

POLICY AND PROCEDURE	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
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APPROVING COMMITTEE	Executive Leadership Team
DATE OF APPROVAL	October 2021
RESPONSIBLE PERSON	Assistant Principal of Human Resources and Organisational Development
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	September 2021
REVIEW DATE	December 2025

History of Amendments		
Date	Version/Pages/Sections affected	Summary of Changes
16.03.18	Pages 5-7	Slight amendments to reflect changes within the College
September 2021	Pages 6, 10 and appendix 2	Minor amendments to reflect structural changes within the college
July 2025	Page 7, section 7.2	Interim adjustment to update UK GDPR and Data Protection legislation reference

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Ayrshire College values diversity and believes that college life is greatly enriched by the diverse range of backgrounds and experiences brought by staff, students, partners and all other stakeholders.
- 1.2 The College aims to be a provider of choice for students and business and believes that embedding equality and inclusion in all that we do is integral to achieving this aim.
- 1.3 The College is fully committed to advancing and promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all of its activities and aims to establish a culture free from discrimination and based upon the values of dignity and respect.

The College will:

- Mainstream equality, diversity and inclusion in all our curriculum and service activities
- Create a respectful working and learning environment which fosters good relations between different groups of people
- Provide relevant staff development in equality and diversity
- Comply with legal requirements and where possible demonstrate best practice
- Set outcomes and actions to advance equality of opportunity
- Continually monitor and review the experience of different groups of staff and students
- Eliminate all forms of unlawful discrimination and deal with any discrimination consistently and effectively
- Challenge unacceptable actions and behaviours such as harassment, bullying or victimisation of people based on their personal characteristics

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all current members or prospective members of the College community including staff, students, visitors and any other stakeholders.

3. Equality Statement

3.1 The College is committed to providing equal opportunities to ensure its staff, students, customers and visitors are treated fairly and with respect regardless of gender reassignment, race, religion or belief including no religion or belief; disability; age; marriage and civil partnerships; pregnancy and maternity; sexual orientation; and sex.

4. Definition of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

4.1 Equality can be described as breaking down barriers, eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal opportunity and access for all groups.

4.2 Diversity can be described as celebrating differences and valuing everyone. Each person is an individual with visible and non-visible differences. By respecting this, everyone can feel valued for their contributions which are beneficial not only for the individual but for the College.

4.3 Inclusion is regarded as a sense of belonging; feeling respected and valued for who you are regardless of any personal characteristics.

4.4 Equality and diversity are inter-dependent. There can be no equality of opportunity if difference is not valued and harnessed and taken account of. This in turn creates an inclusive culture where all individuals feel valued.

5. Legal framework

5.1 The College is committed to meeting the obligations and duties set out for public bodies in the Equality Act 2010 and related legislation.

5.2 The Equality Act 2010 sets out the protected characteristics that are protected by the law and the behaviour that is unlawful. Everyone in the UK is protected by the Act. The “protected characteristics” are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief including no religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

The College must pay due regard to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people of different groups
- Foster good relations between people of different groups, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between different groups

6. Responsibilities

6.1 The Board of Management is responsible for ensuring that Ayrshire College acts fairly as an employer and as a provider of education.

6.2 The Principal and the Executive Leadership Team have responsibility for overseeing the implementation and monitoring of this policy. Assistant Principals, Heads and Curriculum Managers are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of their services comply with this policy.

6.3 The College’s Equality and Inclusion Advisor supports the College in meeting its statutory obligations and provides guidance to managers on the actions that they need to take to comply with this policy. The Equality and Inclusion Advisor, with the support of the Head of HR Services and the Assistant Principal of HR and Organisational Development is responsible for, for example, analysing a range of equality data, developing and implementing strategies to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and works with a range of external partners to embed the value and practice of equality and inclusion within the College and the communities it serves.

6.4 The College's Values, Inclusion, Equality and Wellbeing (VIEW) steering group is tasked to primarily lead, monitor and report on the College's Equality Outcomes. The VIEW steering group will also support the establishment and development of relevant operational working groups to enable the achievement of the College's Equality Outcomes as well as any other key, related activities.

6.6 All staff and students are responsible for supporting the aims of this policy acting fairly and treating others with respect. Staff and students are also encouraged to report any incidences of behaviour that fail to comply with this policy and should be aware that any inappropriate behaviour may result in disciplinary action being taken against them.

6.7 Contractors appointed by the College are responsible for ensuring that individuals act in a way that reflects the College's values on equality, diversity and inclusion.

7. Equalities Data

7.1 The College will gather, monitor and analyse a range of employment and student data by protected characteristics. For students this data will cover various activities such as recruitment, withdrawal and outcomes. For staff this will cover, for example, recruitment, retention, staff development, flexible working as well as gender, disability and race pay gap analysis.

