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EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

1. Equality and Diversity Statement

- 1.1 Leicester College has inclusion as one of its core values. These govern the way we work with each other and our approach to all our learners and stakeholders.
- 1.2 The College aims to promote equal opportunities for potential and current staff, students, visitors and other stakeholders, and will actively implement all of its equalities policies in order to combat discrimination and to promote good relations between different groups.
- 1.3 We are proud to be located in a city such as Leicester, and value the diversity of all the communities we serve. We acknowledge and celebrate the different backgrounds, cultures, languages, abilities and beliefs of our learners and staff. The College aims to promote community cohesion, and to provide a safe and harmonious learning environment where everyone feels that they belong.
- 1.4 The College works within the existing legislation relating to equality and diversity, and will take a range of actions each year to ensure it meets its general and specific public sector duties. We are opposed to, and will tackle, any harassment and all other discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, particularly in relation to the protected characteristics of the Equality Act i.e. age, disability, ethnicity, (including race, colour, nationality), gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief and sexual orientation, but also in relation to social background, class and trade union affiliation.
- 1.5 We will continue to take positive action to address any under-representation in the student or staff profile, and to tackle any gaps in the success, retention or achievement rates for any equality group. We will also work to eliminate any barriers that might inhibit the success or progression of any groups of students or staff.

1.6 This policy applies to all College activity including ESF contracts.

2. The Legal Framework

2.1 The College will comply with the current legal framework of the Equality Act in both its spirit and letter.

2.2 The College will take a holistic approach to work on Equality and Diversity, and will work to an Equalities Framework which incorporates all of its proposed actions in relation to age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, maternity and pregnancy, marriage and civil partnership and religion and belief. We will also consider issues of socio-economic inequality and class that are not required under the Act. The Framework will move through stages of developing, achieving and excelling and will be monitored and reviewed annually as a minimum.

2.3 In relation to disabled students, the College will adhere to its duties under the Equality Act, and will make *reasonable adjustments* to the curriculum, information and the built environment for disabled students. We recognise that the 'anticipatory' aspect of this duty means that we need to consider what sort of adjustments may be necessary for disabled people in the future, and where appropriate, will make these adjustments in advance.

3. Broad Principles

3.1 The College will publish the actions that it intends to take each year to implement its public sector equality duty set out in the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

3.2 The College will also meet its specific duties as defined by the law. It will continue to implement and assess the impact of its policies, procedures and practices on present and potential students, staff and visitors, to ensure that no equality group is disadvantaged.

3.3 The College believes that high quality education is a right for all, and will encourage all students and staff to reach their potential.

3.4 The College will actively work towards offering equality of opportunity to all students, staff and visitors.

- 3.5 All participants in the educational process will be made aware that they have a legal and moral responsibility to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between people from different backgrounds and communities, and between different equality groups.
- 3.6 The College will take active steps to eliminate all forms of discrimination (whether direct or indirect). Bullying, harassment or any other discriminatory behaviour will not be tolerated.
- 3.6 The College will take positive action to try to recruit a workforce and student body that is diverse and reflects the local population, and will address any differences in outcomes for any particular group.

4. Specific Principles – Leadership and Management

- 4.1 The College will ensure that equality and diversity is reflected in its values and vision statements, and that a high profile is given to these issues at all levels of the College's work.
- 4.2 The Governing Body and managers will ensure that the College is fully compliant with legislative requirements on Equality and Diversity.
- 4.3 The College will monitor how well equality of opportunity is promoted, and discrimination tackled, through all of its quality assurance and self assessment processes.
- 4.4 The College, and individual managers, will regularly monitor the success, retention rates and attendance rates of learners from different equality groups, and will take action to address any gaps.
- 4.5 The College will constantly review its provision and support services to ensure they are designed to take into account the specific needs of all equality groups.
- 4.6 The College will ensure it has in place an Equalities Framework which includes a comprehensive implementation plan that is updated at least annually.
- 4.7 The College will continue to assess the impact of its policies, strategies, plans and practices as required by legislation.
- 4.8 The College will work with employers and providers of work-based learning to ensure that equality and diversity principles are monitored and met, and that any under-achievement or under-representation is addressed.

