and the annual programme/Senior Management Team meetings.
- **Teaching and learning observations:** observers will monitor the implementation of equal opportunities in teaching and learning.
- **Staff training:** all staff will receive equality and diversity training every three years.

6. Complaints under the Equality and Diversity policy

Any individual who is experiencing discriminatory harassment or bullying should raise the issue under the College's procedures on harassment and bullying. Other complaints concerning unfair treatment within the scope of this policy should be raised under the Student Complaints Procedure or the Staff Grievance Procedure.

Appendices

Appendix A	Race Policy
Appendix B	Disability Policy

PLUMPTON COLLEGE RACE EQUALITY POLICY

1. Our commitment

The College strives to ensure that everyone is equally valued and treats one another with respect.

We will work towards the elimination of racism whether overt, covert, or by omission, and we will ensure that individuals and communities have equal access to our learning programmes and facilities. This policy reflects the College's commitment to equal opportunities and it places an obligation on staff to promote good practice. The College will treat all complaints seriously, with respect and empathy.

2. Our statutory duties

Under the Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000), the College has the following general duties:

- eliminate unlawful race discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity
- promote good relations between people of different racial groups

The College also has the following specific duties:

- prepare a written statement of its policy for promoting race equality
- put in place arrangements for implementing the policy, publicising its contents and effectiveness
- assess the impact of its policies on students and staff of different racial groups
- review, by reference to those racial groups, the admission and progress of students and the recruitment and career progress of staff
- include in the statement how the process will be publicized
- publish annually the results of its review

3. Meeting our duties

We will seek to ensure that:

- Governors, staff, learners, partners and all stakeholders (including work placement providers) are aware of our race equality policy and the action needed for its implementation
- Governors, staff, learners, partners and all stakeholders (including work placement providers) are aware of the value placed upon equal opportunity and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the policy
- Governors and staff have access to comprehensive information which will assist them to carry out their responsibilities under the policy
- The College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about ethnic minority groups
- Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity
- Ethnic minority learners have access to appropriate support and facilities
- Applicants for employment are drawn from a wide pool with positive action to encourage applications from under-represented groups
- Recruitment and promotion procedures are designed to eliminate cultural bias
- Staff development is designed to meet particular needs of under-represented groups

4. Monitoring our progress

To inform the setting of action points and the measurement of our progress in achieving them, we will collect and analyse the following information where reasonably practicable:

For learners:

- Enrolments by course area
- Retention
- Achievement

For employees:

- Ethnic profiles of employees
- Job application rates
- Selection success rates
- Type of contract

5. How we will use this information

The analyses will help the College to:

- Monitor representation of staff and students from different racial groups
- Review any areas of under-representation and develop action plans to address issues as appropriate
- Review good practice in other colleges to continually monitor our policy and action plan

6. Division of responsibilities

Governors are responsible for ensuring that:

- Every effort is made to ensure that the membership of the Corporation reflects the diversity of the communities served by the College
- The College's strategic plan includes a commitment to race equality
- They are aware of their statutory responsibilities in relation to race and ethnicity legislation
- They receive ethnic monitoring information on learners and staff

Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- The College Principal and Senior Management Team are responsible for taking the lead in creating a positive, inclusive ethos that challenges racist or inappropriate behaviour on the part of managers, staff or learners.
- They are aware of this policy and the duties in relation to race and ethnicity legislation
- The College's strategic plan includes a commitment to race equality
- All aspects of College policy and activity are sensitive to race and ethnicity issues
- Ethnic monitoring information is collected and analysed, and appropriate action is taken if necessary to target under-represented groups for both learners and staff
- Teaching observation reports ensure issues around race and ethnicity are addressed
- Internal verification procedures include scrutiny of race and ethnicity issues
- Curriculum areas assess performance in relation to race and ethnicity and take action as appropriate
- The procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff promote best practice in equal opportunities
- The College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about minority ethnic groups
- Induction programmes and tutorial programmes reflect the College's commitment to promote equality of opportunity

Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of this policy and the College's duties in relation to race and ethnicity legislation
- Their schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity
- They challenge inappropriate behaviour by either learners, work placement providers or other members of staff

7. Publicising our policy and progress

To the public:

- We will highlight our commitment to racial equality in our prospectus, strategic plan and annual report.
- We will include a summary of the results of our monitoring information in our annual report.

