

STAT13 - Single Equality Scheme

Policy Author:	Principal	Policy Owner:	Principal
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Purpose of the Policy

This includes all staff, students, service users, visitors and those franchised to undertake work within the College. Weymouth College is committed to exceeding its legal duties, outlined in this Single Equality Scheme. We will continue to strive for equality of opportunity and promotion of good relations between all people. This relates to all staff, students, service users, visitors, community groups and employers with whom we have contact. The College aims to do this by working closely with internal and external stakeholders.

This Single Equality Scheme, as a statement of our strong commitment, is closely aligned to the College's strategic priorities. The principles in our Equality Scheme are fundamental to the continuous improvement of an inclusive learning organisation which sees equality as a dynamic driver for change and which takes each strand of equality to its heart.

We aim to be open to all areas of the community and to be a truly inclusive organisation where individual differences are respected, where staff, students and service users are treated solely on their merits, and where everyone has a fair opportunity to fulfil their potential. We welcome the Equality Act (2010) and the Equality Duty the College is responsible for, including the three due regards:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it

We will continue to involve students, service users, staff, managers and external organisations through a range of activities and initiatives in developing this scheme. The feedback from staff, students and service users will enable us to prioritise key actions, which will help us to develop and enhance the extensive services/support we offer. We will also take a fresh look at those areas which require new initiatives.

The Single Equality Scheme outlines the essential framework for promoting and embedding equality across all areas of our work. It captures the provision of positive and lasting differences for the experiences of current and potential students, service users, external stakeholders and those people who would like to join us as employees.

The Scheme is reviewed in its entirety every three years and an annual progress report will be made via the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and shared with the College Corporation.

The annual performance report will be published, and will include the results of information gathering and the use made of this information. Where monitoring shows that people are not accessing the College's services, or that policies and practices are not working effectively. The College will make changes to address this where possible and identify new priorities for the action plan. Where effective monitoring systems are not in place we will obtain baseline data with which to work. It will develop a continuing involvement strategy which will ensure that disabled staff, students and service users have opportunities to give us their views on an on-going basis on the effectiveness of our Scheme and Action Plan, and on further priorities for action.

Weymouth College – Distinctive Characteristics

The College is a medium-sized further education college serving the town of Weymouth, Portland and South and West Dorset. The College is the main provider of vocational education in the area; with two local schools now providing sixth form facilities.

The College was the first college in Dorset to achieve the coveted 'Matrix' award for the high standard of information advice and guidance services it provides for its students and service users. The College was described as excellent and very forward-thinking.

The College is based on a redeveloped single campus. £13 million has been spent on new buildings and other accommodation has been remodelled and refurbished.

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Weymouth College is committed to promoting the practice of fairness and to eliminating inequality on the grounds of: colour; religion/ belief; learning need; national group; ethnicity, cultural or national origin; traveller, refugee or asylum seeker status; disability; age; marital/partnership status; family responsibility; gender; gender reassignment; sexual orientation; social/economic position; trade union activity; unrelated criminal conviction, or other irrelevant criteria not justified in law.

2. Reason for the Policy

- 2.1 The government Equality Act (2010) states as one of its key elements: 'Making the law more accessible and easier to understand, by bringing together nine major pieces of legislation and around 100 other laws in a single Act'.
- 2.2 The College is committed to ensuring that all people are treated fairly, with respect and dignity. The College will seek to provide a positive working and learning environment, free from direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or victimisation to either individuals or groups, and in which all members of the College are valued.
- 2.3 All reasonable adjustments to provision will be made to ensure that students, service users, staff and visitors with disabilities are not substantially disadvantaged.

3 Policy Objectives

- 3.1 Prospective and/or existing students, service users and staff will be treated by the College and by each other, solely on the basis of their merits using objective, non-discriminatory assessment.
- 3.2 Weymouth College will strive to ensure that no staff member or learner, whether existing or potential, is discriminated against or denied opportunity to achieve their full potential; as a consequence of discrimination.

