



Equality and Diversity Policy

REFERENCE: ED/POL/06

Quality

1. EIA
2. Equality and Diversity Committee
3. Senior Leadership Team

Approved: 8th September 2015

Approved: 26th October 2023

Approved: 18th October 2023

Review Date: October 2026

Warwickshire College Group is committed to promoting equality and we strive to ensure that all our communication and learning materials are available in various formats including large font. Please contact the College by calling 0300 45 600 47 quoting the document reference number and the title of the policy to request an alternative format.

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The Warwickshire College Group is committed to serving the wider community by developing equality of opportunity in all of its actions and supporting human rights. The aim of the College is that everyone is given both reasonable and appropriate support and the opportunity to reach their full potential. In fulfilling this aim the College works proactively to ensure that no one is disadvantaged as a result of their protected characteristics:

- Age;
- Disability;
- Gender reassignment;
- Race;
- Marriage and civil partnership;
- Pregnancy and maternity;
- Religion/beliefs;
- Sex; and
- Sexual orientation.

2.0 PRINCIPLES

The following principles relate to all students, staff, volunteers, governors and other stakeholders in the College community. The College community is defined as places where College functions take place and includes all out-reach centres, work placements, employer premises and other venues where activities are taking place in the name of, or on behalf of, the College. Every member of this community has a responsibility to tackle and eliminate discriminatory behaviour including bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Visitors, contracted personnel and partners will be required to ensure that equality is upheld both in principle and practice, when visiting or working with the College.

The College will actively promote harmony between different groups and encourages both tolerance and understanding of the beliefs of others. The College is committed to recognising the achievements of all members of the College community.

2.1 The Legislation

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) replaces the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. An education provider like the College will have duties under the Act as an employer or provider of services as well as in relation to its role in providing education to students. The Act makes it unlawful for a further or higher education institution to discriminate against an applicant or student with one of the protected characteristics in relation to the following:

- Admissions;
- The provision of education;
- Access to any benefit, facility or service; and
- Exclusions.

The Act makes it unlawful for the College to harass or victimize an applicant or student.

Public Sector Equality Duty came into force in 2011. The Equality Duty ensures that all public bodies play their part in making society fairer by tackling discrimination and providing equality of opportunity for all.

The Equality Duty has three aims. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to:

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

'Having due regard' means consciously thinking about the three aims of the Equality Duty as part of the process of decision-making. This means that consideration of equality issues must influence the decisions reached by the College – such as in how we act as employers; how we develop, evaluate and review policy; how we design, deliver and evaluate services, and how we commission and procure from others.

Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity involves considering the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- reasonably meet the needs of people with protected characteristics; and
- encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in College.

Fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people who share a protected characteristic and others.

Complying with the Equality Duty may involve treating some people better than others, as far as this is allowed by discrimination law. For example, it may involve making use of an exception or the positive action provisions in order to provide a service in a way which is appropriate for people who share a protected characteristic.

Under the Equality Duty the College is required to:

- publish information to demonstrate their compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually; and
- set equality objectives, at least every four years

2.2 Encouraging participation of under-representative groups

The College will be proactive in identifying under-represented groups and encourage them to participate by developing flexible provision in appropriate surroundings within the College community. The College recognises that it has an opportunity to model equal access and empower all groups including disabled, ethnic, religious and socially & economically disadvantaged and will:

- Try to recruit governors representative of the student population and/or community;
- Encourage the widest participation from students, parents, lecturers and employers;

- Support individuals and community groups to express their case on matters affecting themselves and their community; and
- Encourage all employers to support their workforce in their learning.

This policy is representative of the College core values and will be monitored through the College Single Equality Scheme and associated actions.

