

## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY



## EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

Author's Name and Job Title:	Alexandra Moruzzi, Vice Principal for Student Experience & Progression		
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### VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date revised	Author/reviewer	Section / page no. changed	Summary of change(s)
2.0	January 2024	AMZ	4	Definitions section added
			6	Old section deleted and replaced with the Equality Pledges from the Action Plan so the policy and action plan are aligned
			10	Updated policy names
			Appendix A	Moved to a new section entitled 'Duties and Responsibilities'- new section 5

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## 1. Introduction

We believe in respect for all individuals as a key value of our Catholic ethos. We recognise and celebrate the enrichment that diversity brings to us all. We welcome staff and students from diverse backgrounds, traditions and faiths including those from under-represented groups and minorities.

We are determined to achieve a working and learning environment where all forms of discriminatory behaviour is challenged, including unconscious bias, diversity is celebrated and where we have a culture in which staff and students are encouraged to flourish and thrive. The college is keen to advance equality of opportunity for all and to ensure that this principle underpins all our policies, procedures and opportunities. The college aims to foster good relations between all members of its community including between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

## 2. Purpose and scope

Equality sits at the heart of everything the College does and delivers. It is a fundamental part of ensuring services and employment practices are fit for purpose and do not discriminate or disadvantage any protected group or individual. The purpose of this policy is to define our approach to equality and diversity in the work and study place, setting out guidelines and explaining to staff and students how discrimination will be dealt with. In addition, we are demonstrating compliance with equalities legislation, primarily the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

This policy applies to the whole college community.

## 3. Using this policy

The College is committed to creating a culture where everyone has equal chances to access education in an environment free from any unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying. We recognise that the experiences and needs of every individual are unique and we strive to value and respect the diversity of our students, their families/carers, staff and the public. This policy demonstrates our commitment towards dealing fairly with issues of equality, diversity and inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice both in the provision of services and as an employer. It is our intention to eliminate unfair and unlawful discriminatory practices in line with current legislation.

## 4. Definitions

For the purpose of applying the provisions contained in this policy, the following definitions will apply:

Term / acronym	Definition
Equality	Equality is about fair treatment, and we believe that employment and our services should be accessible to

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	all. Everyone has individual needs and the right to have those needs respected
Equal opportunity	This is the right of individuals and protected groups to equality of access and outcome in employment and service delivery.
Diversity	Diversity is about respecting difference and can include individuals and groups with varying backgrounds, experiences, perceptions, values and beliefs. It is important that we understand, value and respect those differences
Inclusion	Inclusion is about recognising and valuing the differences we each bring and creating an environment where everyone can be their true selves and has equal access to services, opportunities, resources and can contribute to the organisation's success.
Protected Characteristic	The Equality Act 2010 protects against discrimination on the grounds of Age, Disability, Gender reassignment, Marriage and civil partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or belief, Sex or Sexual orientation. These are described in the Act as Protected Characteristics.
Direct discrimination	When someone is treated less favourably than another person because of a protected characteristic they have or are thought to have or because they associate with someone who has a protected characteristic.
Indirect discrimination	A practice, policy or rule which applies to everyone in the same way, but it has a worse effect on some people than others. The Equality Act says it puts them at a particular disadvantage.
Victimisation	Is where someone is treated less favourably because they have either made or supported a complain under the Equality Act 2020.
Harassment	Is unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has a purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
Public Sector Equality Duty	A public authority must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation or any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 in relation to the protected characteristics advance equality of opportunity between all persons; and foster good relations between groups of people sharing a protected characteristic and those that do not.

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Equality impact assessment	An equality impact assessment process ensures that any areas of inadvertent discrimination are detected, and mitigating action implemented to improve and promote equality in everything we do.
Due Regard	Having due regard for advancing equality involves removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics, taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people and encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

### 5. Duties and Responsibilities

All staff have a personal responsibility for their own behaviour and for ensuring that they comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the principles of this policy. As such we expect all colleagues to:

- Understand the College Values and how these impact on everything we do;
- Help promote an inclusive environment by treating everyone with dignity and respect;
- Respect and respond to the diverse needs of colleagues, students and others;
- Appropriately challenge and/or report any behaviour they become aware of, that undermines equality, diversity and inclusion or College Values;
- Undertaking relevant equality, diversity and inclusion training.

