



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY

MARCH 2018

Date Policy Last Approved	Review Frequency	Approving Body	Date of next Review
Mar 2018	Annually	Board of Trustees	Mar 2019



Responsible Officers:
CEO

Senior Executive Team

Equal opportunities employment statement

The College seeks to employ a workforce which reflects the diverse community at large, because it values the individual contributions of all people. To this end, within the framework of the law and best practice, the College is committed, wherever practicable, to achieving and maintaining a workforce which broadly reflects the community.

The College will treat everyone with respect and dignity and will provide a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation. The organisation will not tolerate any form of behaviour or activity that discriminates on the grounds of gender, disability, race, religion or belief, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (intended or actual) or pregnancy and maternity¹ not justified in law or relevant to the performance of the job.

Action will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly, and that decisions on recruitment, selection, pay, training, promotion, career management and the termination of employment are based solely on objective and job-related criteria.

Introduction

The College wholeheartedly supports the principles of equality and diversity in employment. We aim to encourage, value and manage diversity, and seek to employ a workforce which reflects the diverse community at large.. We will treat all employees with respect and dignity and provide a working environment free from unlawful discrimination, harassment or victimisation.

Our policy and practice are informed by the Equality Act 2010. The College will not tolerate any form of behaviour or activity that directly or indirectly discriminates on the grounds of gender, disability, race, religion or belief, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (intended or actual) or pregnancy and maternity not justified in law or relevant to the performance of the job.

¹ i.e. the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.



No employee or job applicant should be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements which cannot be justified, and we will seek to make reasonable adjustments to its practices, arrangements and premises with a view to avoiding any disadvantages for those with protected characteristics.

Action will be taken to ensure that individuals are treated equally and fairly and that decisions on recruitment, selection, pay, training, promotion, and career management and on the termination of employment are based solely on objective and job-related criteria.

Aim of the policy

The aim of this policy and its effective implementation is to:

- help us to provide an environment conducive to the promotion of fair and equal opportunities to all staff
- ensure that the college has access to the widest labour market and secures the best employees for its needs
- achieve an ability-based workforce, which is in line with the working population mix in the relevant labour market areas
- ensure fair treatment for all job applicants, existing members of staff and all others with whom we operate on a daily basis (e.g. clients, students, suppliers and associates)
- improve our employment practices and ensure staff morale
- avoid unlawful or unfair discrimination, and ensure a workplace free from victimisation or harassment

Statement of intent

The College's statement of intent with regard to equality and diversity is as follows:

- create a culture that promotes dignity, equality and diversity, and that respects and values difference
- remove any barriers, bias or discrimination that prevent individuals from realising their potential
- achieve and maintain a workforce that broadly reflects the diversity of society
- treat people fairly in all aspects of employment or engagement with us

Definitions

The College is aware of the different types of discrimination identified in the Equality Act:



- direct
- indirect
- discrimination by association
- discrimination by perception
- harassment
- third party harassment
- victimisation

Responsibilities

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements;
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so;
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics.
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic.
- inform their manager if they become aware of any discriminatory practice.

The CEO has overall responsibility for the operation of this policy.

The HR Manager will be responsible for ensuring that fair and adequate arrangements exist for both effectively handling and recording all aspects of the employment relationship, including recruitment and selection.

All managers have a responsibility to ensure the policy is carried through effectively, by giving active support to the policy and ensuring their team understand and implement the policy. They should encourage employees to inform them of any instances of discrimination, and ensure that all allegations are investigated with the assistance of the HR Manager. Managers will be responsible to the CEO for these activities.

Disciplinary action will be taken against any employee who does not comply with these requirements.

Third-party harassment occurs where a Company employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients, students, suppliers and associates. The College will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform their manager at once that this



has occurred. The College will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

Recruitment

- Wherever possible and appropriate, vacancies will be advertised simultaneously internally and externally.
- Where possible, advertisements will include an appropriate short statement on equal opportunity. (*"We are an equal opportunities employer and welcome applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their gender, disability, race, religion or belief, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment (intended or actual) or pregnancy and maternity."*)
- Selection criteria (job description and employee specification) will be kept under constant review to ensure that they are justifiable on non-discriminatory grounds as being essential for the effective performance of the job. Efforts will be made to identify and remove unnecessary/unjustifiable barriers and provide appropriate facilities and conditions of service to meet the needs of a diverse workforce.
- Wherever possible, a diverse range of current employees will be involved in the selection interview and recruitment process, and all should have received training in equal opportunities.
- All interview processes will be constantly reviewed to ensure that they are inclusive and appropriate with regard to enabling equality and valuing diversity.
- Reasons for selection and rejection of applicants for vacancies will be recorded.
- Selection for employment or promotion will be on the basis of merit and ability only.

