

**West Kent and Ashford College
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
Policy
2018/19**

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1. Introduction

West Kent and Ashford College is committed to being an inclusive College, where all feel safe and valued. Our Strategic aims and core values reflect the environment in which our students study and live safely and with dignity and one in which our staff work effectively to foster and develop an atmosphere of respect and understanding where discrimination is not tolerated.

All our stakeholders are recognised as unique individuals, representing an array of different characteristics which set each other apart whilst uniting all in the College culture and mission “To support all our students to achieve their full potential and aspire to excellence”.

Our responsibility to promote equality of opportunity for students and staff is fundamental to the core values we foster: Our intention at all times is to be:

- Inclusive and respectful
- Caring and accountable
- Professional and ambitious

Each individual is encouraged to reach their full potential through the development of their skills and knowledge based on their unique contribution and individuality regardless of age, disability, gender, including gender reassignment, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief, marital status or pregnancy.

2. Legal Context

The Equality Act 2010 brings together under one single piece of legislation, previously published single equality legislation. Some legislation remains separate and will continue to be updated, for example,

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and 2005 (DDA)
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Employment Equality (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- Equality Act 2006
- Equal Pay Act 1970
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Race Relations Act 1976
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975

The aim is to make the law more consistent, clearer and easier to follow in order to make society fairer. The Equality Act 2010 harmonises and in some cases extends the previous equality legislation.

West Kent and Ashford College has a legal duty to comply with the Equality Duties stipulated in the Equality Act 2010, of which there are three:

- 1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination; including harassment, victimisation and other inappropriate behaviours
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity
- 3) Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

In addition, West Kent and Ashford College as a public sector organisation has a legal duty to comply with two Specific Duties:

- 1) To publish relevant information demonstrating our compliance with the Equality Duty by 31st January 2010 and at least annually thereafter
- 2) To set and publish Equality Objectives which are specific and measurable by 6th April 2012 and at least every four years thereafter

3. Purpose of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy brings together in a single equality and diversity policy document all aspects of the Equality Act 2010.

The aim of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is to describe how the equality duties of the Equality Act 2012 will be met by West Kent and Ashford College and replaces the previously published individual Race, Disability, and Gender Schemes and Action Plans.

In addition to our commitment to meet the legal obligations, West Kent and Ashford College recognises that to be a successful college the culture and core values must reflect the diverse needs of all stakeholders and that each individual has a responsibility to work towards achieving this now and in the future.

Our commitment to working together as one strong cohesive body to ensure that all are treated fairly and with respect and dignity is our common goal on which we must all focus in order to achieve the inclusive environment, where all feel safe and valued.

4. Meeting the Equality Duties

The Equality Act 2010 states the individual characteristics which are protected by law. The three Equality Duties apply to the following Protected Characteristics:

- Age
- Gender
- Disability
- Race
- Gender Reassignment
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and Civil Partnership
- Pregnancy and Maternity
- Religion or Belief

Note: The Socio-economic background of an individual is not one of the Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. From an educational stance, the social and educational background is relevant when guiding and supporting learners through their education. When students are from an area of high deprivation, they may have poor prior educational attainment and low expectations which may impact negatively on the success of the individual if they are not identified and supported appropriately.

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy outlines the focus of its equality work at West Kent and Ashford College. This is grouped under the three Equality Duties and are:

- 1) The promotion of equality of opportunity for all
- 2) The elimination of unlawful discrimination for students, staff and other stakeholders through Equality Analysis, of the full range of Curriculum, Student Support and Human Resource Policies, Practices, Plans and Procedures and every day practices
- 3) The fostering of good relations and promotion of positive attitudes between and towards those with a particular characteristic and those without through training materials and resources for staff, students and other stakeholders

In addition, the following College activities will help achieve the equality duties. These include:

- Ensuring the accessibility to materials, facilities, products, services and resources for all students, staff and stakeholders, including the impact of College policies on individuals or groups
- Ensuring the diversity of students is positively recognised and supported through embedding differentiation and equality of opportunity into teaching and learning and curriculum planning, reducing the differences in outcomes of learners
- Developing a staff development programme in order to raise awareness of equality and diversity and how everyone can contribute to achieving the equality duties
- Ensuring that the diversity of staff is positively recognised and supported and that equality and diversity is embedded into the staff recruitment and promotion procedures enabling all to participate and benefit
- Developing student resources and materials which promote and celebrate differences and diversity in order to raise awareness and increase tolerance towards each other
- Encouraging student engagement through participation and contribution to College activities such as attending the Learner Voice Conferences, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committees, facilitating and taking part in groups such as Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) and the College Chaplaincy
- Data capturing and monitoring of key information, throughout the year will be carried out by the appropriate College departments and reported on each term to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Senior Management Team and Governing Body. Progress against the Equality Duties and Equality Objectives will be published within the Equality and Diversity Annual Report
- Achieving the Equality Objectives as stated in the West Kent and Ashford College Strategic Plan and reporting on progress each term to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Senior Management Team and Governing Body
- Achieving Investors and Leadership in Diversity by involving a range of stakeholders in the process through survey, working groups and action plans