To learners:

- We will make all learners aware of the policy through induction materials. Copies of the policy will be on display in the resources centre, student services and reception.
- We will highlight in the learners' induction programme the College's commitment to racial equality, action to be taken by learners who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against any perpetrators of discrimination.
- Tutors will reinforce this information during tutorials or work based monitoring visits.

To work placement providers, partners and franchisees:

- We will give a copy of this policy to all work placement providers, partners and franchisees.

To staff:

- We will make all staff aware of the policy as part of the Staff Handbook.
- The induction programme will highlight the college's commitment to racial equality, action to be taken by staff and learners who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against any perpetrators of discrimination.
- We will include the results of staff monitoring in the annual equal opportunities report to the Corporation.

8. Complaints

The College will seek to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment. Acts of racial discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation or abuse will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

Staff who feel they are being discriminated against on racial grounds by other members of staff should raise the matter under the grievance / harassment procedure. If, in the course of their work, College staff suffer racial discrimination from members of the public, the College will take appropriate action and provide appropriate support.

Any racist behaviour directed against staff by students will be dealt with under the student disciplinary procedure.

9. Review and Consultation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Finance & General Purposes Committee and Academic Committees in respect of employee and teaching/student issues respectively. As part of the review the Committees will seek and take into account the views of stakeholders including learners, work placement providers, trade union representatives, partners and franchisees.

**Plumpton College
Disability Equality Policy**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The College recognises that it has obligations under The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 Part 2 (DDA), The European Framework Directive 2000, and other relevant legislation.
- 1.2. The College undertakes as a minimum to recognise as disabled all those who fall within the definition given in the Disability Discrimination Act i.e. "A person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he/she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his/her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities".
- 1.3. The Government has stated its intention to extend the positive duty on employers to promote equality and good relations between members of different groups to cover disability as well as race.

2. Our commitment

- 2.1. The College celebrates and values the diversity brought to its workforce by individuals. It believes that the College will benefit from employing both disabled and non-disabled people at all levels of responsibility, and across all areas of work. This will also provide role models for a variety of students in whatever area of the curriculum they are interested in. The College is committed to equality of treatment for all employees regardless of whether they have a physical or mental impairment. This will apply to the operation and implementation of all its employment policies. The College will treat all employees with respect and dignity, and seek to provide a positive working environment free from disability discrimination, harassment or victimisation.
- 2.2. The College will seek not only to eliminate disability discrimination, but also to create a working environment based on good relations between disabled people and non-disabled people. The aim is to create a positive inclusive ethos with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing stereotyping, prejudice and disability discrimination, to respecting diversity and difference, and to encouraging good relations between disabled people and non-disabled people.
- 2.3. The College will work towards the elimination of prejudice and discrimination, whether overt or covert, and will seek to ensure that all staff have equal access to the full range of College facilities.
- 2.4. Most of the detail of this policy relates to those staff who have declared a disability. However, the College will seek to fulfil its duty of care to those staff who do not declare a disability, but who the College as employer could reasonably have been expected to know of the existence of a disability.
- 2.5. Where information is divulged in confidence, every attempt will be made to respect this.
- 2.6. The College will view sympathetically all recommendations made after an assessment carried out under the Access to Work Scheme, and will make all the required contributions towards the cost of providing the recommended reasonable adjustments.

