



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

1. Policy Aim

BCA is committed to creating an environment where learners, customers, staff, governors and other stakeholders celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion in all activities and promote the outcomes of Every Child Matters.

It is the policy of this College to provide and promote an environment which is open and equal, where everyone is treated only on their merits and abilities whatever their circumstances or background.

The College recognises that discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, social background or any personal characteristic of the individual(s), marital status, nationality/citizenship, religious belief or any other irrelevant distinction will not be tolerated.

Learners, customers, staff, governors and other stakeholders are expected to behave in a way which makes other people feel accepted, comfortable and safe by removing discrimination and encouraging diversity.

BCA values everyone as an individual and celebrates diversity by encouraging everyone to be successful as themselves.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy outlines the responsibilities of all learners, customers, staff, governors and other stakeholders.

2. Commitment, Responsibilities and Procedures

2.1 Commitment to Learners

The College recognises that an open and equal environment will allow each learner to best achieve their educational, personal and social goals and to make the most useful contribution to the life of the College.

The College is committed to:

- a) Working with both regional and local communities in providing access to the College and its facilities
- b) Ensuring that marketing and promotional materials are evaluated for their suitability in promoting access to the educational opportunities offered at the College for all potential students
- c) Presenting and preparing course materials that avoid unfair bias and stereotyping.
- d) Evaluating entrance criteria to identify and to strive to remove all barriers to entry that discriminate against applicants
- e) Informing all learners of the "Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy" as part of their induction programme
- f) Providing appropriate support that is tailored to meet the needs of specific individuals or groups via:
 - i) Tutorial support that offers educational and personal guidance
 - ii) Access to language, literacy and numeracy support that enables learners to participate in the full curriculum

- g) Ensuring that within the classroom and the wider college, discrimination between learners is discouraged.

2.2 Commitment to Staff

The College recognises that an open and equal environment will enable staff to best achieve career goals and aspirations and will reinforce their commitment to ensuring that the experience of students is beneficial and stimulating.

The College is committed to:

- a) Providing all staff with equal opportunity in all aspects of employment, training and career progression.
- b) Providing an induction programme for all new staff that will include information and understanding on equality, diversity and inclusion within the college and curriculum.
- c) Supporting staff in understanding and meeting their responsibilities by providing appropriate training and guidance through staff development programmes and providing appropriate ways to discuss concerns.

2.3 Responsibilities of Managers

All Managers recognise that promoting equality, diversity and inclusion is an integral part of the quality in management within the College.

Managers are committed to:

- a) Providing monitoring facilities which enable the effectiveness of this policy to be evaluated and reported on.
- b) Ensuring that job descriptions and advertisements are non discriminatory and appointments, both internal and external, are made on the basis of the candidate's ability to demonstrate their suitability for the position
- c) Working towards the removal of any barriers to entry so that all potential learners have equal access to the full curriculum
- d) Encouraging fair levels of representation from all areas of the community at all levels within the College, ensuring that the needs and interests of all are fairly represented
- e) Ensuring that external partners, including work placement providers, are aware of the College's 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy' and that their own policies and ethos are sympathetic to the College's objectives.

2.4 Responsibilities of Staff

All staff should recognise, respect, implement and maintain the College's 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy'

Staff are committed to:

- a) Ensuring that fellow staff and all learners and visitors are treated equally and fairly and are provided with the necessary support to achieve their full potential during their time at College

- b) Recognising safeguarding issues and that harassment, which may deliberately or unconsciously cause humiliation, offence or distress is a hostile act. Anyone who suffers from or witnesses an incident of harassment has a duty to report such behaviour
- c) Applying the entry procedures, assessment criteria and tutorial support in a way that any discriminatory barriers are identified and removed
- d) Ensuring that promotional material, curriculum materials and delivery advance equality and access, and that the learning environment reflects the diversity of cultures, backgrounds and experiences of all learners
- e) Ensuring that student references are fair and reflect a professional and measured view of achievements, progress and personal behaviour

2.5 Responsibilities of Learners

All learners should give equal consideration to their fellow learners and members of staff and recognise that diversity adds to, not detracts from their experiences at College.

