



Wigan & Leigh
College

Single Equality Scheme 2016-2020



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1. Introduction

Wigan & Leigh College is committed to creating an environment where learners, staff, governors, visitors and other stakeholders actively promote equality and diversity, tackle bullying and discrimination and narrow the achievement gap. The College wants to ensure learners have excellent experiences that ensure they are well equipped for the next stage of their education, training and/or employment.

The College seeks to provide a safe, supportive environment for all its staff and students in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect. The College welcomes individuals and groups from local, regional and international communities. The promotion of equality and diversity enables learners to reach their potential. The College will value difference and diversity and will strive to create positive working relationships so that everyone can work and study to the best of their abilities, free from discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

2. Equality Policy

The Single Equality Scheme was devised to unify the various Equality Schemes, to create a consistent approach to equality, eliminate harassment and discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

This has been further strengthened by the Public Sector Equality Duty introduced by the Equality Act 2010.

The College is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and values the diversity of all its staff and students. The College ensures that all policies and practices embed equality and diversity intentions.

Wigan & Leigh College values the diversity of the multi-cultural and multi-faith community that we serve. The College is fully committed to building positive relations between different sections of our community and will promote common principles, shared values and respect for others. We take a positive approach to serving and representing the whole community.

The College is committed to:

- Upholding its values
- Focusing on learning which encourages high aspirations and success
- Applying excellence and integrity in all we do
- Respecting all learners and staff
- Ensuring staff are appropriately trained, supported and valued
- Maintaining financial stability for the benefit of learners
- Being responsive to individuals, employers, the community and the Government

All staff employed by the College (including those working for the College in a voluntary capacity), will seek to eliminate prejudice of any kind, and to promote equality and diversity. This includes general activities such as challenging the use of discriminatory language or behaviour by staff and by students, and challenging any College policies or procedures which they believe may be discriminatory, whether intentionally or unintentionally. Employees and students are expected to work with the College towards these aims. In certain circumstances, an employee or learner can be personally liable for discrimination against a fellow employee, learner or a job applicant. All employees have personal responsibility for the practical application of the College's Equality and Diversity Policy, which extends to the treatment of job applicants, employees (including former employees), customers clients, students and visitors.

There should be no discrimination, whether direct or indirect, because of any of the protected characteristics. The types of discrimination that are prohibited are explained below.

Discrimination may occur in the following forms:

- direct discrimination - this is treating someone less favourably because of a protected characteristic;
- indirect discrimination - this is treating people in the same way but in a way which adversely affects those with a protected characteristic;
- victimisation – this is treating someone less favourably because they have asserted their right not to be discriminated against because of a protected characteristic;
- harassment – this is unwanted conduct, related to a protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for someone or violating their dignity;
- institutional discrimination – this is an institutional form of any of the above.

3. Related Policies

Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee or learner who is found to have committed an act of unlawful discrimination. Serious breaches of this policy and serious incidents of harassment and bullying will be treated as gross misconduct. Unwarranted allegations that are not made in good faith may also be considered as a disciplinary matter. The College's Grievance Procedure is available to any employee and the Complaints Procedure for any learner who believes that they may have been unfairly discriminated against.

Further Education colleges are major education and training providers for those who are 16 plus, and in particular young people from ethnically diverse, and socially and economically disadvantaged areas. The age and profile of our students makes it crucial to be involved in the Prevent strategy. Wigan & Leigh College has a part to play in fostering shared values and promoting cohesion.

Our Prevent Strategy has five key objectives:

1. To promote and reinforce shared values; to create space for free and open debate; and to listen and support the learner voice
2. To break down segregation among different student communities including by supporting inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue and understanding, and to engage all students in playing a full and active role in wider engagement in society
3. To ensure student safety and that the College is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination
4. To provide support for students who may be at risk and appropriate sources of advice and guidance
5. To ensure that students and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in preventing violent extremism

These and all our other policies and procedures which work in conjunction with Wigan & Leigh's Single Equality Scheme are listed in Appendix 1.

4. The Public Sector Equality Duty

The General Equality Duty:

- We will eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- We will advance the equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic.
- We will foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.



Specific Equality Duties:

- The provision of sufficient information to demonstrate compliance with the general duties.
- The provision of evidence to show that analysis of all information has been undertaken.
- Details of the engagement and consultation that has taken place and publish annual equality information.

Protected Characteristics under the Law:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender Reassignment
- Marriage / Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy / Maternity
- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation

(Please also see Appendix 2 - Equality commitments to the 9 protected characteristics)

To meet these priorities, the following objectives have been compiled.