5. Access to, and Participation in, Education

- 5.1. A clear statement of the College's commitment to Equality and Diversity will be made in relevant College publications and publicity.
- 5.2. The College will work to ensure that there is no discrimination of any kind in relation to the recruitment and admission of students to courses. Recruitment patterns across curriculum areas for all equality groups will be reviewed and positive action taken to address any under-representation.
- 5.3. The College will constantly review its provision to ensure that is appropriate for and attractive to students from all backgrounds e.g. physical access, location and timing of courses and interviews, availability of reflection rooms, and childcare support.
- 5.4. The College will provide appropriate financial support, within the resources available to it, to students who can demonstrate financial need and will monitor take up by equality groups.
- 5.5. The College will seek to identify and take into account the needs of local communities and actively encourage representation in relevant policy-making and consultation bodies.
- 5.6. The College will seek to develop specific provision that meets the needs of particular communities' e.g. specific ESOL courses and on course ESOL support, support for young parents and Looked After young people.
- 5.7. The College will make available interpreters if they are required by students or their families to access education e.g. at enrolments, parents' evenings etc. and will make information accessible and available in alternative formats if required.

6. Employment of Staff

- 6.1. Recruitment for all positions within the College will be carried out in a manner which accords with good equal opportunities practice. The College has a detailed Code of Practice for staff recruitment and appointments.
- 6.2. The long-term aim is that the College establishment should broadly reflect the make-up of the sub-regional available-for-work population.
- 6.3. Members of interviewing panels will be made familiar with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and the Recruitment Code of Practice. Training in appropriate procedures and practices, and on specific equalities issues will be given. Where possible, interview panels should also reflect the diversity of the College population.
- 6.4. The criteria for the promotion and progression of existing employees will be determined solely on the basis of the requirements of the job.

- 6.5. The Human Resources Department will be responsible for the maintenance of statistical information relating to the profile of the workforce, of all applicants and staff involved in disciplinary actions, grievances, leavers etc. The Governing Body will review and monitor these statistics to identify any trends of differences between equalities groups.
- 6.6. The Human Resources Department will provide guidance and support to managers to take positive action to improve the diversity of their teams.
- 6.7. The Human Resources Department will assess the impact of their policies and practices on equalities groups and will monitor staff surveys, consultations etc. by equalities characteristics.

7. Marketing, Publicity and External Liaison

- 7.1. The College will act to identify the needs of the communities the College serves, and will take positive action to engage with equalities communities. This will include liaison with community representatives and market research.
- 7.2. Publicity material will, where practical, reflect the diversity of all communities, and will be free from bias. Particular facilities such as the nursery and reflection rooms will be emphasised in publicity materials.
- 7.3. The College's Equality and Diversity Policy will be available to all staff and students through the intranet, and be referred to in key documents such as the Prospectus.
- 7.4. The College's publicity material will be available in translation into community languages or alternative formats if required, and will be widely distributed in public places and community venues.
- 7.5. The College will take positive action to publicise its provision to communities that are currently under-represented as staff or students, through attending community events, road shows, links with schools and specific initiatives.

8. The Curriculum, Assessment, Learning and Teaching

- 8.1. It is the legal and ethical responsibility of all staff to conduct their teaching and learning activities in a non-discriminatory manner, and this is reinforced in the requirements of the Common Inspection Framework.
- 8.2. All students will be provided with an effective induction programme that familiarises them with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and helps them to recognise the rights and responsibilities of themselves and others in relation to these issues.