7.2 All staff and students are encouraged to declare details of their protected characteristics. The College aims to create an environment in which all feel comfortable to declare this information. The College will ensure that this information is held in accordance with the principles of the current UK data protection framework, which includes the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018, the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 (PECR), and the amendments introduced by the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 (DUAA).

8. Equality Outcomes and Action Plans

8.1 The College will ensure that it understands and identifies any equality issues by gathering and reviewing qualitative and quantitative data relating to the experiences of different groups of students and staff.

8.2 Based on this, the College will set [equality outcomes and actions](#) to eliminate unlawful behaviour, advance equality and foster good relations between different groups of people. These actions and outcomes will be published as a separate document and will be embedded within the College's operational planning and quality enhancement framework.

9. Mainstreaming Equality

9.1 The College is committed to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion in all of our curriculum and service activities.

The College will:

- Carry out Equality Impact Assessments of key decisions, policies and practices
- Include equality, diversity and inclusion within staff and student engagement activities
- Include equality, diversity and inclusion within the operational planning and evaluation framework
- Ensure that lessons and learning materials promote equality, diversity and inclusion where possible
- Ensure that staff receive relevant staff development in equality, diversity and inclusion

10. Support for Staff and Students

10.1 The College recognises that some staff and students with particular protected characteristics may need additional support whilst at College.

10.2 The College is committed to providing assistance, where necessary, to ensure that all students and staff are able to contribute to college life and achieve their full potential.

11. Involvement and Consultation

11.1 The College recognises that to eliminate discrimination and promote equality it is essential that we work in partnership, both internally and externally.

11.2 The College's Values, Inclusion, Equality and Wellbeing (VIEW) steering group provides an opportunity for staff and students to become involved in progressing equality, diversity and inclusion activities across the College.

The VIEW steering group will:

- Develop and implement initiatives to promote awareness of equality and inclusion issues and celebrate diversity
- Support the Equality Impact Assessment process
- Raise any issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion for staff or students
- Act as exemplary role models, promoting a positive approach to equality, diversity and inclusion across the college community
- Review and provide feedback on equality policy, reports, outcomes and action plans
- Review and provide feedback on data relevant to equality, diversity and inclusion
- Recommend changes to current practice and best practice approaches
- Arrange for external members and participants where appropriate
- Arrange for additional groups to be established, as required, to progress equality diversity and inclusion activities across the College

11.3 The College will also be a partner on a range of external diversity and inclusion groups both across the Ayrshire region and nationally. This will ensure that the College is a key partner, working with other agencies, to eradicate inequality that exists within society and advance equality of opportunity for all.

12. Monitoring and Review

12.1 The College will monitor and review the effectiveness of this policy by:

- Reviewing and measuring its progress towards achieving the College's equality outcomes
- Tracking and evaluation of operational plans and targets related to equality, diversity and inclusionMonitoring and review of a range of staff and student data analysed by protected characteristic
- Reporting of equality data to the Board of Management and the Executive Leadership Team on a regular basis

13. Complaints

13.1 Any staff member or student who feels that they have been discriminated against, harassed or bullied because of their protected characteristics should raise this matter using the appropriate College policy.

13.2 The College will treat all complaints seriously and no staff member or student will be victimised for raising a complaint.

APPENDIX 1

Approving Committee(s) Checklist

To be retained within the meeting records

The approving committee has made the following checks prior to approval of the policy

Title _____

The standardised template for presentation has been used	
Appropriate consultation has taken place	
Impact on other college policies and procedures has been considered and consulted upon where appropriate	
Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out	
Agree the date for review	

The committee endorses the above policy and associated procedure(s).

Signature _____

Date _____

(Responsible Person)

APPENDIX 2

Equality Impact Assessment

Decision, Policy or Practice	
Lead Manager	
Purpose of the Decision, Policy or Practice	
Who is affected by the Decision, Policy or Practice?	

Does, or could, the decision, policy or practice have an adverse effect on people sharing the following protected characteristics or/and are care-experienced? (Please tick relevant box)			
Protected Characteristic	Yes	No	Unknown
Age			
Disability			
Gender Reassignment			
Marriage or Civil Partnership			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Race			
Religion or Belief			
Sex			
Sexual Orientation			
Care-experienced			
Details of the adverse effect:			

Does, or could, the decision, policy or practice promote or advance equality of opportunity for people sharing the following protected characteristics or/and are care-experienced? (Please tick relevant box)			
Protected Characteristic	Yes	No	Unknown
Age			
Disability			
Gender Reassignment			
Marriage or Civil Partnership			
Pregnancy or Maternity			
Race			
Religion or Belief			
Sex			
Sexual Orientation			
Care-experienced			
Details of the positive effect:			

In what way does, or could, the decision, policy or practice foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic or/and are care-experienced and those who do not or/and are not care-experienced?

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Should the policy, practice or decision be referred for a Stage 2 Assessment?	Yes/No
Signed	
Date	

Please forward your completed Stage 1 Pro-forma to the Head of HR Services

Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment Approved	Yes/No
Signed	
Date	