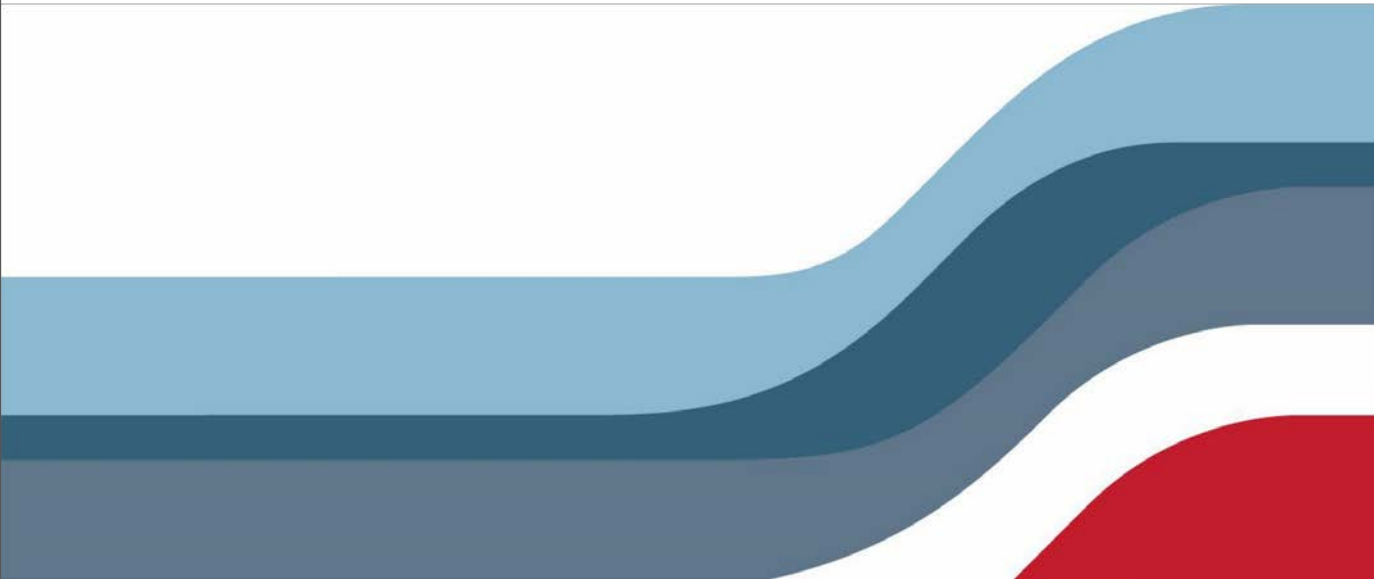


Equality and Diversity Policy



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 South Thames College is committed to ensuring equality in all that it does. The College celebrates and values the diversity brought to its workforce by individuals, and believes that the College will benefit from attracting and retaining staff and learners from a variety of backgrounds. The College expects all staff, volunteers and those contracted to provide services to share this commitment.
- 1.2 This policy has been developed to enable the College to achieve its aim of promoting Equalities and Diversity and achieving the strategic objective of *‘vigorously promoting equality and diversity and challenging discriminatory practice in all aspects of the College’s work.’*

This policy should be read in conjunction with the College Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy relates to all College staff, learners, contractors, service users and volunteers and is applicable to both College staff and student matters. It applies to both direct and indirect discrimination.
- 2.2 The College recognises that institutional discrimination can exist and that no organisation is immune from these. It accepts that both institutional and individual racism “can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness, and racist stereotyping which disadvantages ethnic minority people.” [Macpherson]. The College believes that this definition may be equally applied to other forms of discrimination and the disadvantage suffered by other individuals or groups.

3. Legal Framework

- 3.1 The College will not tolerate any discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, religious or philosophical belief, age, marital or parental status or socio-economic class.
- 3.2 The College will abide by current legislation as listed in appendix 1 including the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014.
- 3.3 The College will appraise itself of all changes to ensure that it abides by its legal duties under current legislation and it will seek to develop best practice in all its activities.

4. Aims

- 4.1 The aims of this policy are to:
 - ensure that every member of the College community, whether staff, learner, contractor or volunteer, is treated fairly and with equal dignity and respect and is enabled to work or study to the best of their potential
 - create a positive inclusive ethos where issues of harassment, victimisation, segregation, stereotyping and discrimination can be discussed openly with a shared commitment to challenging and preventing any form of less favourable treatment, to respecting diversity and difference, and to encouraging good relations between people of different groups and a harmonious and safe environment.

