

<b>Title:</b>	Equity, Equality, and Inclusion Policy
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<b>Approved by:</b>	Senior Management Team - December 2022 Union - December 2022 Corporation January 2023
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<b>Associated documents/policies:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Equality Act 2010</li><li>• Public Sector Equality Duty</li><li>• Complaints Procedure</li><li>• (Staff and student) Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures</li><li>• Admissions Policy</li><li>• Student Risk Assessment Policy</li><li>• (Student and governors) Code of Conduct and Conduct Policies</li><li>• (Students) Bullying and Harassment Policy</li><li>• (Staff) Dignity at Work Policy</li><li>• Pay Policy</li><li>• Maternity/Paternity/Parental Leave Policy</li><li>• Leave Policy</li><li>• Confidentiality Policy</li></ul>

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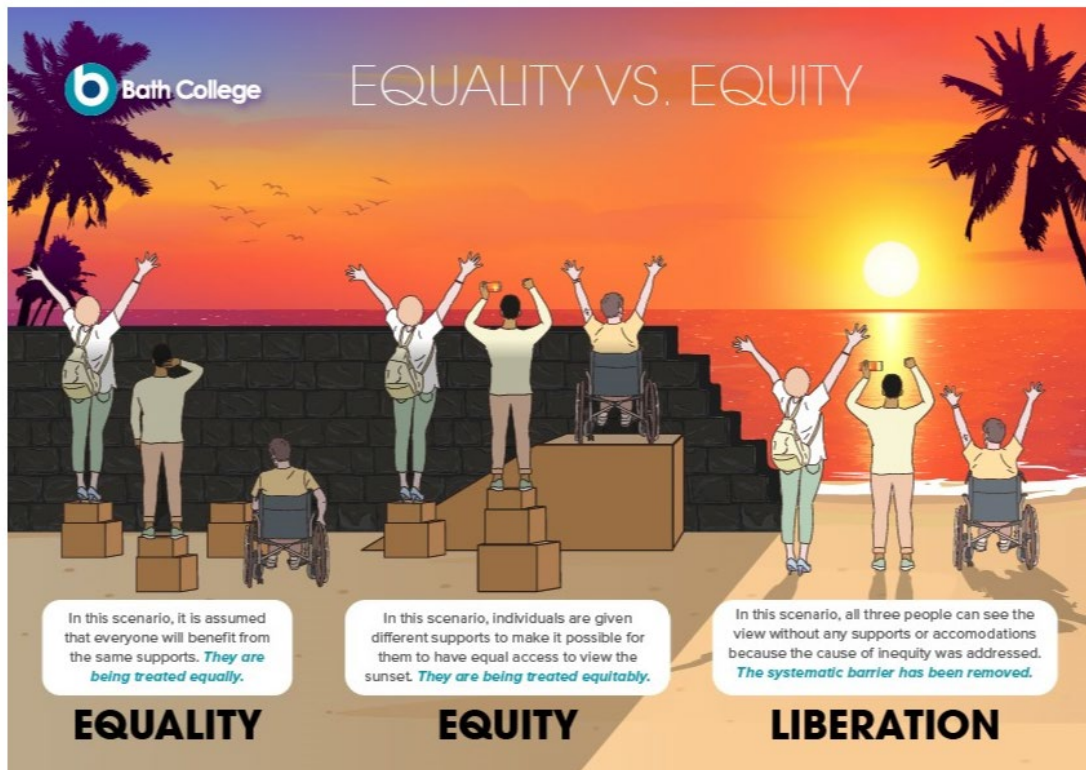
# Equity Policy

## 1 Context and Objectives

The college is committed to going beyond compliance with Equality law to being a proponent of best practice in all aspects of equity and diversity. Essentially the college aims to create and maintain an inclusive organisation where all can work, learn and reach their full potential.

In April 2022, College began the process of changing all written material to reference 'Equity' in place of the term 'Equality'. Equality and equity refer to similar but slightly different concepts. Equality generally refers to equal opportunity and the same levels of support for all segments of society. Equity goes a step further and refers offering varying levels of support depending upon need to achieve greater fairness of outcomes. This is a link to a 3-minute YouTube clip that goes into more detail:

[Equity and Equality - YouTube](#)



The objective of this policy is to outline the college's approach to fulfilling this commitment and to make it clear to all parties what they may expect from the college and what the college expects from them. The policy provides explanations and definitions of relevant terms.