Learners are responsible for:

- a) Reading and understanding the college's 'Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy' and observing both the content and spirit of the Policy
- b) Respecting the personal rights, freedoms and integrity of learners and staff, behaving in a way that ensures that fellow learners and staff are not isolated or belittled
- c) Recognising safeguarding issues and that harassment, which includes persistent teasing, comments about personal characteristics and bullying is a hostile act. Anyone who suffers from or witnesses an incident of harassment has a duty to report such behaviour.

2.6 Implementation

- a) The Principal has responsibility for ensuring the implementation and monitoring of this policy and will provide regular reports to the Executive and Corporation Board as appropriate
- b) Managers will co-ordinate the application of policy and procedures through development and induction programmes
- c) All staff and learners will be encouraged to contribute ideas to promote non-discriminatory practices in all aspects of College life.

This policy takes account of existing statutory regulations.

2.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The promotion of equality of opportunity is a dynamic process; monitoring and evaluating performance encourages continuous improvement.

- a) An annual report will be submitted to the Academic Board and Corporation detailing progress on learner recruitment, enrolment and progression trends
- b) The Principal will make an annual report on staff turnover, recruitment, sickness and development to the Employment and Personnel Committee
- c) The College will provide opportunity for all learners to comment on the effectiveness of their learning and experience through College Evaluation Surveys, focus groups and representation on both student and management committees

- d) Any feedback from staff or learners which identifies a significant divergence from the content or spirit of this policy, will be investigated and reported to Senior Management for action
- e) Course teams will include a review of progress in achieving the aims of this policy as part of the annual self-assessment process. This may include identifying the support or additional resource they require to meet their responsibilities.

2.8 Grievances and Complaints

The College's procedures are designed to ensure that staff or learners seldom, if ever encounter discrimination. However, openness and equality includes the freedom to raise grievances in an atmosphere free from the fear of intimidation or harassment

- a) Any member of staff who considers they are suffering from harassment or discrimination should take their complaint to their line manager or to any other Senior Manager who they feel they can trust
- b) Any learner who considers they are suffering from harassment or discrimination should take their complaint to their tutor, a member of the safeguarding team or any other member of staff who they feel they can trust
- c) Any complaint will be treated seriously and in the strictest confidence
- d) The complainant may take representation through a colleague or friend. If the complaint is upheld then the complainant will receive redress as laid down in the staff and student grievance procedures.

Serious breaches of this policy may be considered a disciplinary offence and will be dealt with in the manner laid down in the staff and learner disciplinary procedures.

3. Policy Statements

3.1 The college will work to ensure that:

- a) Equality of opportunity is embedded in all policies, practices, decision-making and evaluation processes
- b) *A single Equality Scheme is in place, published and monitored annually*
- c) Impact assessments are completed in respect of all policies and procedures
- d) A visibly diverse environment is created which values difference and raises aspiration
- e) Flexible opportunities are offered which meet local learning needs and enable all students to realise their potential
- f) All staff are clear about standards and strategies to meet diverse learner needs and are equipped to respond effectively
- g) The fullest participation of all students and staff is secured in all areas of College life
- h) Issues of under-representation will be addressed and where appropriate incorporated into equality, diversity and inclusion impact measures
- i) There are clear procedures for challenging discrimination, harassment and unacceptable behaviour
- j) Rigorous analysis is undertaken to identify equality, diversity and inclusion gaps; strategies to address these issues are implemented and monitored through equality, diversity and inclusion impact measures
- k) Comprehensive and imaginative feedback systems are developed to capture learner, staff and stakeholder perceptions of our performance and potential for improvement
- l) Positive images of achievement from all sections of society are recognised and celebrated