The College in all its activities will endeavour to:

- Promote Equality and Diversity throughout the student journey and in particular in teaching and learning and in all areas of the curriculum;
- Produce an annual diversity calendar for the College and promote events and information via the intranet;
- Provide vision and strong leadership in all aspects of equality, diversity and tolerance with all our stakeholders, students and staff;
- Respond to the needs of individual learners and seek to include those who are disaffected or marginalised;
- Provide the appropriate environment and facilities for all staff and not limit the equality of opportunity for particular staff;
- Provide the appropriate environment and facilities for all groups of students and not limit the equality of opportunity for particular groups;
- Ensure that all groups of students are supported to achieve their maximum potential;
- Ensure all full-time students have named pastoral support from a Personal Learning Advisor (PLA), Training Coordinator or Personal Tutor and all apprentices have named pastoral support from a Work-Based Learning Manager (WBLM);
- Consult with representatives of community groups, employers and other external organisations to inform the planning of specific learning programmes, initiatives, programme planning and curriculum development;
- Operate an admissions system that promotes tolerance of the beliefs of others, that is sensitive to all prospective students and staff and offers the relevant advice and guidance;
- Give prospective students (where appropriate) the opportunity to visit the College, so that they can make an independent judgement as to whether the environment is suitable;
- Monitor student applications, enrolment retention, achievement, progression;
- Provide reasonable support systems to students by encouraging disclosure, assessing their particular needs and publicising additional support arrangements including any costs incurred;
- Publicise childcare facilities and costs;
- Ensure that staff recruitment systems are compliant with equality legislation;
- Induct students and staff and raise their awareness of the Equality & Diversity Policy;
- Monitor feedback via the Customers Services team for issues that relate to Equality & Diversity to ensure that the College does not indirectly discriminate against one particular group/groups;
- Provide opportunities for students to take part in a wide range of activities;
- Ensure good equality and diversity practice in organisations where students take part in work based learning, employer engagement and any other activities;
- Encourage and support all employers and suppliers to develop Equality

& Diversity Policies;

- Ensure that assessment and examination methods are fair;
- Promote that the College is representative of the community it supports and make sure that all students, governors, volunteers and staff understand that our value of tolerance relating to the beliefs of others is central to everything the College does.

- Promote British Values within the College and specifically the aspects regarding *mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs*.

- The College adopts the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) non-legally binding, working definition of antisemitism which states, '*Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities*'. Warwickshire College takes a zero-tolerance approach to antisemitism in all its forms.

3.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

- 3.1** Overall responsibility rests with the Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Leaders.
- 3.2** The Principal has the responsibility for ensuring that there is a framework in place for the promotion of Equality and Diversity and for ensuring delegated arrangements for the following tasks:
- Overseeing the development and review of the Equality and Diversity Policy;
 - Providing information to the Governor's Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee, via an Annual Equality and Diversity Report, to enable the Board of Governors to keep under review the College's management and implementation of equal opportunities;
 - Chairing the Equality and Diversity Committee;
 - Liaising with the link Governor for Equality and Diversity;
 - Supporting the development of procedures and guidelines to enable staff to comply with equality legislation;
 - Ensuring all staff, governors, volunteers and students are provided with the opportunity to attend training regarding equality matters;
 - Periodically carrying out audits;
 - Monitoring equality and diversity practices;
 - Identifying current and proposed legislation relevant to the College; and
 - Providing day to day advice on equality related matters.
- 3.3** The Governing Body are required to consider Equality and Diversity in how they set strategic direction, review performance and ensure good governance of the College. One member of the Governing Body should take the role of link governor for Equality and Diversity within the College group.
- 3.4** The Senior Leaders are required to consider Equality and Diversity in

how they oversee the design, delivery, quality and effectiveness of the College's functions.

3.5 Human resources staff are required to consider Equality and Diversity in how they build equality considerations in employment policies and procedures.

3.6 Members of the Equality and Diversity Committee are required to meet at least three times per year to monitor the College's equality action plan and deliberate on all issues relating to equality of opportunity and diversity for Warwickshire College Group. The link governor for Equality and Diversity is invited to the Committee meetings. The Equality and Diversity Committee agree the annual diversity calendar.

4.0 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The Equality and Diversity Policy is predominantly implemented via the Senior Leadership Team and is subsequently monitored by the Governor's Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee.

The equality and diversity action plan is monitored by members of the Equality and Diversity Committee and communications regarding equality and diversity are forwarded to staff, students and governors as necessary.

