



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy

Purpose of Policy/Document	To inform the College community of the Heart of Worcestershire's approach to, and values regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and how these are implemented.
Target Audience (staff/students/visitors/contractors)	Staff Students
Particular Legal Requirements/Issues outside of EDD	To inform practices for all students and staff employed by the College.
Links with Other Policies/Documents	Student Standards / Freedom of Information Action / Disciplinary Policy & Procedure / Data Protection & GDPR Policy / SEND policy / Complaints Procedure / Tutorial Strategy / Health & Safety Policy
For completion by The Executive	
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Category	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)
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Authorised By: (SLT/Corporation)	Corporation
Communicated via/Location: (Policy Acceptance software/website/portal etc)	Portal Website
Equality Impact Assessment Statement	The Equality Act 2010 does not require public authorities to carry out EIAs by law. The College does however, carefully consider the impact, when creating or amending its policies, on all concerned parties regarding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and records this at SLT meetings in order to demonstrate compliance with Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy sets out the values and strategic aims of the Heart of Worcestershire College with regard to Equality and Diversity. It outlines the commitments and responsibilities of all college members to fulfil its statutory duties to promote equality of opportunity and avoid discrimination in line with the requirements of the Equality Act and how the College will further improve the service it offers to all to be truly inclusive.

This policy is published on the Heart of Worcestershire College website.

Alternative formats of the policy can be made available. Please email sfriel@howcollege.ac.uk to request these or ask at Reception.

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1. Introduction and Context

The Heart of Worcestershire College is committed to providing a learning environment which respects all individuals and celebrates diversity. Our mission statement 'Inspire, Innovate, Advance' demonstrates our College values and our commitment to ensuring that we transform the life chances for all. As a college, we value social and cultural diversity and seek to promote equality of opportunity and respect amongst all learners, staff, governors, visitors, partners and other stakeholders.

This policy describes the Heart of Worcestershire College's:

- Vision, commitment, values and approach to British Values in relation to Equality and Diversity;
- General and Specific Duties regarding the Equality Act 2010 and how these inform practice;
- Strategies and objectives for generating a positive and fair environment;
- The actions and strategies the College will employ to generate a positive and inclusive environment (*please refer to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan*).

This policy was developed in consultation with staff, learners, and stakeholders who are representative of the local community.

2. Our Vision, Values and British Values

The Heart of Worcestershire College strives to be an outstanding inclusive college where all staff and learners feel valued and respected, having a fair and equal chance to reach their potential. We aim to respond to the diverse profile of needs expressed by our learners, staff and stakeholders and celebrate the diversity of the College community. We aim to go beyond statutory requirements to ensure our learners, staff and partners have the best experience possible. Through our Equality Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, we will work with the College community and beyond to make the College a truly inclusive organisation. We believe that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is an essential ingredient for overall quality improvement.

The College ethos to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion will include the:

- **Involvement of the various communities of interest** - so that their priorities and concerns can be identified and inform college practice and policy.
- **Data gathering for analysis and monitoring** - to establish what different groups experience in terms of recruitment, retention and success as a student or as a member of staff. Any significant differentials will be further explored, and actions agreed accordingly.
- **Raising awareness** - through staff and learners induction, bespoke training and by having thematic weeks to celebrate diversity.
- **Action planning** - The College will set equality objectives at least every 4 years. These objectives will be translated into action plan which will be agreed every year and monitored on a regular basis.
- **Publicise the scheme** - to ensure transparency in our approach and practice regarding Equality and Diversity. This will enable learners, staff and the College's community to be informed of progress and give stakeholders the opportunity to respond.

Our Values

Integrity

- Working with integrity; demonstrating openness and transparency at all times.
- Placing the interests of our students at the heart of all College activities.

Trust

- Inspiring students to achieve success through quality learning and assessment.
- Challenging and supporting staff so that they continue to be effective and successful.

Inclusivity

- Promoting equality and diversity through inclusive practice.

Partnership

- Engaging with Worcestershire's communities to develop stronger partnerships with sustainable benefits.
- Listening to our stakeholders in order to provide responsive and informed services.