- 8.3. Teaching and learning will be informed by equality and diversity principles, and an awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity. Teaching styles should take account of students' varied backgrounds, abilities and learning styles. This should be regularly monitored through the College's quality assurance processes.
- 8.4. The outcomes of any assessment processes will be regularly monitored to ensure that they do not indirectly discriminate against any particular group of learners.
- 8.5. Enrichment and personal and professional development for all curriculum areas and cross college development will address equality and diversity issues including community cohesion and religious and cultural diversity, and we would expect that student surveys reflect a good understanding of these issues.
- 8.6. The curriculum for all areas will be rich and varied, and should be regularly reviewed to ensure it is culturally sensitive, addresses equality issues, and reflects the interests and backgrounds of learners.
- 8.7. All teachers should use materials, resources and learning activities that are free from discriminatory assumptions, images and language, challenge stereotypes, are sensitive to diversity and promote equal opportunities. The College will take swift action if it is made aware of any inappropriate materials that are discriminatory, or work against community cohesion.
- 8.8. Curriculum design will be sufficiently flexible, and the curriculum offered sufficiently broad, to take account of the differing needs of all learners, with the objective of providing easy access to the curriculum for non-traditional learners and widening participation.
- 8.9. Under the protection of the relevant legislation, the College will encourage specific course provision in those areas of the curriculum where particular groups of students are under-represented.
- 8.10. The College will offer learning support in literacy and numeracy for all students who are identified as requiring it, support for students whose first language is not English, and appropriate additional support for any disabled students.
- 8.11. A range of inclusive activities will be developed (both college wide, and in specific curriculum areas), that promote the good relations between students from different backgrounds, and support community cohesion.

9. Student Support and Guidance, and Learner Voice

- 9.1 Support (financial or personal) provided to students through Student Services will be monitored by equality groups to ensure that it is equally available to all students, and positive action will be taken if any group does not appear to be accessing a service.
- 9.2 All students will be encouraged to take part in Learner Voice activities, and these will be monitored to ensure that they are inclusive, and that learners on decision making bodies include those from all equalities groups.
- 9.3 Positive action initiatives will be developed to meet the needs of students from any particular groups who are found not to be proportionately accessing support services e.g. young parents, Looked After young people, asylum seekers, international students.
- 9.4 Pastoral support will be constantly reviewed to ensure it takes account of the needs of particular groups of students e.g. through the development of the Multi-faith Chaplaincy.
- 9.5 Student Services will provide appropriate impartial advice and guidance to all students. Welfare Advisers will ensure that all students have access to appropriate financial support, and will monitor the take up.

10. Behaviour, Attendance, and Discipline

- 10.1 All formal processes relating to student behaviour or disciplinary actions will be monitored by equalities group, and any over-representation or other issues will be addressed.
- 10.2 Staff managing these processes or sitting on the panels should be trained in equalities and diversity as part of their induction programme.
- 10.3 Attendance of students on different courses will also be monitored by equalities groups, and action will be taken to seek, understand, and address any patterns that emerge.

11. College Environment

- 11.1 The College will seek to create an environment in which all students, staff and visitors feel comfortable, irrespective of their background.
- 11.2 The College staff will respond positively and courteously to all its students, staff and visitors from the first point of contact, and will be trained in equality and diversity to enable them to meet the needs of particular equality groups.
- 11.3 College facilities will be reviewed regularly to ensure that the needs of particular groups receive attention, and the views of students and staff from different equality groups will be sought as to any proposed changes.

- 11.4 The College will cater for the different religious and cultural needs of its students e.g. providing for particular dietary requirements where possible, providing reflection rooms on all main sites.
- 11.5 The College will continually review the physical access to its buildings 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.
- 11.6 The College will ensure that displays, photos and other artefacts reflect the diversity of the college and promote community cohesion.

12. Staff Training and Development

- 12.1 All managers and governors will receive Equality and Diversity training and should be able to demonstrate a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding equalities and diversity.
- 12.2 The College will make all employees aware of their responsibility for the implementation of Equality and Diversity policies through induction and follow up training.
- 12.3 The College will use a range of processes to support teaching staff to review the tutorials and the content of the curriculum they deliver to ensure it is relevant and culturally sensitive (e.g. lesson observations, coaching and training).
- 12.4 Staff training and development opportunities will be monitored by equalities groups to ensure that they are equally available to, and can be accessed by, all staff, both teaching and support, full-time and part-time.
- 12.5 The College will also take positive action to offer opportunities for training and promotion to groups of employees who are identified as disadvantaged and / or are under-represented at particular levels in the organisation.