5. Key Principles

- 5.1 The College is committed to ensuring that all staff and learners reach their full potential. It aims to remove social and environmental barriers by addressing attitudes and behaviours that prevent people from being fully able to participate in College life. The College seeks to create an open and welcoming environment where all people feel valued and respected. It will continuously improve its access, systems and monitoring to ensure that appropriate support and consideration is given to all those who engage or wish to engage in the life of the College.
- 5.2 The College will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against its learners or employees whether from other learners, employees or members of the public. It believes that treating people less favorably because of their race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief (including no belief), gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, age or socio-economic class is unacceptable. It rejects any behaviour or ways of working, obvious or not, which allows this to happen, or which suggests that one group of people with shared characteristics is superior to another.
- 5.3 The College will seek to eliminate unlawful harassment against all its learners or employees whether from other learners, employees or members of the public.
- 5.4 The College seeks to be a proactive agent of change, taking a whole organisational approach to ensure equality and diversity is central to all that it does and is embedded

across the whole organisation. This will be applied consistently across all aspects of service delivery and employment.

- 5.5 In seeking to achieve a balanced student body and workforce at all levels the College will ensure that no applicant for a College course or job, progressing learner or candidate for promotion will be disadvantaged or treated less favourably because of conditions or requirements that are not related to the programme of study or the job.
- 5.6 Reasonable adjustments will be made to arrangements and premises to ensure equal access for potential and enrolled learners and job applicants and employees with a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition.
- 5.7 All of the College buildings are accessible.
- 5.8 Annual targets in relation to both the learner and employment aspects of the policy will be set and monitored to allow the impact of the policy to be evaluated and appropriate action taken. These Equality and Diversity Impact Measures (EDIMs) will be set at College and School level.
- 5.9 The College will seek not only to eliminate discrimination, but also to create a working and learning environment based on positive relations between members of different groups with shared characteristics. To this end, the College undertakes to provide training and support for staff, to consult with learners, staff and other relevant groups about their experience of the working environment.
- 5.10 The College will seek to promote equality of opportunity and good relations between groups in all its work with other agencies, employers and partners.

6. Student Policy

- 6.1 The College will aim to ensure that information about its courses and facilities is made available and accessible to the widest possible audience. Publicity materials will be produced in a range of formats and avoid prejudice and stereotyping. Marketing activities will seek to encourage participation from those groups currently under-represented in the College as whole and in particular areas of study.
- 6.2 Applicants for College courses will be encouraged to disclose a disability, learning difficulty and/or medical condition to ensure that appropriate support can be planned and put in place. Support will be offered at interview. Decisions about course offers will be made independently of the process for identifying and meeting support needs and will be based on applicant's capability, learning needs and learning and employment goals. The College booklet Support for Your Success (Disability Statement) that outlines facilities and provision for learners with disabilities, learning difficulties or medical conditions will be updated annually and will be available on Blackboard or on request from the College Enquiry Unit or Student Services.
- 6.3 College originated curriculum materials will be monitored and evaluated to ensure that they do not promote any form of discrimination. An exception may be permitted for the inclusion of materials used for illustrative purposes (within the context of the subject being taught).
- 6.4 Learners and other users of College services will be supported to use the College's Complaints Procedure in cases of alleged discrimination or harassment.

7. Staff Policy

- 7.1 The College will take positive measures allowed by law to rectify any disadvantage in employment revealed by monitoring.
- 7.2 All applicants who declare a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition will be interviewed if they meet the minimum selection criteria.
- 7.3 The College will, within resource constraints, seek to make reasonable adjustments for employees with a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition.
- 7.4 Any formal staff complaint of discrimination will be dealt with through the appropriate staff grievance procedure. Complaints of harassment or bullying will be addressed using the appropriate harassment procedure.

8. Responsibilities

- 8.1 The Corporation and Senior Leadership Team are committed to ensuring that equality and diversity is a College priority, taking a whole organisational approach. They are responsible for taking the lead in challenging discriminatory behaviour and creating a positive and inclusive ethos.
- 8.2 The College Management Team will ensure they are aware of the College's statutory duties in relation to equalities legislation. They will be responsible for ensuring implementation of the Policy in their areas of responsibility.
- 8.3 It is the duty of every member of staff and learner to promote equality, challenge and eliminate discriminatory practices, to discourage them in others and to accept personal responsibility for the application of this Policy.
- 8.4 Employees and learners will be encouraged and supported to report any instances of discrimination and the College will ensure that any allegations are investigated with due regard to confidentiality.
- 8.5 The Equalities and Diversity Board monitors equalities actions and impact across the College and reports to the Senior Leadership Team.

9. Data collection

- 9.1 To inform the setting of targets and the measurement of our progress in achieving them, the College will collect and analyse the following information by age, gender, ethnicity and disability. It will collect data on sexuality, gender identity and religion or belief where possible and where it can be used to identify differential impact.