The contents of this Equity Policy reflect the streamlined, harmonised, and strengthened content and requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the college's statutory responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Act identifies nine 'protected characteristics'. These are:

- **Race** (nationality, ethnic background, or heritage)
- **Disability** (physical or sensory impairments, mental health difficulties, long term medical conditions, learning difficulties, neuro diverse conditions such as dyslexia, autism, Tourette's or ADHD)
- **Sex** (women, men)
- **Gender reassignment** (Transsexual people, transgender people, men, and women with a transsexual history - see also section 16)
- **Age** (older people, younger people)
- **Sexual Orientation** (gay and lesbian people, bisexual people, heterosexual/straight people)
- **Religion/belief** (people from different faith groups, people with a philosophical belief, people with no religion or belief)
- **Pregnancy/maternity** (pregnant women, people on maternity leave, women who have recently given birth)
- **Marriage/civil partnerships** (married people, people in a civil partnership, single people)

All nine protected characteristics are covered in the employment duties of the Act. The protected characteristic of marriage and civil partnerships is not included in the education duties of the Act.

The Act, and this policy, recognises the following types of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination, including association and perception discrimination
- Indirect discrimination
- Harassment
- Victimisation
- Discrimination arising from a disability
- Failure to make reasonable adjustments

These are further defined in Appendix 1.

This policy outlines how the college intends to fulfil its **general duty** to give due regard to

- eliminating discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- advancing equity of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

- fostering good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

and its **specific duties** to report on progress with the general duty and to set and publish equity objectives.

## **2 Scope**

The commitments within this policy apply to all learners, staff, governors, volunteers, and users of the College. The policy also forms the standards the College sets for work with other organisations and visitors in providing equality, for example work experience placements, employers, collaborative partners, and contractors.

## **3 Policy and Procedures**

The College publishes a Strategic Plan to outline the college's mission and values and an annual Quality Improvement Action Plan. These will identify local and national priorities in promoting opportunity for all and demonstrate the actions the College will take to meet this. Alongside this the college has updated this Equity Policy, will publish equity objectives, will produce a related action plan and report on progress against the objectives.

## **4 Management of the Policy, Accountability and Compliance**

The Governing Body carries the ultimate responsibility, under the law, for ensuring that the college meets the requirements of equality legislation. The authority for this is delegated to the Principal and Chief Executive, who in turn has designated the Deputy Principal to take the strategic lead for championing equity, diversity, and inclusion. This role is shared with the Director of Human Resources in regard to the college as an employer. However, all staff have the responsibility to uphold the policy, comply with the law and to support the college in fulfilling its duties and implementing the Equity action plan.

The objectives and related action plan will be reviewed at least annually by the College Management Team and Corporation. Updating will take place after consultation with stakeholders – learners, partners, and, where applicable, specific groups. They will be continuously adapted to reflect new developments, legislation, and the demands of current circumstances. Review will lead to changes in actions and their priorities.

College Management Team members will take shared responsibility for setting and agreeing actions to achieve targets within the action plan and to embedding equity and diversity in all aspects of their team's work.

The College will not tolerate abuse, prejudice, harassment and bullying and will use the appropriate disciplinary policy to investigate and address any incidents. The College will ensure that codes of conduct for students and staff explicitly state that discriminatory practices will not be tolerated. Posters and notices will be displayed in prominent locations to this effect.

All staff are expected to challenge prejudice if they encounter it in the course of their duties.

## **4.2 Involving Stakeholders**

Equity of opportunity and inclusivity is, and will continue to be, at the heart of the college ethos. The College will seek to involve and consult with its community and make consultation accessible as far as is practicable.

Consultation on the development and implementation of the Equity Policy will involve individuals and groups as well as the formal groups and committees of the College such as the Corporation, Senior and Middle Management teams, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, staff and student forums and surveys.

The College believes that effective involvement of learners in the College's activities will have a positive impact on learner achievement, employability, and citizenship. Involvement of learners will also raise the quality of the College's provision for learners, customers, and potential learners. Therefore, it has a Learner Involvement Strategy which details how this will be achieved. Learner led societies/action groups which focus on ensuring equity or celebrating diversity will be particularly encouraged and supported. The Students' Union executive includes an Equalities Officer, who represents the Union on the college's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee.

## **5 Partnerships and Contracts**

All organisations who are being sub contracted by the College to deliver learning, are required to provide copies of their Equal Opportunity Statements as part of the procurement process. This will enable monitoring of outcomes against the standards set out in the contract.