- m) No member of the College community is unfairly disadvantaged because of their social or economic background
- n) Job applications are welcomed from all sections of the community and selection is made on the basis of specified skills and abilities. Exceptions are only permitted in the event that there is a genuine occupational requirement

- 3.2 Inclusiveness is central to all the decisions and actions of the College staff. Staff and governors are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of, and meet, their statutory responsibilities. Learners are made aware of, and expected to behave in a way that is consistent with, the College's "Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy". Individual breaches of the policy will be dealt with under the Student or Staff Disciplinary Procedures. The College will support individuals who have a justified complaint. The Whistle Blowing Procedure may be one mechanism in which an issue could be raised.
- 3.3 The College believes a commitment to equality is more effectively met when it is embedded across a range of activities and is alert to the need to demonstrate the efficacy of commitments which are implicit and integrated. The College will also develop a clear set of equality, diversity and inclusion measures to assess the impact of its policy and practice and benchmark College performance against comparable external outcomes.
- 3.4 The following sections of the policy support the overall aims above and the policy statements at 3.1, and consider particular aspects of equality, diversity and inclusion.

4. Gender

4.1 Position Statement

The College will:

- a) Work actively to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all that enables full participation and success in learning and employment and will open up opportunities by actively combating discrimination in every area of College life. The College will not allow sexual harassment or unfavourable treatment in any form.
- b) Recognise that people are often treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of their gender. The College aims to eradicate gender discrimination and to actively promote gender equality
- c) Recognise the importance of listening and responding to the needs of every individual involved in College life. We understand the potential damage that may be caused by gender discrimination and will take positive action to break this cycle.

4.2 Policy Statements

The college will:

- a) Oppose sexism and be committed to taking positive action to identify and remove sexism from College life
- b) Be proactive in the development of equality of opportunity for all throughout their College career
- c) Monitor and review the participation and performance of male and female students and redress inequalities
- d) Positively encourage learners into non-traditional areas of study and work to minimise gender stereotyping

- e) Not tolerate sexual harassment in any area of College life. Any incidences of sexual harassment will be vigorously challenged through College disciplinary procedures
- f) Not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of gender re-assignment towards either transgendered or transsexual people
- g) Ensure that policies, procedures and opportunities for professional development will be family-friendly to encourage full participation

5. Sexual Orientation

5.1 Position Statement

The College:

- a) Is working actively to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all which is conducive to excellent practice in education, training and employment. The College actively combats discrimination, sexual harassment or unfavourable treatment in every area of College life
- b) Recognises that people are often treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of their sexuality. The College's aim is to eradicate discrimination on the grounds of sexuality and to promote equality of opportunity for all

5.2 Policy Statements

The College will:

- a) Strongly oppose discrimination on the grounds of sexuality and is committed to taking positive action to identify and remove homophobia from College life
- b) Encourage positive acceptance of gay, lesbian, bisexual, gender re-assignment and heterosexual people
- c) Not tolerate homophobic harassment in any area of College life. College commitments will be made explicit to new learners and staff. Sexual harassment and discrimination will be challenged through College disciplinary procedures
- d) Employment policies and procedures will be family-friendly and will apply equally to households based on same-sex partnerships and to non-traditional parenting and care arrangements where appropriate legislation is in place.

6. Disability

6.1 Position Statement

The College:

- a) Aims to identify and eliminate attitudes, practices and procedures that discriminate against people on the grounds of disability and/or learning difficulty
- b) Is committed to ensuring an inclusive, professional and friendly environment for students, employees and members of the public with disabilities and/or learning difficulties

6.2 Policy Statements

- 6.2.1 The College fully accepts its responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act Part 4 (and any subsequent amendments thereto) and is committed to making any reasonable adjustments within the Corporation's business activities that will promote equal access and opportunity for students, employees and members of the public with disabilities and/or learning difficulties using College facilities.