The focus of the work is on the outcome of the activity. In other words, what difference is the action and activity having on an individual or group with a particular Protected Characteristic and how can this be evidenced in order to measure the effectiveness of the equality work at West Kent and Ashford College.

Equality Objectives 2016-19

The Equality Objectives are fully embedded in to the West Kent and Ashford College Strategic Plan 2016-19. There are five strategic objectives:

1. To inspire every student to achieve their best
2. To meet the needs of businesses and our community
3. To create, develop and sustain a culture that empowers everyone
4. To be an inclusive College where all feel safe and respected
5. To ensure a sustainable economic future for the College

By working towards and achieving the targets set under each strategic objective, the Equality Duties are being embedded and met by all areas of the College.

Strategic Objective 4: ***To be an inclusive College where all feel safe and valued*** targets specific areas of development within the College and is the key priority for the duration of the Strategic Plan regarding equality work.

This is not an exhaustive list though and new priorities may be introduced to meet the need for development within the equality work.

Strategic Objective 4: To be an inclusive College where all feel safe and valued

4.1: To ensure that all College sites and activities are accessible to all stakeholders and comply with relevant legislation	Equality Work Key Priority and Targets	Person Responsible
<p>A - To undertake an annual review of DDA and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy compliance across the whole campus and sites and increase accessibility year on year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy on an annual basis to ensure compliance with legislative changes • To update the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy to include the Equality Objectives, Equality Duties and Specific Duties for Public Sector Organisations • Incorporate the DDA into the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy • Identify staff responsibilities against the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy • Include the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy into the annual Equality and Diversity Staff Development Programme • Set an annual date to audit working practices in relation to reasonable adjustments and compliance with the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and DDA • Appoint a company to conduct a Site Accessibility Audit • Develop a working plan with costs and time scales to complete all works to ensure accessibility across all sites • Review accessibility of Initial Advice and Guidance (IAG) and information to all stakeholders • Make reasonable adjustments to ensure all IAG and information is accessible in a variety of formats. <p>Audit Accessibility of information and IAG annually</p>	<p>Group Vice Principal Student Support Services</p>
<p>B – To ensure all activities are EIA and all reasonable adjustments are made to ensure maximum % accessibility to all activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate EA into lesson observation and Curriculum Health Checks • All Support Health Checks to include an EA of the service, resources, facilities etc. • Conduct an Equality and Diversity survey with stakeholders to assess position and implement change through Action Planning • Investors In Diversity: Leadership in Diversity kite mark achieved April 2014. 	<p>Group Vice Principal Student Support Services</p>

<p>C - To comply with all government legislation guidance for SENDA/DDA requirements on all capital builds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new building works/capital spend to have EA prior to build to ensure legislation compliance • Contractors to be made aware of requirements and to factor into building plans and cost • Increase compliance from 80% to 100% as part of a rolling programme 	<p>Assistant Director Estates Strategy and Commercial Development</p>
<p>4.2: To ensure that the principles of safeguarding underpin everything that we do</p>	<p>Equality Work Key Priority and Targets</p>	<p>Person Responsible</p>
<p>A - To continue to raise the profile of safeguarding within the student body and monitor safeguarding incidents through the disciplinary and student bullying logs to ensure that there are no trends of bullying and that disciplinary logs show consistency of application and fair sanctions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce the Student Single Safeguarding Log and Action Plan and monitor termly through the Safeguarding Committee • Annual Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding Reports to include incidents and trends • Include Student Disciplinary and Bullying and Harassment Policies in the Annual Staff Development Programme, raising staff awareness each year • Include elements of Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding on the Annual Learner Voice Conference Agendas 	<p>Group Vice Principal Student Support Services</p>
<p>4.3: To create a College community which embraces diversity in all areas of the organisation and proactively addresses the achievement gap</p>	<p>Equality Work Key Priority and Targets</p>	<p>Person Responsible</p>
<p>A - To develop, implement and monitor the EDIMS on an annual basis in line with government recommendations and internal targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To Review EDIMs annually and set targets through an EDIM Group • Targets to be monitored in year through the Equality and Diversity committee • Set new EDIMs in line with College direction, government changes and census data 	<p>Group Vice Principal Student Support Services Group Vice Principal Quality</p>