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- 4.1 Religion and Belief (Equality Act 2010)
- 4.2 Gender (Equality Act 2010)
- 4.3 Age discrimination (Equality Act 2010)
- 4.4 Race (Equality Act 2010)
- 4.5 Disability (Equality Act 2010)
- 4.6 Sexual Orientation (Equality Act 2010)
- 4.7 The aim of the policy reflects the College's commitment to the general duties of eliminating direct or indirect discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity for all by:
- Publicising equality, diversity and inclusion policies and schemes where relevant
 - Actively promoting equality of opportunity for those within the community
 - Ensuring that all promotional material will comply with the Single Equality Scheme, monitored through the Standards Committee
 - Striving to ensure that all members of its community have every opportunity to achieve their full potential, regardless of diversity of background or needs

- Assessing the impact of its Single Equality Scheme and action plans on students, service users and staff by monitoring aims and outcomes; and whether the policies are likely to lead to direct or indirect discrimination
- Consulting and involving students, service users and employees; both formally and informally; within the College and wider community.
- Providing feedback arising from consultation with relevant groups within the College and the wider community
- Acting on recommendations arising from involvement of people within the College and wider community
- Monitoring the recruitment and progression of students, service users and staff
- Ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion matters and the fostering of opportunities for all, are at the heart of any College further development
- Recognising its obligation to ensure that contractual and other service provision arrangements; made on behalf of the institution, with outside voluntary or public organisations: reflect the College's commitment to equality of opportunity and its statutory obligations
- Ensuring that students, service users and staff have access to a multi faith Chaplaincy team
- Setting out the arrangements for publicising equality, diversity and inclusion policies and monitoring and consulting in accordance with the above

4.8 The College will offer equality of opportunity for its students and service users by:

- Ensuring that publicity and course information is accurate, clear and is free from explicit or implicit discrimination
- Providing impartial and accurate guidance for each applicant to help them make an informed choice about relevance of course, suitability and progression routes
- Providing all College and course information and entry criteria information in a format that is easily understood and accessible to all prospective students and service users and is free from any form of discriminatory practice
- Providing feedback on selection criteria
- Ensuring that the curriculum meets and reflects the diversity of our existing and potential student body and community
- Ensuring that all teaching staff identify opportunities in all areas in which they work; to adopt the best approach to the opposition of all forms of discrimination; in terms of course content, teaching styles and classroom organisation and management
- Ensuring that all teaching and learning materials are free from explicit or implicit discrimination and include positive images of disadvantaged groups
- Ensuring that all students and service users have equal access to the full range of support services within the College
- Ensuring that all assessment strategies and materials are fair and reliable
- Engaging students and service users in equality improvement processes
- Ensuring that all under-represented groups have a voice within the College
- Encouraging support networks within the College for those from under-represented groups.

4.9 The College will offer equality of opportunity for its staff by:

- Adopting a recruitment policy that positively supports equality of opportunity. This will involve more than a commitment to remove discrimination; it also means addressing the inequalities that exist by adopting positive policies aimed at tackling discrimination
- Ensuring that all recruitment and selection panels have training and guidance on their responsibilities under the Law and under the College's Single Equality Scheme
- Assisting in the establishment of support networks for under-represented groups where this could further the aims of the Single Equality Scheme

- 4.10 The College will ensure the understanding and significance of equality, diversity and inclusion and how to implement it in practice by:
- Ensuring that all newly appointed staff, full and part-time, participate in an induction programme within the first term of service and are aware of how to address any breach in the Policy
 - Ensuring that all students and service users, full and part-time, participate in an induction programme and are aware of how to address any breach in the Policy
 - Ensuring that all staff, students and service users respect and abide by the principle that there is equality of opportunity for everyone in all aspects of College life
- 4.11 The College will ensure that effective systems for the monitoring and evaluation of equality of opportunity practices are in place by:
- Setting and monitoring equalities performance indicators as part of the College's commitment to Quality Assurance
 - Monitoring data on student applications, enrolment, retention and achievement in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability; with a view to comparing trends and highlighting and improving any imbalances identified
 - Monitoring student progression in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability, including progression within the College, progression into other educational institutions and, where possible, progression to employment
 - Monitoring staff recruitment and selection in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability
 - Monitoring the take up of staff training and development opportunities
 - Holding regular meetings at which views of staff, students and service users are represented and at which policies and practices are regularly examined and reviewed to ensure that there is no inadvertent discrimination
 - Developing learner experience measures.

5 Definitions

- 5.1 In specific circumstances, the law permits positive action. The positive action requires evidence showing under representation. Positive action should prevent, or compensate for, disadvantages linked to the relevant section to whom the positive action relates.
- 5.2 Positive action allows organisations to:
- Provide facilities or services (in training, education or welfare) to meet specific needs;
 - Target job training at particular under-represented groups;
 - Encourage applications from under-represented groups.
- 5.3 The College undertakes, once the results of monitoring are available, to consider targets to reduce the number of those at a disadvantage whether employees, students or service users. If monitoring reveals that specific groups are disadvantaged, some targets may relate to those specific groups. The targets, where appropriate, will be published annually in the Single equality Scheme Action Plan.
- 5.4 Positive action strategies are intended to be temporary measures only. They will be kept under regular review and cannot be used once the special needs have been met, or if the under-representation no longer exists. The College will ensure that when using positive action as a strategy, it falls within the law.
- 5.5 Weymouth College will continue to actively promote equality of opportunity for all groups within the community by:
- Carrying out market research within the community
 - Offering courses to match the identified need of those within the community
 - Engaging in awareness raising activities throughout the year to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