- Raise the awareness and skills of staff to promote fairness, equality and diversity and good relations
- Raise the awareness of learners to promote understanding and good relations between diverse groups
- Provide a hospitable and multi-cultural environment that welcomes, respects and protects diverse persons
- Monitor learner representation and success, take action to promote equality and ensure that all learners achieve excellent outcomes, whatever their background
- Monitor representation amongst all staff types and take action to promote equality
- Consult and involve representative staff, learners and outside organisations
- Embed the actions arising from equality impact evidence into policy development, business planning and quality assurance processes
- Ensure that partner organisations meet the College's standards and requirements for equality community. Our aim is to be inclusive and to provide high-quality learning opportunities and working environment, which meet the needs of students and staff fairly, equitably and consistently.

5. Our Strategic Objectives

Our Vision

To be a beacon of educational excellence transforming the lives of the individuals and communities we serve.

Our Values

- i. Teaching and learning are our first priority and the needs of our learners always come first.
- ii. As members of the College we are partners in the success of the organisation and are all accountable for our results.

- iii. High standards are at the heart of all that we do. In our pursuit of excellence we recognise that individually and collectively we can always improve.
- iv. Within our College community we all treat each other with respect, trust, openness, care and consideration. We celebrate student and staff success.
- v. We value equality and diversity.
- vi. We work in partnership with others so that we can contribute to local, regional and national economic development.

6. Equality and Diversity Strategic Priorities

Chapter 13 of the College Strategic plan is dedicated to Equality and Diversity at Wigan & Leigh College.

- 13.1 To create equality of opportunity for all students by maintaining a College community with a supportive ethos and high levels of mutual respect that does not tolerate discrimination and removes barriers to learning.
- 13.2 Strategic Goal: To embed promotion of equality and diversity in all curriculum areas to raise the awareness of learners to promote understanding and good relations between diverse groups.
- 13.3 To manage College services to ensure that the diverse needs of all students, users, visitors and staff are met.
- 13.4 To ensure College policies and practice reflect legal requirements and best practice with regard to equality and diversity.
- 13.5 To provide an environment, including external premises that welcomes respects and protects all learners and raises aspirations.

The College completes an annual equality and diversity report which is impact assessed. The report clarifies the demography within the college and states the college strategic aim to:

- Ensure equality and diversity is embedded into teaching and learning.
- Maintain a high reputation as a fully inclusive College that values and promotes equality and diversity.

This document describes how the College will continue to fulfil its statutory duties to promote equality and diversity as well as tackling and eliminating discrimination.

7. Valuing Staff and Learners

Our Learners:

We will provide an outstanding environment for teaching and learning and ensure that we work to ensure equality of access by:



- Using marketing strategies that target underrepresented groups to attract learners from a variety of backgrounds.
- Providing guidance for learners is sensitive to equality and diversity issues.
- Ensuring that the College offers a wide range of programmes that cater for all potential students.
- Delivering a curriculum that meets the needs and reflects the diversity of our student body and community.
- Acting in a robust manner to challenge and eliminate prejudice, bullying or harassment.
- Making reasonable adjustments for learners with particular needs.
- Complying with all equalities related legislation.
- Providing accommodation that creates an accessible, safe and secure environment for all learners.
- Providing a wide range of forums for learners to ensure that their voice is heard and issues raised are acted on.
- Encouraging open and frank discussions around issues that support learning, educational attainment and aspiration.

We will also ensure all learners have access to appropriate assessment opportunities by:

- Using the Additional Learning Support Team to carry out assessments and/or collate a comprehensive and compelling body of evidence to demonstrate the appropriateness of any arrangement so as not to place a student at a substantial disadvantage on account of their disability or learning difficulty.
- Agreeing all access arrangements prior to an assessment to allow candidates with disabilities, learning difficulties or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment.
- Providing access arrangements as listed in JCQ regulations (chapters 5 and 6 of the adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties).
- Meeting a range of access arrangements for candidates who are likely to have a number of required adjustments as outlined in JCQ regulations (chapter 4 of the adjustments for candidates with disabilities and learning difficulties)
- Making reasonable adjustments that may be unique to an individual and may not be included on any prescribed list of available access arrangements. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors which will include, but are not limited to, the needs of the disabled candidate, the effectiveness of the adjustment, the cost of the adjustment and the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

Our Staff:

To ensure that we are an employer of first choice for talented and innovative staff the college is committed to investment in its employees. To recruit and retain a motivated workforce which reflects the local community we will:

- Ensure that our HR policies are impact assessed.
- Have a swift, robust response in terms of challenging and eliminating bullying or harassment.
- Ensure that all new staff undertake a robust induction that includes the college equality and diversity ethos.
- Regularly review and report on workforce monitoring for equality and diversity and take action where needed.