		Standards and Performance
<p>B - To develop, implement and monitor a teaching and learning strategy to ensure all lecturers are recognising diversity in the classroom and learner differentiation is observed in a minimum of 90% of lessons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite an Equality and Diversity Consultant in to observe lesson observations and provide guidance for improvement • Provide training for the Lesson Observation Team on how to embed Equality and Diversity into teaching and Learning • Deliver training on embedding Equality and Diversity in teaching and learning • Aim for 90% of lessons to be good or outstanding on differentiation • Review lesson observation profile three times a year Carry out supportive observations identifying missed opportunities in Equality and Diversity 	<p>Group Vice Principal Quality, Standards and Performance</p>
<p>C - To ensure that retention, achievement and success for minority groups is within 3% of internal targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request reporting system that enables data to be cut accurately at headline level • Monitor retention of minority groups three times a year and compare with EDIM target • Put in place an action plan for improvement if the retention of minority group is (less/more) than 3% of other groups • Monitor and review achievement and overall success at the end of the year and put in place an action plan for improvement for the following year if Retention Achievement and success (RAS) is (less/more) than 3% of other groups 	<p>Group Vice Principal Quality, Standards and Performance</p>

4.5: Creating a culture of respect and dignity which promotes self esteem and confidence, enabling all staff and students to make a valued contribution	Equality Work Key Priority and Targets	Person Responsible
A - To review and monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the Student Bullying and Harassment Policy and the Student Disciplinary Policy on an annual basis to ensure that trends are identified and discrimination and bullying are addressed effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review emerging trends of Bullying and Harassment each term and set an Action Plan to counter inappropriate behaviours • Annual Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding Reports to include incidents and trends on Bullying and Harassment • Include Student Disciplinary and Bullying and Harassment Policies into the Annual Staff Development Programme. Raising Staff Awareness each year • Include elements of Equality and Diversity and Safeguarding on the Annual Learner Voice Conference Agenda 	Group Vice Principal Student Support Services
B - To promote and monitor the principles of the core values embedding them in College life and evidenced through staff annual Performance Talent Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain robust Performance and Talent Reviews and Reporting Procedure • Deliver Training through the Equality and Diversity Staff Development Programme on core values and how to embed into College life/culture • Promote the core values through a range of documents and ensure all staff receive these during induction, Equality and Diversity and Performance Talent Review training • Monitor application of Performance Talent Reviews once a term and report to SMT on progress • Include questions about core values in staff surveys/questionnaires. • Analyse staff survey and make reasonable adjustments to further promote and embed care values into College life • Analyse results from external audits such as IIP and Ofsted and make reasonable adjustments to further promote and embed care values into College life 	Group Director Human Resources

5. Protected Characteristics and non protected characteristic monitored by West Kent and Ashford College

Within the overall equality objectives there are priorities which link specifically to the different Protected Characteristics. These priorities will be monitored through the specific equality groups responsible and reported to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Age

People of all age are protected, though for people under the age of 18 years, the Children's Act applies. People sharing the same age group share the same protected characteristic. It does allow however, for differences in ages when certain services and goods are being provided such as travel passes.

- Gather and analyse data for staff and students. Outcome: age profile and identification of equality issues regarding accessibility, discrimination and learning outcomes
- Robust IAG for all age groups regarding accessibility to curriculum. Outcome: review curriculum planning to ensure equality of opportunity within educational constraints
- EDIMs monitoring of Retention, Achievement and Success (RAS). Outcome: reduce RAS gaps between different age groups
- Analysis of Staff Profile, Outcome: to identify gaps in employment and inequality of opportunity

Gender

Men and women are both protected. An example is equality in the work place which prohibits less favourable treatment between men and women in terms of pay and conditions of employment.

- Gather and analyse data for staff and students. Outcome: Gender profile and identification of equality issues regarding accessibility, discrimination and learning outcomes
- EDIMs monitoring of recruitment. Outcome: break down stereotypical ideas of male and female jobs, careers, educational and professional pathways. Actively promote and encourage staff and students into industries and jobs associated with the opposite sex
- Actively address student and staff recruitment through robust IAG. Outcome: Increase males and females into industries and jobs traditionally associated with the opposite sex

- Actively support students and staff that may be of an underrepresented gender within their area of study or work. Outcome: Create an inclusive environment where students and staff feel valued and safe. Increase moral, productivity and success
- EDIMs monitoring of RAS. Outcome: reduce RAS gaps between different Gender groups

Disability

A person has a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term (usually more than 12 months) adverse effect on that person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. A person does not have to disclose a disability therefore we should take the lead and always ask if there are any needs that need accommodating. It is unlawful to ask about a job candidates health before offering them work.