- 5.6 The term 'direct discrimination', means treating one person less favourably than another or subjecting a person to a detriment. Direct discrimination is unlawful under the Acts and Regulations cited above.
- 5.7 'Indirect discrimination' means putting a person at a disadvantage, when compared to others. Indirect discrimination is unlawful under the Acts and Regulations cited above.
- 5.8 Harassment is considered to be unwanted conduct, which violates another person's dignity, or creates an intimidating, hostile or degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- 5.9 Victimisation will be considered to have taken place, when a person receives less favourable treatment than others, because he/she has exercised his/her rights under the relevant legislation or policy.
- 5.10 Tokenism is to pay lip service by a simple or individual gesture to offset criticism and put on pretence of accepting something to which one is not committed by identifying the minimum requirement. This would be contrary to the ethos and practice of Weymouth College.

6 Responsibility

- 6.1 Responsibility for this policy and its effective implementation rests with the Governing Body who will adopt the Single Equality Scheme on an annual basis. The Principal and Senior Leadership Team will:
 - Review and adopt the Single Equality Scheme on an annual basis
 - Monitor the implication of recommendations relating to compliance with equality and diversity legislation within other College policies and procedures
 - Provide adequate resources needed to ensure the effective implementation of the policy
- 6.2 The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee will:
 - Communicate the policy and its implications to staff, students, service users, parents and other bodies
 - Take remedial action as required
 - Support the development and implementation of the policy and other related policies designed to ensure equality of opportunity.
 - Report and make recommendations to Student Union, CMT, SLT and Governors, as appropriate.
- 6.3 The Vice Principal will:
 - Monitor, evaluate and report on the operation and impact of the Single Equality Scheme on an annual basis
 - Monitor, review and update the Single Equality Scheme and monitor the impact of other policies on an annual basis
 - Highlight and inform relevant personnel of the impact of the Single Equality Scheme on other policies
 - Ensure the effective implementation of the policy
 - Monitor and report on the operation of the policy
 - Evaluate training recommendations
- 6.4 Staff:

The Single Equality Scheme applies to all staff. Staff will be consulted on the implementation of the policy through programme area representatives/members of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, and via the relevant trade unions.

All staff are responsible for:

- Possessing a sound knowledge and understanding of the issues contained within the Single Equality Scheme
- Having a clear and relevant understanding of how these issues relate to their area of work.
- Creating schemes of work, lesson content and teaching resources demonstrating sensitivity to and promotion of, equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Challenging inappropriate behaviour by students, service users, colleagues, work-placement providers, outside contractors, or visitors to the College
- Confronting discrimination whether witting or unwitting, whenever it occurs

6.5 Students and service users:

The Single Equality Scheme applies to all students and service users (full and part-time), regardless of whether they receive some, or all of their education at Weymouth College.

All students and service users are responsible for:

- Possessing a basic knowledge and understanding of the issues contained within the Single Equality Scheme and how they impact on their students and service usership

6.6 Parents/carers and other persons: All parents, visitors, contractors, sponsors (including work placement providers) and any other persons are expected to comply with Weymouth College's Single Equality Scheme.

6.7 Heads of Curriculum & Skills will ensure Equality, diversity and inclusion matters are included on all staff meeting agendas.

6.8 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee members will raise any issues brought from Heads of Curriculum & Skills and cascade all relevant information.

The Vice Principal will report on equality, diversity and inclusion issues to College Management Team and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

The College Principal and in their absence the Vice Principal will have over-all responsibility for the equality, diversity and inclusion within the College.

The College will implement a confidential incident reporting system that is open for use by all staff to monitor and manage the issues which arise in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. The Vice Principal will be responsible for collating information and acting on behalf of The College Principal.

Definitions:	As above	Who Needs to Know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff including those who are franchised to undertake work for the College • All students and service users • Employers with whom we work and who are in contact with the College • External partners and stakeholders and those engaged in projects with the College
Related Policies and Procedures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying and Harassment Policy • Safeguarding - Child Protection and Adult at Risk Policy • Online Safety Policy 	Approval Date:	October 2021
<p>This policy was approved and adopted by:</p> <p><i>Julia Howe</i></p> <p>Julia Howe Principal and CEO</p>			