- Use a variety of recruitment methods to ensure that we attract and retain staff from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Comply with all equalities related employment legislation.
- Train staff in equality and diversity issues to enable them to carry out their role that reflects the ethos of the organisation.
- Make reasonable adjustment for staff with particular needs.
- Work to develop a workforce that is reflective of our local community.

8. Actively engaging with Staff and Students

Our methods for consultation and involvement are:

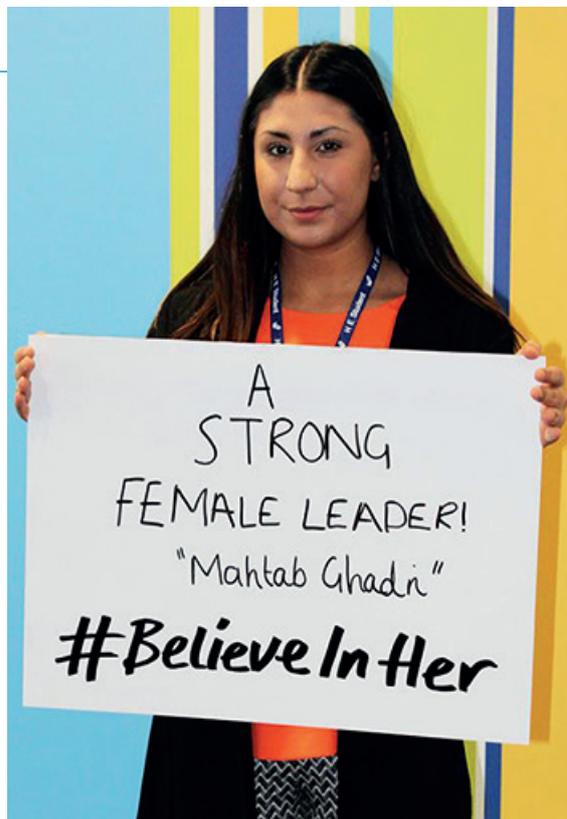
- Consultation questions accompanying the Scheme
- Surveys, forums and informal dialogue with learners and customers
- Communication within and between staff teams
- Liaison with Student Union Representatives
- Advocacy through the Students Union, Heads of Studies, Student Services and the Additional Learning Support Team.
- Mandatory Equality and Diversity Staff Development programme for all staff, managers and governors (Please see appendix 3)

We believe that moving to an Equality Scheme achieves better overall communication with learners, customers, staff, employers, partners and communities. Consultation and involvement is fundamental to the success of the Scheme and we are committed to embedding this in our business processes. We will consider the views of people with the full range of protected characteristics in further development of this Scheme and in the review of progress. Staff, learners and customers are well placed to tell us how we can improve our approach. We also welcome views from external organisations and the general public. We have made provision in the action plan to ensure that arrangements for routinely listening to people are developed, as appropriate, to better understand needs associated with protected characteristics.

9. Leadership and Management

Equality and Diversity management is led by the Vice Principal, College Services and the Head of Quality via the Executive Management Team which reports to Governors. A whole organisational approach to the Equality Scheme is achieved by its integration into strategic planning and Equality and Diversity is an integral part of the self-assessment process. All staff of the College contractually commits to take responsibility for eliminating discrimination and promoting equality. (Please also see Appendix 4 – Roles and Responsibilities)

Materials on equality and diversity are available from a variety of sources for staff to use at induction, in tutorials and staff development. Equality policy and procedures are a compulsory component in all learner and staff induction programmes. Equality and Diversity are a part of the tutorial programme.



10. Equality Impact Assessments

The College uses an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA's) process to assess all our organisation's services and functions. This includes a detailed, systematic analysis of the impact of policy, procedures, plans and practices to assess whether there is a differential impact on the people that the policies are designed to support. EIA's are reviewed at the specified date for each policy renewal.

The staff profile is regularly monitored by the Human Resources Department which then enables the College to provide monitoring reports for all areas of the organisation.

Enrolments, retention and achievement of learners in relation to protected characteristics are monitored regularly at all levels across the College for learners, through the Management Information System.