3. Our legal duties

The College undertakes to fulfil all the legal duties put upon it by:

- 3.1. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the associated Guidance and Codes of Practice, especially “The Code of Practice for the elimination of discrimination in the field of employment against disabled persons or persons who have had a disability”. This means there will be no discrimination against staff on grounds of disability in access to employment, training, working conditions, terms of employment, treatment at work, promotion or dismissal. The College undertakes to fulfil its duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable staff to do their work, and not to treat staff with a disability less favourably than those without.
- 3.2 The wide range of other legislative provision which relates to disability discrimination, including:
 - The Employment Rights Act 1996
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - Pensions Act 1995
 - Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

4. Recruitment and selection

- 4.1. The College will not discriminate on grounds of disability in the way it recruits and selects staff.
- 4.2 The College will ensure that:
 - 4.2.1 Job descriptions and person specifications will be drafted to ensure they do not exclude people with disabilities.
 - 4.2.2 Recruitment materials will be fully accessible, and made available in a range of alternative formats.
 - 4.2.3 Interviews will be fully accessible, and reasonable adjustments will be made to allow candidates with a disability to attend the interview without being placed at a disadvantage.
 - 4.2.4 Impairments will not be used to excuse the non-recruitment of candidates who meet the minimum criteria.
 - 4.2.5 Where candidates have particular needs, consideration will be given to the adaptations needed to enable the candidate to do the job, assuming they meet the essential criteria in the person specification.
- 4.3 The College undertakes that all applicants for a vacant post will be given the opportunity to ask to be considered under the guaranteed interview scheme if they have a disability and meet the minimum criteria as specified in the person specification.

Efforts will be made to redress any under-representation of disabled people by positive action [e.g. advertising in the disability press].
- 4.4 All advertisements will include a commitment to equality.

5. *Appointment*

- 5.1 If a candidate is considered suitable for appointment the College will follow the advice given in the Employment Code of Practice under the DDA to enable a new appointee to carry out the job, providing some reasonable adjustments are made.

The College will pay due regard to the reasonable adjustments set out in 6[3] of the DDA, by considering, for example;

- Adjusting the premises
- Allocating some of the duties to another person
- Altering working hours
- Allowing time off for treatment
- Making College materials available in the preferred format
- Acquiring or modifying equipment

- 5.2 The College will discuss with the new appointee and relevant experts what reasonable adjustments are needed. If there is not sufficient expertise available in the College to deal with a particular reasonable adjustment, the College will seek the advice of the Disability Employment Adviser under the Access to Work scheme.

- 5.3. Where adaptations are to be introduced that affect other employees, notification will be given to those employees and their union representatives, and the most suitable arrangement for all parties will be reached taking into account confidentiality issues.

6. *Career development*

- 6.1 All employees shall have equal rights to training, promotion and other aspects of career development. Special employment needs will not be used to justify a failure to promote or train any employee.

- 6.2 The College undertakes that all the training and staff development that it provides will be fully accessible to all, including venues, materials and provision of support staff if required.

- 6.3. Line managers of staff who have declared a disability will ask such staff at least once a year if their needs have changed, and if any steps need to be taken to ensure that their development needs are met.

7. *Retention*

- 7.1. The College undertakes to make every effort to ensure that an employee who becomes disabled and who wishes to remain in employment is enabled to do so.

- 7.2. An employee who becomes disabled and declares this to the College has the right to a meeting with their line manager, their union representative, and a member of personnel staff. At this meeting, the needs of the employee should be discussed and agreed. Medical advice might also be sought about the employee's needs, which might include a period of paid disability leave to adjust to changed circumstances [the amount of time to be agreed at the meeting] adaptations to the work environment, job redesign or training.

- 7.3. An employee who requests a transfer to part-time work, or lighter duties, on the grounds of disability, whether on a short-term or permanent basis, will have their request sympathetically considered.

- 7.4 If an employee develops a disability which makes it impossible for them to do their existing job, but they wish to be redeployed to a job they can do, the College undertakes to make every effort to redeploy them, including providing training where necessary.
- 7.5. Paid time off for medical appointments/treatment related to their disability will be granted at all times. Employees who can control the timing of their appointments/treatment should consider the needs of the College.

8. *Dismissal*

- 8.1 The College will ensure that there is no disability discrimination in relation to dismissal of staff. In particular, should a redundancy situation occur, it will ensure that disability is not a factor in the selection of those to be made redundant. For staff who have declared a disability, sick leave shall not be used as a criteria for selecting for redundancy. For more details see The Redundancy Handling Procedure.