13. Harassment and Bullying

- 13.1 The College will ensure that all students and staff are aware of the policies and processes for reporting harassment and bullying through induction and tutorials, and this information will be available in all major publications, and on the intranet.
- 13.2 Support will be provided for any students who are victims of harassment or any other form of bullying, through the tutorial system and Student Services. The College Counselling Service will also provide a confidential service for all students if required.
- 13.3 The College has in place a Fair Treatment Advisor Scheme to support staff or students experiencing harassment or bullying, and has a contract with an Employee Advisory Provider, First Assist. All employees have

access to confidential counselling via a telephone help line including legal services. New employees will be provided with information regarding this service.

13.4 The Human Resources Department will provide advice and guidance to employees on all issues connected with their employment, including bullying or harassment.

13.5 All complaints of bullying and harassment will be recorded and dealt with through the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy, and will be passed on to the Student Services and Diversity Manager if necessary. The outcomes will be monitored by equalities group.

14. Consultation

14.1 The College will ensure that staff and students from equality groups are consulted on, and involved in, the development of the Equalities Framework and other equality policies, and in identifying areas for action.

14.2 The College will consult its staff and students from different equality groups on other policies and strategies as required, and will ensure that they are involved in decision making and Learner Voice bodies.

14.3 Specific questions on equalities and diversity will be included in learner satisfaction surveys and the results will be monitored by equality group.

15. Structure

The Equalities and Diversity Committee, under the Chair of the Principal, will monitor compliance with the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and Equalities Framework. The Committee's remit is:

- To advise and report to the Senior Leadership of the College on policies and good practice in relation to equalities, diversity and community cohesion, and to provide them with minutes of all meetings.
- To agree an annual work plan that includes any review of equalities policies and plans, in conjunction with the Director of Governance and Policy.
- To approve, review and monitor the implementation of the College's Equality and Diversity Policy and Equality Development Plan and all related equality and diversity policies and action plans and to determine Codes of Practice and other guidance.
- To receive monitoring reports on outcomes for staff and students from different equalities groups (e.g. success rates, applications, appointments) and to recommend to SLT strategic actions to address any areas of concern.

- To receive and comment on an annual Equality and Diversity Annual Report on the strengths and areas for improvement of equality and diversity work in the College.
- To raise awareness of, and comment on, new national policies and statutory requirements in relation to equality and diversity, and to advise the College on their compliance.
- To advise on the strategy for raising awareness of equalities and diversity issues through staff development and other activities.
- To commission and agree the Annual Report on Equality and Diversity for the Governors (to include the progress on the Equality Framework).
- To consider the views expressed by the Student and Staff Equality Forum representatives.
- To undertake any other task within the broad remit of the Committee.

16. Procedure for Handling and Monitoring Complaints

All complaints will be dealt with under the College's Complaints Procedure. In the case of serious complaints relating to equalities, the Student Services and Diversity Manager may be appointed as the Investigating Officer. Prior to entering the formal process, complainants can speak to a colleague, or to a member of the Equality and Diversity Committee. Complaints will be monitored annually and reported on by equalities group.

17. Monitoring our Progress

To inform the setting of targets (EDIMs) and the measurement of our progress in achieving them, the College will collect and analyse the following information by equality groups

For learners

- Profile of learners
- Applications, success and failure rates of admission to programmes
- Retention rates
- Achievement rates
- Work placements including success rates, satisfaction levels and job offers
- Disciplinary action
- Complaints by learners and their response
- Satisfaction surveys

For employees

- Profiles of employees by grade and type of work
- Job application rates
- Selection success rates

- Type of contract (permanent, temporary)
- Training application rates
- Promotion application and success rates
- Disciplinary proceedings
- Grievances
- Satisfaction surveys

18. Publicising our Policy and Progress

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

- Our commitment to equalities and diversity will be highlighted in our charter, prospectus, and annual report
- Summary of the results of our monitoring information will be included in our annual report

To learners

- All learners will receive a summary of the statement in the Student Handbook. Copies will also be on display in the learning resource centres and student social spaces
- The induction programme for learners will highlight the College's commitment to equality and diversity, action to be taken by learners who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against any perpetrators of discrimination
- Learning coaches will reinforce this information during tutorials.