For Learners:

- Group profiles of learners
- Applications, success and failure rates for admission to programmes. (Learners are not requested to disclose disabilities at application stage)
- Retention rates and achievement rates

- Progression
- Disciplinary action
- Learner Voice
- Complaints by learners or their sponsors.

For Employees

- Profiles of employees by grade/salary scales
- Job application rates
- Selection success rates
- Type of contract (permanent/temporary, part time/full time)
- Training and Staff development
- Promotion application and success rates
- Disciplinary/capability proceedings
- Grievances and staff complaints
- Age profile
- Disclosure rates of sexual orientation/religion or belief (or no belief)
- Requests for flexible working
- Exit interviews
- Staff satisfaction surveys.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

- 10.1 The College Equality and Diversity Board will receive monitoring reports for review and to propose actions.
- 10.2 The College's quality procedures will require that equality and diversity issues and the monitoring of EDIMs are addressed and reported on as part of self assessment and included in the overall Quality Cycle of the College.
- 10.3 Staff information will be included in Annual and Termly reports on HR presented to the Senior Leadership Team.
- 10.4 Annual Monitoring reports including regular updates on the Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan will be provided for the College Corporation.

11. Breach of the Policy

- 11.1 The College will take seriously any instances of non-adherence to the College's policy by its learners, staff or management.
- 11.2 Any instance of breach of the policy will be investigated and, where appropriate, action will be considered under the College's Disciplinary Codes for staff and learners.

12 Equality Impact Assessment

- 12.1 Impact assessment ensures that the College's decisions and activities do not disadvantage any employee or learner and also identifies opportunities to actively improve equality. The College will undertake impact assessments on its policies, procedures, processes and practices.

- 12.2 The information gathered in monitoring activities will be used in impact assessment to identify areas of adverse impact. Relevant representative groups will also be consulted to get a wide source of evidence when assessing for impact.
- 12.3 The Equality and Diversity Board will take responsibility for monitoring the timescales and mapping of existing policies, procedures, processes and practice for impact assessment.
- 12.4 Any actions resulting from impact assessment will be included in the Single Equality Action Plan where relevant. These findings, together with amendments made to the policy, procedure, process or practice will be reported to the Equality and Diversity Board for inclusion in the end of year report.

13 Access to the Policy

- 13.1 The College will seek to ensure that:
- Governors, staff, learners and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of our Equality and Diversity policy and the action needed for its implementation
 - Staff, learners and their sponsors (including work placement providers) are aware of the value placed upon equal opportunity and that action will be taken in the event of any breach of the policy
 - Governors and staff have access to comprehensive information, which assists them to plan, implement and monitor actions to carry out their responsibilities under the policy.
- 13.2 In the broad range of information the College produces online and offline about our courses, services and facilities, as far as possible information will be provided that reflects the College's commitment to equality and diversity. This will include, but not be limited to: diversity in images of students; information on, and signposts to, specialist support; and constant reviews of our distribution channels to extend how people might access our information.
- 13.3 The induction programme for learners will highlight the College's commitment to equality and diversity, the action to be taken by learners who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against such perpetrators of discrimination. Tutors will reinforce this information during tutorials or work-based monitoring visits.
- 13.4 Tutorial programmes will address issues of equality and diversity.
- 13.5 All work placement providers will receive a summary of their responsibilities under the policy and will signify their understanding of, and agreement to, these responsibilities.
- 13.6 Staff inductions will highlight the College's commitment to equality and diversity and action to be taken by staff who suffer discrimination and the action to be taken against any perpetrators of such discrimination.
- 13.7 This policy will be published on the South Thames College Blackboard.

14. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary by the Deputy Principal Curriculum & Quality.

Produced by:	Sue Jones Deputy Principal Curriculum and Quality
Date Reviewed:	September 2015
Approved by:	SLT
Date Approved:	30th September 2014
Review by:	September 17

Appendix 1

Legal Framework

Equalities Act 2010

Age

Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006

Disability

Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001

Disability Discrimination Act 2005

Children & Families Act 2014

Gender

Sex Discrimination Act 1975

Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

Equality in Employment (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003

Gender Recognition Act 2004

Civil Partnership Act 2004

Equality Act 2006

Work and Families Act 2006

Gender Equality Duty Statutory Code of Practice 2006

Marriage [same sex] Act 2013

Race

Race Relations Act 1976 (amendment) Regulations 2000

Race Relations 1976 (Statutory Duties) 2001

Statutory Code of Practice on the Duty to Promote Race Equality 2002

Religion

Equality in Employment (Religion and Belief) Regulations 2003

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006

Equality Act 2006

Other

Human Rights Act 1998

Employment Equal Treatment Framework Directive 2000

Employment Act 2002

Equal Treatment Directive 2006

Care Act 2014

Communications Acts 1998 & 2003