Anyone who undertakes work for or on our behalf (e.g. Casual Workers, Volunteers, Contractors, Peripatetic Workers etc.) are expected to recognise and comply with the principles set out in this Policy. This includes being aware of their individual statutory duties in relation to EDI, challenging and reporting discriminatory behaviours by others in the College and for promoting community cohesion.

All managers should adhere to this policy and bring it to the attention of colleagues in their work area, in order to establish and maintain an inclusive environment free of unlawful discrimination. Managers have a responsibility to:

- Set a positive example by treating others with respect and set standards of acceptable behaviour, in line with the College Values;
- Promote an inclusive working environment where unlawful discrimination is not tolerated and teams work effectively together;
- Ensure any discriminatory behaviour or practices are challenged and escalated;
- Ensure colleagues are given equal opportunity to access learning and development opportunities.

HR will ensure that support and training is provided in relation to EDI responsibilities and practice. HR will update policies as appropriate and keep relevant case-logs to identifying any inequalities.

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The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group will monitor the implementation of this policy and make recommendations for change or development to Principalship Team and Governing Body. The Steering Group will produce regular minutes of its meetings, make an annual report and, as required by the Governing Body, will set equality targets, develop action plans, analyse the statistics produced through routine monitoring, propose action where necessary.

The College Leadership Team is responsible for ensuring that the College environment is inclusive and accommodating for all. The College Leadership Team will also:

- Ensure all policy documentation and procedures, including course approval processes, are equality impact assessed to look for any adverse effect they may have on students, staff or the wider community;
- Build equality, diversity and inclusion into their own area of work;
- Oversee the College's response to its public sector equality duty and ensuring the publication of relevant data and reports.

The Principal has overall responsibility for the application of this policy across the college and for giving a consistent and high profile lead on all equality issues.

The Governing Body is responsible for ensuring that the Equality Act 2010 is embedded within all College practices and that the College meets all its duties under the legislation.

Students and their parents/carers will be expected to recognise and comply with the principles set out in this Policy. Every effort will be made by the College to ensure all relevant information is available in a suitable format to achieve this aim. In addition students must:

- Be respectful to all staff and others, ensuring that they do not discriminate or engage in any behaviour that could be interpreted as harassment;
- Engage with EDI awareness training provided as part of the tutorial programme and the Religion, Philosophy and Ethics programme which includes community cohesion and religious and cultural diversity;
- Report if experienced or witness inappropriate behaviour.

## **6. Creating an inclusive college community**

### **6.1 Zero tolerance approach**

We take a zero-tolerance approach to ensure that no individual or group faces discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of a protected characteristic. The college will uphold a working and learning environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued.

### **6.2 Embedding EDI**

We have a strong commitment to embed EDI in everything that we do and are committed to promote awareness and understanding of the key issues that impact on our function as an education provider and employer.

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Embedding EDI is important as it will help to:

- Ensure that the services we provide are accessible to all, actively promote equality and are free from unlawful discrimination;
- Develop services which best meets the needs of our diverse community;
- Eliminate from our services, policies and decision making, any adverse impact on the promotion of equality and inclusion for our students and staff; and
- Enhance the reputation of the college.

Commitment is required from all colleagues in order for equality, diversity and inclusion to become a golden thread that runs through the college. This will ensure our goals, vision and values inform and are informed by our processes, systems and people.

### **6.3 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**

An EIA is a tool that helps us to understand how our policies, practices and service provision impact on people, positively and negatively, and put actions in place to remove or remove any disadvantage. They help us to identify any further actions that need to be taken to support all protected groups, whether students or staff.

The Equality Impact Assessment process will be used to assess whether there may be any barriers or difficulties, harassment, or exclusion as a result of a planned change, or in fact any positive impact such as the promotion of equality of opportunity, developing good community relationships, encouraging participation and involvement as experienced by students, their families/carers, staff and key stakeholders.

### **6.4 Employment practices**

Inclusion, Equality and Diversity is implicit within all of our employment policies and these are all Equality Impact Assessed and regularly reviewed to ensure there is no element of bias or discrimination.

We may also consider the use of appropriate legal methods, including lawful positive action, to address under-representation of any group in particular types and levels of job.