To work placement providers

- All work placement providers will receive a summary of their responsibilities under this statement and will signify their understanding and agreement to them
- Work placement providers will be offered training on equalities and diversity, where appropriate
- College staff will promote the recruitment of students from under represented groups to providers
- Summary of the results of our monitoring information will be made available to all employers

To staff

- All staff will be signposted to the Equality and Diversity Policy as part of the on line training programme
- The induction programme will highlight the College's commitment to equality and diversity, action to be taken to support learners who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against any perpetrators of discrimination

19. Division of Responsibilities

Governors are responsible for ensuring that

- The membership of the Governing Body reflects the diversity of the communities served by the College
- The College's strategic plan includes a commitment to equality and actions to implement it
- Other College strategic documents and curriculum SARs include targets for implementing the Single Equality Scheme
- They consider the equality implications of any planning or review of provision
- They are aware of the governing body's statutory responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity
- They ensure that managers and other staff receive adequate training to meet their equality duties
- They receive and respond to the monitoring information relating to learners and staff
- They scrutinise reports analysing complaints and grievances in relation to equality and discrimination

The College Principal is responsible for

- Giving a consistent and high profile lead on equality and diversity issues
- Promoting equality and diversity inside and outside the College
- Ensuring that the Equality Framework and its procedures are followed
- Ensuring that managers fulfil their responsibilities in relation to the Equality Framework..

Managers are responsible for ensuring that

- They are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to equality and diversity
- The policy is actively promoted and put into place, making sure that staff are aware of their responsibilities and receive support and training to carry them out
- All aspects of College policy and activity are sensitive to equality and diversity issues
- Equality monitoring information is collected and analysed
- Targets are set on the recruitment, retention and achievement of learners based upon the analysis of the monitoring information
- Teaching observation reports include comments on equality and diversity issues
- Internal verification procedures include scrutiny of equality and diversity issues
- Curriculum areas are required to assess performance in relation to equality and diversity issues through the self-assessment process and action taken as appropriate
- The procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff enshrine best practice in equal opportunities
- Targets are set on the recruitment and promotion of staff based upon the analysis of the monitoring information

- The College's publicity materials present appropriate and positive messages about equality groups
- Learner induction programmes and personal and professional development and employability programmes reflect the College's commitment to promote equality and diversity

The staff are responsible for ensuring that

- They are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to equality and diversity
- Teachers must ensure their schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrate sensitivity to issues of equality and diversity
- They challenge and report inappropriate behaviour by either learners, work placement providers or other members of staff
- They promote community cohesion, and good relations between learners from different backgrounds and between different equality groups

Students are responsible for ensuring that

- They promote equality and diversity and community cohesion
- They do not discriminate against anyone for reasons of disability, age, ethnicity, colour, race, gender, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, maternity or pregnancy, religion and belief, sexual orientation, social background, class, or trade union affiliation
- They challenge and report any breaches of equality policies.

Contractors and Service Providers are responsible for ensuring that

- They follow the College's Equality Framework and any equality conditions in contracts or agreements.

20. Handling Breaches of the Policy

Any breach of this policy by a student, staff member or College Governor will be treated as a serious matter, and if necessary handled through formal disciplinary procedures.

21. Review and Consultation

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Equality and Diversity Committee. As part of the review, the views of internal and external stakeholders, including learners and staff from different equalities groups, will be sought and taken into account. Any recommendations for change will be passed to the Senior Management Team, and from them, on to the Governing Body for approval.