



POLICY TITLE

15A EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

REVIEW CYCLE

Annually

NEXT REVIEW DATE

1st February 2018

PERSON (S) RESPONSIBLE

Director of Human Resources & Legal Services

APPROVING BODY

Corporation Board (advised by the Principal and Executive Board)

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to make definitions and agree procedures for the equality of opportunity in both employment and service provision.

15A - EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN EMPLOYMENT

BACKGROUND

The College's mission is to invest in and provide excellence in education and training in support of local people, the regional economy and the national targets. Our staff team is one of the most important means by which this purpose will be fulfilled. This requires that we give strategic attention to investment in and development of our staff. This forms the basis of the College's approach to equality of opportunity in employment.

In addition, the College recognises that minority groups:

- (a) under-represented in employment generally at the College, and unrepresentative of the range of customers that we serve;
- (b) under represented in a range of specific occupations, including those at senior management level.

This forms the basis of priorities adopted in this policy, which will be regularly reviewed.

POLICY STATEMENT

The College is committed to working towards equality of opportunity in its employment policies and practices.

The overall aims are to:

- (c) give priority status within the application of the policy to issues related to minority groups;
- (d) ensure that no job applicant or employee is discriminated against on grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, gender re-assignment, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief; and
- (e) ensure that no applicant or employee is unfairly disadvantaged by factors that are not occupationally or otherwise relevant to the requirements of the post and objectives of the College.

However, the College recognises that there may be genuine occupational requirements that have a disproportionate effect on the priority groups referred to in this policy. Therefore the College commits itself to the development and implementation of programmes of positive action that are both permissible within the law and assist us in combating the traditional under-representation of the priority groups.

IMPLEMENTATION

It is the responsibility of the Board of Governors, the Chief Executive and all staff of the College to uphold and implement this policy.

The Director of Human Resources & Legal Services will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the operation and effectiveness of this policy.

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The Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plans will address the implementation of major initiatives, and this policy will be used as a corporate standard against which other employment policies and practices will be developed.

EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN SERVICE DELIVERY

BACKGROUND

The College's mission is to invest in and provide excellence in education and training, in support of local people, the regional economy, and the national targets.

Our customers are the focus of the service that we offer, and it is crucial that we give strategic attention to their educational needs and career aspirations. This forms the basis of the College's approach to equality of opportunity in service delivery.

POLICY STATEMENT

The College is committed to working towards equality of opportunity in all aspects of its service delivery.

It will achieve this by:

- providing opportunities for access for all local communities and individuals wishing to gain vocational qualifications;
- developing access arrangements and facilities, where existing conditions present significant barriers to would-be learners;
- assessing and, where possible, accrediting prior experience and achievement;
- addressing, wherever possible, individual learning needs;
- providing individual guidance and support, and monitoring progress on courses of study;
- respecting individual beliefs and customs; and
- providing a generally supportive learning environment, so that the full range of our students can benefit from the opportunities here.

The College is intent upon achieving this within a secular ethos. However, it will respect religious beliefs and customs, and be as flexible as possible in responding to students who hold these beliefs. The College will not however, allocate its resources to any religious instruction or practice.

The communities that we serve are diverse and represent a rich source of experience, skills, and values. The College aims to utilise this diversity as a positive force to examine critically the quality and relevance of its services, and to improve and develop them.

The College will not tolerate any form of harassment, intimidation or discrimination on any grounds. The College will also not allow the expression of views that are intolerant of other beliefs, cultures and customs. The College will also not allow any activities which seek to convert people from one faith or religion to another, or to persuade people to take-up a particular faith or religion.

The College will do all within its power to ensure that it does not give less favourable treatment to students on the grounds of age, race, colour, ethnic origin, gender, gender identity, gender reassignment, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion or religious belief .

IMPLEMENTATION

The College makes it a responsibility of all managers, staff and students to uphold and implement this policy.

The College's quality control and quality assurance systems will be developed in such a way as to enable monitoring and evaluation of the operation and effectiveness of this policy.

The Corporate Plan and Directorate Business Plan will address the implementation of major initiatives, and this policy will be used as a corporate standard against which other curriculum and service policies will be developed.

REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice by the Directorate of Human Resources, in conjunction with relevant parties.

GENERAL

This policy is to be read cross-referenced with all relevant College and service delivery policies.