- 6.2.2 The College will ensure that all disabled learners and learners with learning difficulties have access to:
- a) Appropriate opportunities to disclose disability and/or learning difficulty throughout their time as a learner at the College
 - b) Flexible and inclusive learning opportunities
 - c) Assessment of need to ensure that any reasonable adjustments to College provision are made and are appropriate to the individual
 - d) Direct and indirect, student centred learning support to enable access to College provision including specialist equipment and technology
 - e) All other aspects of College provision
 - f) Information in relevant formats to ensure equal access
 - g) Information on support available

- 6.2.3 The College will ensure that all potential and current employees with disabilities and/or learning difficulties have access to:
- a) Appropriate opportunities to disclose disability and/or learning difficulty throughout their time as an employee at the College
 - b) Employment opportunities, including promotion, and are not refused due specifically to a disability and/or learning difficulty
 - c) Specialist equipment and technology and other reasonable adjustments to allow equal opportunity as an employee
 - d) Information in relevant formats to ensure equal access

The College will maintain strong links with external agencies to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective support for staff with disabilities and/or learning difficulties

- 6.2.4 The College is committed to:
- a) Ensuring that its services and facilities are open to the public
 - b) Equal and dignified treatment in the provision of those services and facilities
 - c) Continual improvement in all aspects of equal access in all areas of College provision
 - d) Maintaining strong links with external agencies to ensure the provision of appropriate and effective support for students with disabilities and/or learning difficulties
 - e) Undertaking health and safety risk assessments to assess entry onto programmes where appropriate

7. Religious Observance or Belief

7.1 Position Statement

- 7.1.1 The College recognises the need to ensure compliance with the Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations (any any subsequent amendments thereto) under which it is unlawful to discriminate against workers because of religion or similar belief.
- 7.1.2 For the purposes of treating all students and employees equally on religious grounds, the College defines religion or belief as being any named religion, religious belief or similar philosophical belief. It will therefore be for the Employment Tribunals and other Courts to decide whether particular circumstances are covered by the regulations.

7.2 Policy Statement

The College will:

- a) Not discriminate directly against anyone by treating them less favourably than others because of their religion or belief
- b) Not discriminate indirectly against anyone by applying a criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages people of a particular religion or belief unless it can be objectively justified
- c) Not subject anyone to harassment. Harassment is unwanted conduct that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment having regard to all the circumstances and the perception of the victim
- d) Not victimise anyone because they have made, or intend to make a complaint, or allegation, or have given or intend to give evidence in relation to a complaint of discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief
- e) Not discriminate or harass anyone in certain circumstances after the working relationship has ended

8. Race and Ethnicity

8.1 Position Statement

The College:

- a) Is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and good race relations between persons of different groups and avoiding racial discrimination, whether direct or indirect
- b) Recognises its responsibilities under the Race Relations Act 1976 (any any subsequent amendments thereto)

8.2 Policy Statement

8.2.1 The College actively supports and welcomes diversity amongst its students, staff and visitors, recognising the particular contributions to the achievement of its mission that can be made by individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

8.2.2 The College is committed to:

- a) Actively tackling racial discrimination, and promoting racial equality and good race relations
- b) Encouraging, supporting and helping all students and staff to reach their potential
- c) Working with other institutions, local communities and others to tackle racial discrimination and to encourage and promote good practice in achieving race equality
- d) Assessing the effects of the policy on staff and students from different racial groups
- e) Monitoring, by racial group, the admission and progress of students, and the recruitment and career development of staff
- f) Promoting the race equality policy inside and outside the College

9. Age

9.1 Position Statement

The College:

- a) Recognises that people are often discriminated against and stereotyped because of their age. This is evident in the range of beliefs, assumptions and attitudes which underpin judgements about an individual's potential, behaviour and preferences

- b) Believes that prejudice and discrimination on the grounds of age ('ageism') have no place in an educational establishment. There should be no discrimination employment on the grounds of age, subject to normal arrangements for employees to retire. The College will not discriminate against students on the grounds of age, except where age is a mandatory criterion for entry to a course
- c) Recognises the value of Life Long Learning and that an individual's life experiences add to their role as a member of the College community and their personal learning experience