British Values

British values are of paramount importance to Heart of Worcestershire College. We see British values as underpinning what it is to be a citizen in a modern and diverse community.

Ofsted evaluate how well colleges actively promote British Values and prepare learners for life in modern Britain. This requirement is reiterated within guidance on the Prevent Duty, a statutory duty on colleges to have due regard to prevent people being drawn into terrorism and to challenge extremist ideas.

British values relate to four aspects; democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

The College will seek to promote these values recognising they will be underpinned under the College's own values of Integrity, Trust, Inclusivity and Partnership.

3. Meeting our Legal Duties

The Equality Act 2010 imposes both general and specific duties upon the College. The legislation applies not only to the College as an organisation but also to anyone working or studying with us and any partners, contractors and stakeholders. The general duties are to:

- **Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010** - The act introduces the concept of "protected characteristics" of which there are nine. The definition of discrimination has been extended to include associative and perceptive discrimination.
- **Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it** - Reasonable adjustments will be provided for learners, staff and customers who may be experiencing barriers due to their disability. The recruitment, retention and achievement of learners will be monitored by protected characteristics to identify any trends enabling the College to respond effectively.
- **Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it** - The College will ensure that Equality and Diversity is a natural part of the curriculum to raise awareness and understanding. All College processes will be continually reviewed to ensure that the College is accessible and fair in all of its functions. Our customer service will be unbiased and welcoming to all.

The specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 are to:

- **Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty** - This will include information relating to learners, employees, and other individuals who share a relevant protected characteristic who will be affected by our policies and practices. A report for Equality and Diversity is published annually to inform our College community of our progress and to celebrate our diversity.
- **Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years which are accessible to the public** - The objectives will form the basis of the Equality Action Plan which can be found on our website.

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion is central to the College's overarching plans, as set out in its Strategic Plan, and is embedded throughout the College in many ways such as sharing and celebrating good practice and participation and consultation.

Within the **Prosper pillar** of the colleges 22-25 Strategic plan, the following priorities were identified :

Equity

We will play our part with partners to address social inclusion, through community engagement and support, providing opportunities for the economically inactive to obtain a professional qualification and employment.

We will better utilise our data to inform our curriculum development strategies to tackling the disadvantage gap for students as well as residents of Worcestershire who have low educational attainment levels

We will advocate on behalf of our students to reduce inequities, improve transport and access to good quality digital infrastructure.

Achievement

We will celebrate and value the diversity of our students, staff and the communities that we are part of.

Education

We will enhance student capabilities and enable them to fulfil their potential through the provision of an integrated curriculum with professional, technical, vocational and inclusive foundations.

We will nurture innovation and provide opportunities for development beyond academic and vocational achievement for example digital skills or social impact activity.

Within the **Place pillar** of the colleges 22-25 Strategic plan, the following priorities were identified:

Local

We will focus on our role as a community asset in all the areas we serve; the test for our strategy is how we continue to do this with other partners, reaching into local communities and engaging those facing the greatest disadvantages.

Regional

We will ensure we develop and deliver a technical and inclusive curriculum which is carefully aligned to regional skills needs

The Equality Action plan

The Equality Action Plan sets out the strategy for establishing how the College intends to ensure equality for all and build upon existing practice. It is intended to be flexible to respond to new developments and changes in legislation and will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis, with the continuing involvement of College learners, staff, partners and community groups. Progress will be reported twice yearly to Corporation and monitored through the EDI strategic group meetings taking place each term.

The College strives to ensure that all learners enjoy an excellent experience whilst at college and monitors this by analysing data regarding people with a protected characteristic and those classed as vulnerable. The EDIMS [Equality and Diversity Impact Measures] are incorporated into the College's Equality Objectives and are approved by the Senior Leadership Team and College Corporation.

The Principal of the College has overall responsibility for EDI, while the day to day management rests with the Vice Principal Student Experience and Stakeholder Engagement. However, to be successful, the implementation of the EDI Policy must be a shared responsibility amongst all staff employed by the college.

We will provide equality of opportunity for all of our learners and staff by:

- Taking effective action to prevent discrimination, harassment or bullying;
- Listening to our learners and staff;
- Providing flexible learning and working opportunities to support differing aspirations and goals;
- Promoting equality of access to all college services;
- Taking all reasonable steps to provide a safe, accessible, inclusive and equitable learning and work environment.