- Gather and analyse data for staff and students. Outcome: Disability profile and identification of equality issues regarding accessibility, discrimination and learning outcomes
- EDIMs monitoring of RAS. Outcome: reduce RAS gaps between the groups of students receiving ALS support or where reasonable adjustment is made and groups where no support or reasonable adjustment is made
- Improve disability disclosure rate of staff and students through targeted and appropriate IAG at recruitment and induction stages. Outcome: increased opportunity to make timely reasonable adjustment and raise awareness of disabilities with staff on a need to know basis to ensure health and safety compliance
- Review accessibility of physical work and learning resources, services and facilities. Outcome: identify and address accessibility barriers which have a negative impact on learning or employment
- Review curriculum timetabling and staffing consideration for students and staff with disabilities. Outcome: appropriate support and logistical access to services and facilities ensure increased RAS for students and increased staff morale and productivity for staff
- Focus within teaching and learning on differentiation and positively promoting disability with society. Outcome: Increased equality of opportunity for all
- Provide training materials and staff development for staff. Outcome: raise awareness of the barriers to learning and social development as a result of a range of disabilities. To understand the negative impact specific disabilities have on learning and develop strategies to overcome learning and

employment barriers by making reasonable adjustments

- Promote zero tolerance to bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination based on any of the Protected Characteristics, particularly disability (though all are treated equally). Outcome: eliminate discrimination and victimisation due to any form of disability

Race

The Equality Act 2010, “Race” refers to a group of people defined by their race, colour, nationality including citizenship and ethnic or national origins. Physical attributes can be classed as race, though culture which may be linked to a particular nationality is not protected for example, language, which may define the race but is not classed as “Race”.

- Gather and analyse data for staff and students. Outcome: Race and Ethnicity profile and identification of equality issues regarding accessibility, discrimination and learning outcomes
- EDIMs monitoring of RAS. Outcome: reduce RAS gaps between different ethnic groups and those from minority groups
- Raise Awareness with staff and students of different ethnic groups and nationalities. Outcome: To break down barriers to learning, improve tolerance and acceptance between all. Foster good relations between different groups. Eliminate discrimination, victimisation and harassment through improved understanding and awareness of ethnic differences
- Embed into teaching and learning diverse examples. Outcome: create an inclusive environment where students and staff feel valued and safe. Increase moral, productivity and success.
- EDIMs monitoring of staff and student profile. Outcome: match the staff race profile to the student race profile. Increase the staff race profile to match the local community profile in order to increase the number of students into education from the underrepresented groups
- Promote and celebrate nationality themes to match the staff and student profile within the College community. Outcome: visibly and actively embrace different nationalities to raise awareness amongst the student and staff body and to create an inclusive environment where students and staff feel valued and safe. Increase moral, productivity and success
- Promote zero tolerance to bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination based on any of the Protected Characteristics, particularly race (though all are treated equally). Outcome: eliminate discrimination and victimisation due to race

- To provide staff development on behaviour management. Outcome: to enable all staff regardless of role within the college the necessary tools and strategies to tackle inappropriate behaviours amongst colleagues and students with regard to any of the Protected Characteristics, particularly race (though all are treated equally). Outcome: eliminate discrimination and victimisation due to race

Gender Reassignment

Gender reassignment refers to a person who has proposed, started or completed a process to change his or her sex. The person is protected by the Equality Act regardless of whether they are undergoing medical supervision. Gender reassignment does not apply to transvestites.

- See Gender bullet points
- Ensure facilities and services are accessible in an unobtrusive and respectful manner. Outcome: inclusive environment where students and staff feel valued and safe. Increase moral, productivity and success.

Sexual Orientation

This refers to a person's sexual orientation towards a person of the same sex, opposite sex or either sex.

- Actively promote LGBT groups within the College and local surroundings. Outcome: To create an inclusive environment where all students and staff regardless of their sexual orientation feel safe, included and supported
- Promote zero tolerance to bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination based on any of the Protected Characteristics, particularly sexual orientation (though all are treated equally). Outcome: eliminate discrimination and victimisation due to sexual orientation. To raise awareness around trans/bi/homophobia and the negative impact this may have on an individual

Marriage or Civil Partnership

The Equality Act protects employees who are in a civil partnership or married though only in relation to unlawful discrimination.