9.2 Policy Statements

The College will:

- a) Promote and actively support educational achievement for people of all ages
- b) Work to remove arbitrary age barriers to educational access and to the realisation of individual potential and success
- c) Provide learning experiences which meet the needs of particular cohorts
- d) Promote actively up-skilling and re-training programmes for those in paid employment or who wish to re-enter training
- e) Develop teaching and learning and support strategies to meet the particular needs of learners from different age groups
- f) Promote positive images of achievement by people of all ages and which recognise and celebrate the knowledge and experience which people bring to their learning throughout life
- g) Welcome job applications from all age groups and select on the basis of specified skills and abilities

10. Ex Offenders

10.1 Position Statement

The College:

- a) Recognises the requirements of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (and any subsequent amendments thereto), in terms of the right of individuals seeking to gain employment with the College or seeking to join a College programme not to be questioned about offences which are spent
- b) Recognises that the Act sets education as an exemption to this, where education is the occupation

10.2 Policy Statements

The College will:

- a) Not discriminate against any individual seeking employment or enrolling on the grounds of previous offences, with the exception of circumstances that might put existing staff or students in danger
- b) In the appointment/application process meet the requirements of the Act apart from where the exception in terms of education is applicable

As an organisation using the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) Disclosure service to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, BCA complies fully with the CRB Code of Practice and undertakes to treat applicants for positions fairly. The College will not discriminate unfairly against any subject of a Disclosure on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.

The College actively promotes equality of opportunity for the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.

11. Individual Personal Characteristics

11.1 Position Statement

The College:

- a) Will work actively to create a supportive and inclusive environment for all, that enables full participation and success in learning and employment and that will open up opportunities by actively combating discrimination in every area of College life
- b) Recognises that people can be treated unfairly in terms of education, training and employment because of personal characteristics. The College aims to eradicate such discrimination

11.2 Policy Statement

The College will:

- a) Be proactive in the development of equality of opportunity for all throughout their College career

12. Impact Assessments and Legislative Context

12.1 Position statement

As part of our commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion we are reviewing and impact assessing our policies and procedures in line with legislation. We welcome these legislative changes as equality impact assessments help us to identify hidden barriers and inequalities; where these are identified we will take appropriate action.

12.2 Legislative Context of this Policy

There are three pieces of legislation which impose positive duties upon us to promote Disability, Gender and Race equality in everything we do and the *statutory general duties* that are also listed under each heading are central to this Policy.

Disability - Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005

- a) promote equality of opportunity between disabled people and other people
- b) eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- c) eliminate harassment of disabled people that is related to their disabilities
- d) promote positive attitudes towards disabled people
- e) encourage participation by disabled people in public life
- f) take steps to take account of disabled people's disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled people more favourably than others

Gender – Equality Act 2006

- a) eliminate unlawful discrimination and harassment



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- b) promote equality of opportunity between men and women

Race - Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000

- a) eliminate unlawful racial discrimination
- b) promote equality of opportunity
- c) promote good relations between people of different racial groups

Whilst the remaining three strands of Equalities legislation do not have statutory general duties assigned to them, we believe that the central ethos of our “Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy” should go beyond our statutory duty to promote Disability, Gender and Race. We therefore state our commitment to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination harassment and victimisation within the remaining three strands of Age, Religion or Belief and Sexual Orientation. The following legislation is therefore relevant to this “Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy”.

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003

Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Wherever possible we will ensure within our policies and procedures that we do not discriminate on the grounds of any of the six Equalities strands.

Originator	
Status	
Approval Review Body/ies	SMT / Academic Board
Review Interval (years)	Annually
Date of Next Review/Approval	Oct 2010
Evaluation of Reports	
EIA Assessed	
File Location	Staff Handbook