5. Meeting the Needs of Learners

The College is committed to inclusive learning by working with our learners, their carers or advocates and College staff to create an environment in which learners are not disadvantaged because of their special educational needs (SEN) and are supported to achieve their full potential. The College is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where needs and circumstances are anticipated and responded to positively to support the learner.

Support is provided in order to enable equality of access to students who have a learning difficulty or disability that may affect their ability to access a course or programme within the College, and to ensure learners are motivated, engaged and provided with opportunities to stretch and challenge their capabilities in the learning they undertake at the College.

Supported students on vocational and technical courses will be allocated a Personal Learning Coach who will monitor the progress and academic achievements of their allocated students.

Supported students on discrete SEN courses within Inclusive and Supported Learning will be supported by a range of staff who will set and monitor targets and progress including the course teacher, Personal Learning Coach, Learning Support Assistant and specialist agency staff e.g. speech and language therapists.

Learners with EHC plans will have targets set and monitored to support progress against their agreed EHCP outcomes.

An essential part of the College experience for a learner is to be prepared for working and living in a diverse society. Therefore:

- All teaching and training resources will reflect and promote EDI as appropriate to raise awareness and understanding.
- Staff will actively promote British Values throughout College life and empower students to challenge stereotypes, assumptions and discrimination within a culture of mutual respect and tolerance for others.
- Admission processes and initial assessment will be used to ensure that the correct support is available to learners at the beginning of their course. Learners are given opportunities throughout the year to disclose any disabilities or other protected characteristic they may have.
- Information, guidance and support will be delivered in ways accessible to different groups with protected characteristics and in ways that challenge stereotypes.
- The THRIVE tutorial programme will include group tutorial sessions to promote EDI, British Values and social awareness to develop a culture of respect and tolerance. Personal Tutors will work closely with learners to develop learner's personal, social and employability skills.
- Wellbeing services support learners who have a welfare or mental health need or deemed vulnerable, to safeguard and support them and give them the skills to develop coping strategies, resilience and problem-solving strategies.
- Financial support is available to assist learners who may have difficulties in completing their course due to financial reasons.
- Learner Voice continues to be a crucial mechanism for understanding and responding to the learner experience to ensure that the College is inclusive in all aspects of the service it delivers.

6. Recruitment and Employment of Staff

Positive employment and recruitment practices are promoted through practices and

legislation contained within the College's Recruitment and Selection Policy and Remuneration Policy.

All applicants are asked to advise the College of any adjustments that may be required for the purpose of the interview or if they were to be employed by the College.

7. Measuring Our Progress and Monitoring Improvements

Equality and Diversity feedback is encouraged from a broad spectrum of sources to inform planning, decision making and actions to further improve the service offered by the College. To inform the setting of goals and the measurement of our progress in achieving them, we will collect and analyse the following information by the protected characteristics of race, sex, disability, and age. The College collects and keeps records pertaining to Equality and Diversity in a systematic and co-ordinated way to enable efficient analysis and review.

7.1 For Students

- Learner surveys;
- Student ambassadors;
- Learning walks ;
- Statistical monitoring - retention and achievement of learners by protected characteristics; comparative reports on 16-18 and 19+, ethnic minority groups, LLDD, male and female achievement rates;
- Applications and progression rates for admission to courses;
- Disciplinary action;
- Complaints.

7.2 For Staff

An annual report is produced by HR to statistically Monitor:

- Gender pay gap
- Workforce profile
- Flexible working
- Apprentices
- Staff recruitment
- Staff turnover
- Performance management
- Staff sickness absence

7.3 Overall

- EDI meetings;
- Meetings with external partners and groups to elicit feedback about the service the College delivers.

8. The EDI Strategic Group

Heart of Worcestershire College has an established EDI Strategic Group to lead on the Organisation's strategic approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. Key post holders from across College attend these meetings each term.