11. The Equality Scheme in Action

The College's Equality Scheme and four year action plan is published on the College's website and intranet. The Scheme is made available to staff, learners, and stakeholders in accessible formats and is cross referenced in the Self-Assessment Report.

Our four year Equality Action Plan demonstrates the steps we take to implement the Equality Scheme.

The action plan reflects:

- Strategic priorities of our organisation
- Priorities for each protected characteristic
- Measurable indicators of progress towards outcomes
- Lines of accountability and commitment at all levels

12. Monitoring

The College has in place arrangements to monitor the selection and recruitment of members of staff and the admission of students. This monitoring will enable the College to identify possible improvements in its practices in relation to:

- Teaching, learning and assessment;
- Management and governance;
- Admissions, access and participation;
- Students' support and guidance;
- Behaviour and discipline;
- Staff recruitment, training and career development; and
- Service delivery.

Monitoring in relation to the Equality Scheme Action Plan will continue to be aligned with the annual business cycle to ensure progress. In order to exercise responsibility under this Scheme, governors and senior managers will be provided with a range of monitoring information. This will include data on the protected characteristics and other relevant information about staff, learners

and customers. This is purely for the purpose of ensuring the maximum effect of this Scheme; data will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and security over data will be adhered to at all times. Each part of the College will take action locally to support progress towards the equality objectives. Progress towards the equality objectives will continue to be reported annually to Wigan & Leigh College Governing Board.

The Equality Scheme will be reviewed on a 4 year cycle.

The Equality and Diversity Group includes representatives from a range of areas including: Curriculum Managers, Human Resources, Quality, Marketing, Additional Learning Support, and Teaching, Learning and Assessment Coaches. Student representatives are also invited

The Equality and Diversity Group will:

- be pro-active in promoting, recognising and celebrating diversity,
- develop practices to ensure the removal of prejudice and discrimination from all aspects of marketing, recruitment, teaching and learning,
- set targets, develop action plans, and monitor and evaluate all College activity in relation to equality and diversity and the Single Equality Scheme,
- assess the impact of the Policy,
- publish results.

13. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months, or whenever new legislation comes into force, whichever is sooner.

14. Complaints and Breaches

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

Acts of discrimination (direct or indirect) or harassment on grounds of the protected characteristics, or of victimisation or abuse, will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence, and the appropriate disciplinary procedures will be followed (according to whether the accusation relates to a learner or a member of staff).

15. Publicising the College's Policy and Progress

Wigan & Leigh College has ensured the accessibility of information. Information provided via the internet has been reviewed to ensure that content is non-discriminatory. Alternative formats have been made available when appropriate. Advertising and publicity materials have highlighted the commitment to equality.

16. Appendix 1

Related Policies

Equality and Diversity is an issue that pervades the entire business of the College and is, therefore, related to every other policy and procedure to a greater or lesser extent.

College policies that work in conjunction with the Single Equality Scheme are:

- Complaints Procedure
- Grievance Procedure
- Safeguarding Children
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Prevent Strategy
- Human Resources Policy
- Student Disciplinary Procedures

Wigan & Leigh College information is available via its website and staff intranet pages, or can be made available upon request.



17. Appendix 2

Equality commitments to the 9 protected characteristics

Gender Reassignment

The College takes seriously its duty to address and eliminate the unlawful discrimination and harassment of transsexual people. This includes treating transsexual people less favourably for being absent because they propose to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone gender reassignment than they would be treated if they were absent because they were ill or injured. The Equality Act provides protection for transsexual people. A transsexual person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. The Act no longer requires a person to be under medical supervision to be protected – so a woman who decides to live as a man but does not undergo any medical procedures would be covered. It is recognised that there may be differences between physical sex and gender identity.

Disability

The College takes seriously its duty to promote equality of opportunity between disabled and other people; eliminate discrimination and harassment; promote positive attitudes to disabled people; encourage participation by disabled people in public life, and take steps to meet disabled people's needs, even if this requires more favourable treatment.

Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on an individual's ability to do normal daily activities.

Age

The College takes seriously its duty to protect those who share the protected characteristic of Age from direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Age is defined by reference to a person's age group. It means a person belonging to a particular age group. An age group includes people of the same age and people of a particular range of ages. Where people fall in the same age group they share the protected characteristic of age.

Marriage / Civil Partnership

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership.

Marriage covers any formal union of a man and a woman / man and a man / woman and a woman which is legally recognised in the UK. Civil partnership refers to a registered civil partnership of a same sex couple under the Civil Partnership Act 2004, including those registered outside the UK.

Pregnancy & Maternity

The College takes seriously its duty to ensure that women are protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of their pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which they are entitled.