9. *Harassment*

- 9.1 Disability harassment is viewed by the College as a very serious offence, which if proven may in certain circumstances lead to the dismissal of a member of staff, or, if an employee is harassed by a student, the expulsion of that student. For details of handling harassment claims, see The Harassment Policy.

10. *Ensuring equality between disabled people and non-disabled people*

- 10.1 The College is committed to work to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in employment practices, as well as to encourage changes in individual behaviour and attitudes, and ensure equality of opportunity and treatment for disabled people and non-disabled people.
- 10.2 The College undertakes to provide disability awareness training to all its staff. This will include examination of the appropriate use of language.
- 10.3 The College will endeavour to ensure that its publications and publicity material promote positive images of disabled people in both language and illustration.

11. *Part-time working*

The College accepts that any unequal treatment of part-time workers is likely to have an adverse impact on disabled people. To avoid disability discrimination, the College will adhere closely to The Employment of Part-Time Employees Policy.

12. *Monitoring and positive action*

- 12.1 The monitoring process will be used to ensure that disabled staff and non-disabled staff are treated equally.
- 12.2 To inform the setting of targets [as required by the Learning and Skills Council Equality and Diversity Impact Measures] and the measurement of progress in achieving them, the College will collect and analyse the following information about disability.
- Disability profile of employees by grade/salary scale and type of work
 - Job application and selection success rates.
 - Type of contract (permanent, temporary agency)
 - Training/Staff Development

- Staff recruitment, development and promotion.
- Grievances, disciplinary and capability proceedings
- Exit Interviews.

13 Division of responsibilities

13.1 Governors are recommended to try to ensure that the membership of the Corporation includes disabled people.

Governors are responsible for ensuring that:

- The College has a commitment to disability equality.
- They are aware of the Corporation's statutory responsibilities in relation to disability legislation as an employer
- They receive and respond to the disability monitoring information on staff.

13.2 Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- The College Principal and Senior Management Team are responsible for taking the lead in challenging discriminatory behaviour on the part of the managers, staff or learners and creating a positive, inclusive ethos
- They are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to disability legislation
- All aspects of College policy and activity are sensitive to disability issues
- Disability monitoring information is collected and analysed
- The procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff enshrine best practice in equal opportunities
- The College's publicity materials present appropriate positive and non-stereotypical messages about disabled people and non-disabled people.
- Appropriate training and development is provided to support the appreciation and understanding of diversity.

13.3 Staff are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to disability legislation
- Their schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of cultural diversity
- They challenge prejudiced and discriminatory behaviour, whether witting or unwitting, by learners, work placement providers, outside contractors or other members of staff whenever practicable.
- They respond positively to the needs of disabled staff and students who they come in contact with in the course of their work.

14 Publicising our policy and progress

14.1 To the public (including learners, work placement providers and staff):

14.1.2 Our commitment to disability equality will be highlighted in our prospectus and annual report

14.1.3 A summary of the results of our monitoring information will be included in our annual report, where this does not breach individual confidentiality.

14.2 To staff:

14.2.1 A full copy of the policy will be placed on the staff intranet.

14.2.2 The staff induction programme will highlight the College's commitment to disability equality, action to be taken by staff who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against any perpetrators of such discrimination.

15 Complaints

15.1 The College will seek to provide a supportive environment for staff who make claims of discrimination or harassment.

15.2 Acts of disability discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation or abuse will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

15.3 Staff who feel they are being discriminated against on grounds of disability by other members of staff should raise the matter under the Grievance/Harassment Procedure, which will, if the accusation is upheld, be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.

15.4 If, in the course of their work, College staff suffer disability discrimination from members of the public, the College will take appropriate action and provide appropriate support.

15.5 Any discriminatory behaviour directed against staff by students will be dealt with under the student disciplinary procedure.

16 Review and consultation

16.1 This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice.

17 Implementation

17.1 The College, working in partnership with the recognised trade unions and employee representatives, will seek to ensure that all staffing policies and procedures (e.g. Recruitment and Selection Procedure) are non-discriminatory, and that monitoring and positive action processes are regularly reviewed and monitored.

18 General

18.1 This policy should not be read in isolation, but cross-referenced with all relevant College employment policies.

November 2007