Other contractors are expected to comply with the college's Equity Policy when engaged on college business.

## **6 Key Partners and Specialist Support**

Bath College has close working relationships and partnerships with local and national organisations that share the College's commitment to equity and diversity and provide specialist advice and support. These organisations include:

- Bath Inter Faith Group
- Bath Educational Trust
- Bath and North East Somerset Council
- Black Families Education Support Group
- Bath Racial Equality Council
- Stonewall
- NUS
- RNID
- MIND
- MENCAP
- Connexions
- Avon and Somerset Police
- Primary Care Trusts
- National Association of Managers of Student Services
- Government funding agencies
- Awarding bodies
- Integrated Care Board (ICB)

## **7 Staff Training and Awareness**

The College will provide periodic training and awareness raising to staff and governors through:

- Materials and information on an Equity and Diversity site on the college intranet, on 'Moodle' and in the Library
- A range of training sessions on a staff development day
- Providing 'good news' feedback to governors, staff and learners through various media
- 1:1 Coaching in how to effectively embed Equity and Diversity in the curriculum
- Support in dealing with any issues that arise

## **8 Teaching and Learning**

All courses and learning activities provided by the college will have equity and diversity embedded in their content and delivery. Resources, learning materials, case studies, projects and learning activities will reflect and promote equity and diversity whether or not this is included in awarding body criteria.

All teachers will review schemes of work, lesson plans, course materials and learning strategies to ensure teaching:

- Takes account of the diverse learning needs, styles, and preferences of learners
- Validates the diverse perspectives of learners
- Is anti-discriminatory and teaches learners about their rights and responsibilities to each other in the classroom, the workplace and wider society
- Fosters understanding of how stereotyped attitudes and prejudiced thinking damage relationships, hinder communication and are therefore bad for education and business
- Acknowledges and celebrates the contribution of men and women of all backgrounds, ages, cultures, and religions to human progress in all fields.

All teachers will make it clear to learners that any work submitted for assessment, uploaded on to the internet with any association to the college or carried out on college premises or equipment must not include any discriminatory content or promote any organisation which breaches the commitments within this policy and equality legislation.

The College has a role in promoting good practice in equity and diversity in the workplace. Work-based assessors will monitor equity and diversity through progress reviews and meetings with learners and employers/workplace supervisors. The College expects that an employer with a work-based learner will have an equity and diversity policy or formally agree to comply with that of the college. The College will work alongside its partner employers to improve equity and diversity in the workplace and to eliminate discrimination.

The quality of the promotion of Equity and Diversity will be assessed through SARs, internal and external verification, observation of teaching and learning and through analysis of trends in student data.

Individual learners will have their learning and personal support needs identified and met through effective planning, reasonable adjustments and the involvement of support staff or specialist agencies. Teachers, assessors, and support staff will act as positive role models in the learning environment



and will routinely challenge any unacceptable behaviour or language, whether or not learners from any of the protected groups are present.

The student induction and enrichment programme will include information and activities which make the college's commitments under this policy very clear and help to raise learners' general awareness and understanding. Equity and diversity will feature as a standing agenda item at all course rep meetings.

## **9 Admissions**

Applicants to the College will not be discriminated against on the basis of any of the protected characteristics or association with them. The College has an important role in promoting participation in education and training for minority groups, therefore, applications from people from minority groups will be welcomed and, wherever possible, reasonable adjustments made to ensure the College can meet their need.

## **10 Publicity, Marketing and Published Images**

The College will ensure that it has no negative imagery of individuals in its publications and, wherever possible, will provide positive images of people covered by the protected characteristics within the Equality Act 2010.

## **11 Monitoring and Reporting**

Data is based on self-declaration by staff and students. Every effort will be made to reduce the category of 'not known/not provided' to increase the validity and analysis of data. However, the College respects the right of an individual not to declare.

Information is used for statistical reporting, informing the provision of reasonable adjustments for people with a learning difficulty or disability, analysing equity and action planning for quality improvement. The information is held for no other reason and reporting in a public forum is not individual and recognisable.

Reports will be produced to the following bodies:

- Equity, diversity and Inclusion committee
- Senior Management Team
- Governors

In addition, departmental data of performance by different groups will be analysed regularly with Heads of Department.