Pregnancy and Maternity covers the condition of being pregnant and subsequently the period after giving birth. It is linked to maternity leave in the employment context. In the non-work context, protection against maternity discrimination is for 26 weeks after giving birth, including as a result of breast-feeding.

Race

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate racial discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups. Race refers to a group of people defined by their colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origins.

Religion or Belief

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate discrimination because of religion or belief. Religion means any religion, including a reference to a lack of religion. Belief includes religious and philosophical beliefs including lack of belief (e.g. Atheism). Generally, a belief affects life choices or the way people live their lives for it to be included.

Sex

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate unlawful sex discrimination and harassment - including for transsexual people and to promote equality of opportunity between men and women. Sex relates to the gender of an individual – i.e. whether a man or a woman.

Sexual Orientation

The College takes seriously its duty to eliminate discrimination on the grounds of someone's sexual orientation or perceived sexual orientation. This includes discrimination against someone because of their association with others who are lesbian, gay or bisexual.

Sexual orientation relates to whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.

18. Appendix 3

All staff employed by Wigan & Leigh College as required to undertake mandatory training within their probationary period. Equality and Diversity is part of our core training that we ask all staff to complete on a 3 year cycle.

Below are examples of the training undertaken to promote our policies and practices and to embed our equality and diversity intentions.



Equality & Diversity

- Welcome & Introduction (No Test)
- Age Discrimination
- Approaching Equality & Diversity
- Disability Discrimination
- Faith, Religion or Belief Discrimination
- Next Steps: Making a Difference (No Test)
- Race Discrimination
- Sexual Discrimination
- Sexual Orientation Discrimination

Safeguarding Training - The online Safeguarding training is accessed through the Wigan Safeguarding Children's Board,

- Awareness of Child Abuse & Neglect – Core
- Safeguarding Adults
- Safer Recruitment (for Managers only)
- Awareness of Child Abuse & Neglect
- Awareness of Child Abuse & Neglect Refresher

Prevent Training

The training is accessed through Foundation Online Learning, <http://www.foundationonline.org.uk/>

19. Appendix 4

Role and Responsibilities

All staff will comply with the general duty to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. Particular responsibilities in the organisation are listed below.

The Board of Governors

The Board is responsible for ensuring that the Single Equality Scheme is in place, and that the College meets its obligations including the general duty and the specific duty.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for providing overall direction and leadership in advancing and monitoring the Single Equality Scheme.

Vice Principal, College Services

The Vice Principal, College Services is responsible for giving a consistent and high profile lead, and ensuring the Equality Objectives are set in relation to the Strategic Objectives, devising and implementing the annual action plan. They are also responsible for ensuring that the action plans are monitored and are embedded within the college's self-assessment and strategic planning processes, and providing reports to the Executive team and the Board of Governors.

Head of Quality

The Head of Quality and Standards is responsible for ensuring that the Equality Objectives are embedded with the Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy and monitored through the cross college quality processes.

They are also responsible for assisting the Vice Principal, College Services to ensure the action plans are monitored and are embedded within the college's self-assessment and strategic planning processes, and providing reports to the Executive team and the Board of Governors.

Assistant Principal MIS & IT

The Assistant Principal MIS & IT is responsible for ensuring curriculum data is recorded and reported effectively to identify any areas of under achievement relating to protected characteristics so that appropriate and effective interventions can be made.

The Equality and Diversity group

The Equality and Diversity Group is responsible for adopting a proactive and participative approach to the promotion and implementation of Equality and Diversity and ensure that the principles of Equality pervade all of our work. The Equality and Diversity group is supported by sub groups and task and finish groups, that work towards the targets set within the Equality Objectives.

All managers:

All managers are responsible for ensuring that identified objectives, where appropriate, are embedded within their functional or curriculum action plans and for putting the scheme and related policies and procedures into practice. They are also responsible for ensuring that their staff know and understand their responsibilities with regard to this.

All teaching and learning staff:

All Teaching and Learning Staff are responsible for embedding the principles of Equality and Diversity into their professional practice and using naturally occurring opportunities to promote and develop our learners' understanding of equality and diversity issues.

All staff:

All college staff are responsible for ensuring that equality of opportunity and respect for diversity is at the heart of all we do. They are also responsible for working to eliminate discrimination and promoting the right of every individual to be treated with respect and dignity.

All contractors and service providers:

All contractors and service providers are required to be aware of our Single Equality Scheme and to follow this in any contracts or agreements.