- Consideration of marital or civil partnership in relation to HR policies. Outcome: to ensure equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination

- Gather and analyse data for staff and students. Outcome: “Marital Status” profile and identification of equality issues regarding accessibility and discrimination. Identification of possible inequalities between single staff and staff who are married or in a civil partnership. The law does not protect single persons and inequality of treatment may occur towards single staff that are treated less favourably than those who are married or in a civil partnership, and therefore protected under the Equality Act 2010

Pregnancy and Maternity

A woman is protected on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity. Maternity refers to the period after the birth, which reflects the period of a woman’s ordinary maternity leave entitlement in the employment context.

- Consideration of pregnancy or maternity in relation to HR policies. Outcome: to ensure equality of opportunity and to eliminate discrimination
- Gather and analyse data for staff and students. Outcome: Pregnancy and Staff Maternity profile and identification of equality issues regarding accessibility and discrimination
- Ensure Risk Assessment is carried out. Outcome: Put in place reasonable measures to ensure equality of opportunity leading to reduced likelihood of health complications and increased likelihood of RAS for students and productivity and increased morale for staff

Religion or Belief

For a religion to be protected under the Equality Act, it must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief, on the other hand must be an important and significant aspect of human life and behaviour. Sustainability is an important element of belief, for example, Green belief. If belief is worthy of respect in a democratic society it too is protected, such as Political belief.

- Gather and analyse data for staff and students. Outcome: to identify the student and staff religion and belief profile and identification of equality issues regarding accessibility and discrimination
- Ensure students at all sites have access to multi-faith facilities. Outcome: To create an inclusive environment where students and staff are shown respect for their different religions and beliefs resulting in raised staff morale and productivity and student RAS
- Investigate local places of worship and community links. Outcome: improved support for students and staff of different religions and faiths, particularly minority faiths
- Provide materials and training opportunities for staff. Outcome: To raise

awareness of the impact of specific religions and faiths on teaching and learning, residential living and employment

Socio-economic background

Although this is not a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, it is important to recognise that students and staff can be a victim of discrimination, inequality of opportunity and poor social inclusion due to their actual or perceived social and economic background.

In some cases students from a poor socio-economic background are disadvantaged initially due to poor social skills or underdeveloped educational knowledge and skills. West Kent and Ashford College is committed to raising the achievement gap and providing all with an equal opportunity to succeed.

- Gather and analyse data for students. Outcome: to identify the student socio-economic profile and identification of equality issues regarding equality of opportunity, accessibility and discrimination
- Review curriculum offer. Outcome: to ensure students with poor prior educational experience and results can access education and training at West Kent and Ashford College

6. Reporting Processes

Equality and Diversity, Safeguarding and Behaviour Management are intrinsically linked together and reported on a range of documents.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) are reported and monitored through the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Safeguarding Committee

Discrimination, victimisation and harassment are reported to the Safeguarding Committee, Senior Management Team and Governing Body each term via the Safeguarding Termly Reports.

Bullying and harassment incidents and potential trends are monitored and analysed with Action Plans being put in place to eliminate discrimination and victimisation within the student and staff body.

Inappropriate behaviours are reported through the Safeguarding reports.

Quality Improvement Meeting

Lesson Observation reports and outcomes are reported through the Quality Improvement Meeting each term. Embedding equality and diversity, differentiation and reasonable adjustments are reported and feed into the Annual Equality and Diversity Report.

7. Associated Documents

- 1) Safeguarding Reports Term 1, Term 2 and Term 3 all feed into the Annual Safeguarding Report.
- 2) Annual Complaints Report.
- 3) EDIMs are reviewed on an annual basis and are reported within the Annual Equality and Diversity Report.
- 4) Strategic Objectives are monitored through the year and Strategic Objective 4 is reported within the Annual Equality and Diversity Report.
- 5) Information and evidence regarding compliance with the three Equality Duties of:
 - i) Elimination of discrimination
 - ii) Advancing Equality of Opportunity and
 - iii) Fostering good relations

Are reported on within the Annual Equality and Diversity Report and published on the West Kent and Ashford College websites.

8. Acknowledgements

Dr Christine Rose, Equality and Diversity and Human Rights consultant

Equality and Human Rights Commission: various sources

AoC Guideline Documents

LSN Training Materials

Investors in Diversity and Leadership