## 12 Responsibilities

**Governors** are responsible for ensuring that:

- Positive action is taken to ensure that the membership of the Corporation reflects the diversity of the communities served by the College.
- They are aware of the college's responsibilities as outlined in this policy and equality legislation.
- They monitor the college's provision by reference to the performance and representation of different groups of learners and staff
- They carry out equity analysis of all major strategic decisions

**The Senior Management Team** is responsible for ensuring that:

- The College's strategic plan includes a commitment to equity of opportunity
- The Quality Improvement Action Plan incorporates the annual Equity Action Plan
- The college recruits and retains an inclusive and diverse workforce which is appropriately developed to ensure each individual has the opportunity to achieve their full potential
- Comprehensive and transparent equity impact assessments are carried out as an integral part of the business cycle

**The College Management Team** is responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of this policy and duties in relation to all of the protected characteristics and the college's general duties under the Equality Act
- All programmes of learning offered, whether existing or new, will be regularly reviewed through the SAR and curriculum planning processes to examine how far they meet the needs of all students with particular reference to equity of opportunity.
- Learners' participation, attendance and success is monitored annually, and appropriate action taken if necessary to target under-represented groups
- Teaching observation reports include an evaluation of how successfully equity and diversity is promoted
- Internal verification procedures include scrutiny of equity and diversity
- Schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources of staff within their areas are reviewed against the commitments within

this policy and take action to make improvements or adjustments accordingly

- Service Support areas analyse their service and resources against the commitments within this policy and take action to make improvements or adjustments accordingly

**Staff** are responsible for ensuring that:

- They are aware of this policy and duties in relation to all of the protected characteristics and the college's general duties under the Equality Act
- They demonstrate sensitivity to issues of diversity and that they attend staff training to support them in this area
- They challenge inappropriate behaviour by all people on its premises
- Visitors and contractors comply with the policy

**Learners** are responsible for ensuring that:

- They attend induction, enrichment and tutorial activities concerning equity and diversity and fulfil their responsibilities towards other learners and members of staff
- Their coursework reflects sensitivity to issues of equity and diversity and does not include any discriminatory content
- They do not use any of the college equipment or resources to produce or research material in such a way that could be considered discriminatory or in opposition to the commitments within this policy
- They refer cases of inappropriate behaviour by any staff, visitors, or fellow students to a member of staff.

### **13 Promoting Trans Equality**

Since this may be an area in which staff and students have less knowledge and understanding, this policy includes this specific statement:

The College welcomes applications from staff and students irrespective of their gender identity or gender reassignment. It recognises the need to respect an individual's right to work or study with dignity, to respect their personal identity and name and for their privacy and confidentiality.

The College will:

- Refer to trans people by the gender in which they live rather than by their birth gender.
- Not pass on information about a trans person's Gender Recognition without their consent
- Ensure all records of someone who has a Gender Recognition Certificate reflect their legal gender and no reference to their previous gender is held or passed on to third party.
- Grant time off for gender reassignment treatment on the same basis as for sickness or injury
- Maintain any records of a person's previous gender securely and for access by a named person (Head of Human Resources & Workforce Development).

## Appendix 1: Definitions

**Equality** is about creating a fairer society where everyone can participate and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential – to live as equal citizens in society free from discrimination and harassment.

**Equity** goes a step further than ‘equality’ and refers offering varying levels of support depending upon need to achieve greater fairness of outcomes.

**Diversity** is about respecting, valuing, and celebrating aspects that make us unique as individuals – recognising that we contribute to society because of these aspects, not in spite of them.

**Direct Discrimination** happens when someone is treated unfairly, or less favourably than another person, because they have a protected characteristic. This often arises because of assumptions, stereotyping or prejudice. The Equality Act 2010 extended the definition of direct discrimination to cover **association discrimination** or **perception discrimination**. This is direct discrimination against someone because they associate with a person who has the protected characteristic or because they are perceived to have a protected characteristic.

**Indirect discrimination** happens when a ‘provision, criteria or practice’ is applied that appears to affect everyone equally but which in fact puts people who share a protected characteristic at a disadvantage.

**Harassment** happens when someone who behaves in such a way that their conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an environment that is hostile, degrading, humiliating, or intimidating. **Sexual harassment** can include unwelcome sexual advances, touching, sexual jokes, displaying pornographic images and sending e-mails of a sexual nature etc).

**Victimisation** happens when someone experiences disadvantage because they have supported someone in making a complaint or an allegation of discrimination or because they have personally made a complaint or allegation.