Appendix A is the WCG statement of our commitment to students with learning difficulties and disabilities.

5.0 COMMUNICATIONS

- Communications relating to this policy are the responsibility of the Principal, members of the college leadership team and members of the Equality and Diversity Committee
- All communications for staff and students are via the College intranet
- All communications for external organisations are electronically, usually via email.

6.0 RELATED PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE

This policy is likely to be related to other College policies, procedures and guidance:

- Human Resources Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policies for FE and HE
- Assessment Policy and associated procedures
- Complaints Procedures for FE and HE
- Admissions Policies for FE and HE
- Tutorial Policy
- Transgender Guidance

7.0 VERSION CONTROL

Dates of Revision	Revised by	Description of the Revision
18 th July 2014	Helen Kinghorn	01-Introduction of the revised policy
8 th September 2015	Helen Kinghorn	02-Revised policy to include reference to British Values
6 th December 2016	Helen Kinghorn	03-No changes to the policy, so it was approved for another two years
20 th February 2019	Helen Kinghorn	04-Updated to job titles (CEO) and the role of the Equality and Diversity Committee
26 th May 2021	Helen Kinghorn	05-Update to the job titles, amendments to subcontracting provision. Additional reference to antisemitism in response to the letter from the Secretary of State for Education dated 14 th May 2021.
18 th October 2023	Helen Kinghorn	06- Removed the reference to sub-contracting. Updates to job roles.

Appendix A



WCG Statement of Our Commitment to Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

Warwickshire College Group is committed to providing services and provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. The aim of the College is that everyone is given both reasonable and appropriate support and the opportunity to reach their full potential. In fulfilling this aim the College works proactively to ensure that no one is disadvantaged. In this document we have used the term '*students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities*', and by this we mean students who, because of a learning difficulty and/or disability, will need specific provision or services.

The College encourages applications from **all people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**. Our aim is to make it easier for you to study with us and to achieve your learning goals.

We want the College and its courses to be as accessible as possible to our whole community. That is why we are committed to providing **sensitive and individual support** for all our students.

If you have a learning difficulty or a disability, you may need additional support to obtain access to the College facilities. You may discuss your particular needs confidentially with a member of staff.

Application to College

If you would like to join one of our courses, there are people who can help you through the admissions process. You will be asked to complete an application form. If this is difficult for you to do yourself then you can get help from the Careers Team, or you may want to ask someone you know well to help you.

Please inform us at the earliest possible opportunity if you have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) so that we can ensure that the provision and needs outlined within the plan can be provided. Our Inclusion Team will arrange to meet you to discuss your needs and transition to college.

Support for learning

All full-time students have a Personal Learning Advisor (known as a PLA). Your PLA is here to support you in our studies, to provide advice, guidance and information, and is your main contact at college. You will meet regularly to discuss your progress and identify where you are doing well, what you need to work on and have help with. Any additional support you may need to complete your studies will also be made known to your PLA.

Here are some examples of how we can help:

- Support from a Learning Mentor in and out of class
- Specialist Learning Mentors for ASC
- Specialist Learning Mentor for Mental Health
- Personal care support

- Support with numeracy and literacy
- Materials in different formats
- Loan of specialist equipment
- Technical support
- Reader/note taker
- British Sign Language/Sign Supported English communicators

Support with using equipment

The College has a wide range of equipment available for student use. A particular piece of equipment is sometimes needed to enable students with disabilities to gain full access to their course.

What other facilities and services are available?

- The College provides a wide range of services and facilities to all its students including:
 - Advice and guidance about choosing a course
 - Support from the Welfare Team and financial support
 - Use of libraries
 - College counselling service
 - Careers guidance
 - Support from the Mental Health Team

Contacts for Further Details

Louise Ball
 Director of Schools, Re-engagement and SEND
ljball@warwickshire.ac.uk

Sarah Terry, Head of Learning Support
sterry@warwickshire.ac.uk

Livy Jarvis, Assistant SENCo
lj Jarvis@warwickshire.ac.uk