All newly appointed staff will undertake an induction programme to make them aware of the policy expectations, their personal responsibilities and how to address any experienced breach in the policy.

We will provide all staff with mandatory training to raise awareness of The Equality Act 2010 and its implications, and equip them with the knowledge and skills required to meet the our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

### **6.5 Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

We will ensure that all students experience equal access in terms of curriculum, assessment, support services and resources by ensuring that the curriculum meets students' and employers' needs and that local and national priorities are used to review and plan the provision.



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We will ensure that teaching, learning and assessment promote equality, diversity and inclusion and tackle discrimination, victimisation, harassment, stereotyping, radicalisation and bullying.

We are committed to providing students with the support they need to succeed in their programme of study. This means that from admission through to completion, the college will ensure the provision is an inclusive and engaging environment where Teaching and Learning practices develop subject specific and transferable skills which supports personal development, progression to Higher Education or employment opportunities.

The College will monitor and analyse data relating to applications, enrolment, attendance, retention, achievement and progression of students with a view to comparing trends and highlighting and addressing any imbalances identified; thus ensuring that achievement gaps are narrowed between different groups of students.

### **6.6 Access to premises and facilities**

College facilities will be assessed and reviewed regularly to ensure that the needs of particular groups receive attention, and the views of students and staff from different interest groups will be taken in relation to any proposed changes.

The College will cater for the different religious and cultural needs of its students e.g. providing for particular dietary requirements where possible, providing prayer and meditation space.

The College will continually review access to its buildings, information, curriculum and environment to ensure it complies with the law and is accessible to the widest range of disabled people as possible, and will publish information about its access arrangements.

## **7. Records, monitoring and publication**

will routinely monitor the make-up of our workforce, student population and applicants for jobs taking account of information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this equality diversity and inclusion policy. The data used will be anonymised and handled in full compliance with the requirements General Data Protection Regulations 2018 and in line with our relevant privacy notices for these processing purposes. The college will consider and take any appropriate action to address any issues identified through the monitoring process.

Monitoring will include assessing how the Policy and any supporting action plan, are working in practice, reviewing this annually, and considering and taking action to address any emerging issues.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion reports will be produced annually for the following forums:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Group;
- Principalship;

- Relevant governor committees.

## **8. Dealing with breaches of this Policy**

The college will take very seriously any reported instances of non-compliance with this Policy by staff, students or other members of the college community. All instances will be investigated and appropriate action taken against the student or staff member.

Staff should report any acts of discrimination, bullying, victimisation or harassment they experience or witness to their line manager, HR and/or a member of the Principalship Team, who will take appropriate action.

Students should report any acts of discrimination, bullying, victimisation or harassment they experience or witness to their Progress Tutor, a member of staff in whom they feel they can confide or a member of the Principalship Team, who will take appropriate action.

## **9. Equality Impact Statement**

We are committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way we provide services to our students and the way we treat our staff reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups on any grounds of any of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act, which are age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

We will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate any individual with particular equality and diversity requirements in implementing this policy and procedure.

## **10. Further information**

### **8.1 External information**

Relevant legislation and statutory requirements that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- Equality Act 2010;
- Equality and Human Rights Commission Codes of Practice.

### **8.2 Internal information**

Local policies and procedures that have been taken into consideration for this policy include:

- College Values;
- Supporting Attendance Policy and Procedure (Staff);
- Dignity and Respect at Work Policy and Procedure (Staff);
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure (Staff);
- Code of Conduct (Staff)
- Leave Policies - Maternity, Adoption, Paternity, Special Leave (Staff);
- Safer Recruitment Policy and Procedure (Staff);

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- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy (Students);
- Compliments, Concerns & Complaints Policy (Students);
- Positive Behaviour Management Policy (Students);
- Student Admissions Policy (Students);
- Student Attendance Policy (Students);
- Bursary & Free College Meal Policy (Students);
- Transport Policy (Students);
- Community Use Policy.

### **11. Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years from the date of approval.

The policy may be reviewed at an earlier date, if necessary, for example, to update it in line with changes in legislation, organisational development or good practice.

Any individual who has queries regarding the content of this policy, or has difficulty understanding how this policy relates to their role, should contact the Policy Author.