Training and awareness-raising

Responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity will be positively incorporated into general training sessions at all levels, day to day project planning and operational implementation. The College will provide training and raise awareness amongst employees in relation to equality and diversity issues.

In addition, this policy will be made available to all employees.

Monitoring, analysis and positive action



To ensure that this policy is operating effectively (and for no other purpose), the college will monitor the diversity of its workforce and job candidates on a regular basis. Ongoing monitoring and regular analysis of such records will provide the basis for appropriate action to eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

Visitors, Contractors and Sub-contractors

Responsibility

Visitors, contractors and sub-contractors must comply with the College's E&D Policy. College staff meeting/employing visitors, contractors and sub-contractors are responsible for making them aware of the College's E&D Policy.

Data Collection and Monitoring

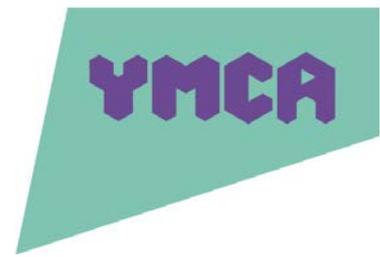
The personal data of students and staff are collected, stored and used in line with the College's Data Protection Policy. Course leaders, and the College as a whole are responsible for monitoring the data available for each of the Protected Characteristics, where they are identified, and taking appropriate action to advance E&D and to reduce any gaps in achievement. The monitoring of enrolment, retention, achievement and success data at appropriate points throughout the academic year.

This data is evaluated in SARs (Self-Assessment Reports) and where there are achievement gaps for different Protected Characteristic groups, the teams will identify actions to eliminate or reduce these gaps. These actions become part of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) for the area and, as such, are monitored regularly.

The used data will be available to them centrally and also put in place systems to monitor data for different groups of people. Key data includes those relating to staff (applications, interviews, employment, turnover and staff satisfaction) and students (enquiries, applications, interviews, admissions, complaints, appeals, disciplinaries, breaches of assessment, additional learning support and student satisfaction). The data will be analysed and recorded in their SARs and where there are differences in the data for different groups of people, identify actions to eliminate these differences. These actions are inserted into QIPs and monitored regularly. The College's E&D Committee monitors E&D data relating to students and staff. This is then reported to both the Principle and Governing body accordingly.

Disability

Avoiding discrimination arising from a disability



The College will avoid in our practices, and will not tolerate in our workplace, direct or indirect discrimination in relation to disability. That is, we will ensure that employees or job applicants are not treated unfavourably either because they have a disability or because of something that is connected to their disability. The only exception to this would be where such treatment might reasonably be considered to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Disabilities arising during employment

If an employee becomes incapable of carrying out his or her normal duties because of a disability, the College will consider reasonable adjustments to the job and working conditions, redeployment and retraining. In the first instance, the HR Manager will arrange through a disability advisory service or an occupational health service for an employee's capabilities to be assessed with a view to identifying suitable alternative work for that individual or making reasonable adjustments.

Should an employee's performance fall to an unacceptably low standard through a deterioration in his or her health or fitness caused by a disability, the HR Manager, line manager and employee concerned, will:

- explore the possibility of further adjusting the job to allow continuation of employment
- consider alternative employment.

If, having considered the above options, it is apparent that the employee cannot realistically continue in employment, a decision to dismiss may be taken only by the Board, following consultation with the employee, his or her representative and in conjunction with medical advice.

Employee grievance procedure

The College is aware that we have a responsibility not only to address and prevent discrimination and harassment in the workplace, but also to do what we reasonably can to protect our employees from third party harassment (e.g. by clients, suppliers or project participants).

Any employee who believes that he or she, or another employee, is being discriminated against and/or harassed in any way should raise this issue immediately with his/her line manager. Depending upon the nature and seriousness of the complaint, we would encourage employees to do so informally (i.e. verbally)



initially, as it may be that the discriminatory action is unwitting and easily resolved once the problem is clear.

However, if the employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal process, or the complaint is very serious, the employee should raise the matter in writing as a formal grievance addressed to the HR Manager, who will agree the appropriate course of action with the CEO as appropriate.

The College will not tolerate victimisation of anyone who, in good faith, makes such a complaint or raises such a grievance.

Review

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of the Chief Executive.