This group will:

- Ensure the College meets its responsibilities with regard to its public sector general and specific duties;
- Ensure EDI is promoted effectively through teaching and learning;
- Ensure that information regarding EDI is communicated effectively to the College community;
- Monitor, review and contribute to the College's Equality and Diversity Objectives and Action Plan;
- Monitor, review and contribute to the College's Access and Participation plan, in particular monitoring outcomes for cohorts of learner's in HE where there is an identified achievement gap
- Make recommendations as to how the promotion of the equality duties can be further enhanced and improved through the curriculum and service provision;
- Monitor Equality and Diversity meetings to share and develop best practice and ensure whole organisation 'buy in';
- Review and revise the College's EDI Policy annually;
- Contribute to the College's annual Equality and Diversity Report, published in January;
- Monitor the progress made against College EDIMS;
- Monitor any complaints pertaining to Equality and Diversity;
- Champion inclusive practice;

9. Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

- Have a significant role in creating and maintaining an inclusive organisation where all can learn, work and reach their full potential;
- Agree and monitor Equality Objectives;
- Instruct the Senior Management team to:
 - Ensure that relevant policies are in place up to date and effectively implemented.
 - Listen to the voice of learners and make changes accordingly to improve the inclusivity of the College
 - Ensure that the College upholds its legal obligations in relation to Equality and Diversity.
 - Promote Equality and celebrate Diversity.

The College Management Team will:

- Lead by example through implementing the EDI Policy;
- Promote a culture of mutual respect and tolerance;
- Monitor Equality and Diversity through the self- assessment process and quality reviews;
- Include EDI awareness training in the induction process and thereafter in staff development and performance reviews;
- Ensuring EDI is fully embraced by staff within their area.

Individuals will:

- Inform an appropriate person if inappropriate or discriminatory practice occurs;
- Be responsible for engaging in staff development opportunities that address equality and diversity issues;
- Ensure that curriculum content includes equality and diversity to raise awareness in students;
- Challenge any inappropriate language or behaviour and promote a culture of mutual respect and tolerance;
- Embrace and embed British Values into their working practise.

10. Procurement

The College ensures that any external organisations with which it works or contracts with are made aware of and encouraged and supported to adhere to the core EDI principles of the College. The College will also seek to identify the equality and diversity policies and practices of any external organisations it may work with and to give information to partners regarding their obligations of working with a public sector organisation.

11. Equality Impact Assessments

There is no specific legal requirement to carry out formal, documented equality impact assessments (EIAs).

The college encourages individuals and teams to think carefully about the likely impact of their work on all groups with a protected characteristic and take action to improve services, policies, strategies. This involves anticipating the consequences of policies and functions on all groups and making sure that as far as possible any negative consequences are eliminated or minimised.

12. Complaints

The College has a transparent and responsive complaints procedure for all stakeholders. Complaints relating to EDI should initially be addressed to quality@howcollege.ac.uk. Complaints data is analysed by the Vice Principal Curriculum and Standards on a regular basis to ensure that there are no trends.

- 12.1 Heart Of Worcestershire College seeks to provide a supportive environment for those who make claims of discrimination or harassment on the grounds of age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage or civil partnership.
- 12.2 Acts of discrimination (direct, indirect, by association or by perception), harassment, victimisation or abuse will be treated as a serious disciplinary offence.
- 12.3 Staff who feel they are being discriminated against by other members of staff should raise the matter with HR under the Grievance Procedure.
- 12.4 If, in the course of their work, members of staff suffer discrimination from members of the public, Heart of Worcestershire College will take appropriate action and provide appropriate support.
- 12.5 Any discriminatory behaviour directed against staff by learners, or by learners against other learners, will be dealt with under the Student Standards Procedure and in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.

13. Involvement and Consultation

The College continues to elicit feedback from its community by having effective communication channels in a variety of formats such as:

- Student satisfaction surveys at induction and on-programme;
- Student Ambassadors;
- EDI Strategic meetings;
- Tutorials;
- Partnerships with outside agencies.

14. Informing others

The EDI Policy will be relevant to many people, not just in terms of responsibilities under the policy, but also in terms of how students, staff and visitors can expect College life to change and improve.

The College will make the policy available on its website and ensure that it is available in a variety of formats to meet the diverse needs of our student and staff population.