

EQUALITY, EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EED&I) POLICY 2026/27

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1. Introduction

Equality, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (“EED&I”) are central to the work of City of Portsmouth College (“the College”). This underpins the vision of the College to transform lives through providing exceptional education and training.

1.1. Definitions

- Equality: The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities
- Equity: The quality of being fair and impartial.
- Diversity: The practice of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations etc.
- Inclusion: The practice of providing equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as those who have disabilities and members of other minority groups.

1.2. The College’s commitment to EED&I is reflected in the continued successful promotion of these strands through the curriculum, enrichment activities and the range of direct and indirect student support services

1.3. This Policy provides a framework for the College to continue to attract and recruit talent from all sections of society, to fully develop the potential of our staff and students and continue to build a sense of community and not only to fulfil its Statutory Public duty but to go beyond this and to continually improve the experience of students, staff, our partners and service users.

1.4. The College is located in a diverse community and is wholly committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all who learn and work here. We value and celebrate differences in age, disability, sex, gender reassignment and gender identify and expression, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, and strive to ensure mutual respect throughout the College community.

2. Scope

2.1. This Policy applies across all the functions and services of the college, and applies to:

- Students including those under our subcontracted provision
- Governors
- Staff employed by the College
- Volunteers, visitors, self-employed contractors, and agency staff
- Sites and premises belonging to the College or used by the College for conducting its functions.

2.2. The College will also promote the principles of this Policy in its dealings with:

- external contractors, by having in place EED&I requirements as part of the tender process and documentation
- providers of work-based placements through having clear signposts on the EED&I requirements for the student journey

2.3. The College welcomes and abides by all statutory provisions on EED&I, including the nine protected characteristics and key public duties outlined in the Equality Act 2010 (Appendix 1)

2.4. Breaches of this Policy will be regarded as misconduct and therefore subject to the Staff Disciplinary Policy, Grievance Policy, Feedback [Compliments & Complaints] Policy, Student Behaviour Policy and Procedure, and Fitness to Study Policy.

3. Our Commitment

3.1. The college aims to:

- Actively promote EED&I within our policies, procedures, practices, plans and activities.
- Widen participation and increase access to education, training, and employment for the City of Portsmouth, and other communities the College is part of.
- Recognise that equality of opportunity is not additional or marginal to our activities, but central to the efficiency and development of the College as an employer and as a provider of education and training.
- Create a visibly diverse and inclusive College which values and celebrates difference and enables all our students and apprentices to succeed.
- Promote good relations between individuals and between groups, ensuring that harassment, victimisation, bullying and discrimination are not tolerated under any circumstances.
- Offer a distinctive and responsive curriculum that provides our students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to fulfil themselves, to live in and contribute to a local, national, and global society.
- Provide teaching, learning and assessment methods, support and resources that meet the individual needs of students.
- Work towards a staff profile (including Governors) that reflects and complements the diversity of the communities we serve.
- Ensure that staff (including Governors) understand the significance of EED&I and know how to implement EED&I in their work.
- Ensure that procedures for challenging all forms of discrimination, harassment and unacceptable behaviour are widely promoted.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of policies, procedures, practices, and plans in relation to EED&I, and act on equality gaps.
- Seek the fullest participation of staff, and students in all areas of college life and act to address under representation.
- Comply with all general and specific duties set down by the public sector equality duty.

4. Responsibilities

4.1. Responsibility for the overall leadership and management, of EED&I rests principally with the Board of Governors, the Principal & Chief Executive Officer, and the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). This commitment operates through a network of key individuals. This infrastructure provides a vital platform for the College to collectively raise awareness and actively

promote and embed EED&I into the culture and operation across the College.

- 4.2. It is also the responsibility of all members of staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors, and other service users to actively support the College's commitment to EED&I. They share a collective and individual responsibility to create an environment that is free from discrimination.
- 4.3. In particular the College expects all staff to embrace the commitment to EED&I by actively throughout their area. Line managers' responsibilities in relation to EED&I include:
 - following EED&I procedures when undertaking recruitment.
 - appropriate communication with their staff on EED&I matters, whether individually or via team meetings.
 - applying all policies and procedures correctly, consistently, and fairly.
 - monitoring and responding to EED&I data and responding the trends.
 - supporting staff to ensure equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion are fully embraced and embedded by staff within their area
- 4.4. Staff (including Governors) and students must comply with the Policy and treat others with respect at all times. With support they are expected to familiarise themselves with the responsibilities that Equalities legislation places on them and ensure that they are sensitive to issues of age, disability, gender identity, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and the impact of socio-economic factors.
- 4.5. Where students or staff (including Governors) encounter discriminatory practice or behaviour, such as bullying, harassment, verbal or physical aggression (including those by a person who provides a service on behalf of the College or by customers using or seeking to use the College's goods or services) they are expected to report the matter to either the Director of People & Organisational Development or Vice Principal of Student Experience who will take appropriate action.
- 4.6. Staff (including Governors) and students must comply with the Policy and treat others with respect at all times. With support they are expected to familiarise themselves with the responsibilities that Equalities legislation places on them and ensure that they are sensitive to issues of age, disability, gender identity, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and the impact of socio-economic factors.
- 4.7. Where students or staff (including Governors) encounter discriminatory practice or behaviour, such as bullying, harassment, verbal or physical aggression (including those by a person who provides a service on behalf of the College or by customers using or seeking to use the College's goods or services) they are expected to report the matter to either the Director of People & Organisational Development or Vice Principal of Student Experience who will take appropriate action.

5. Implementation

5.1. The College is committed to creating an environment underpinned by fair and equitable practices and procedures in which all members of the community can feel comfortable, and share the College's corporate responsibility to embed equality, equity, diversity, and inclusion through the provision of its services and function

The College is committed to a student-centred approach that promotes choice, opportunity and progression and includes activities such as:

- Monitoring the achievement and retention of the students by the nine protected characteristics and other characteristics required by the latest Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and seek to address identified imbalances.
- Ensuring all students are given the opportunity to progress to more advanced course if this is within their assessed potential.
- A range of feedback techniques such as student surveys used to identify student perceptions of the College environment and the quality of their experience in regard to the protected characteristics.
- Ensuring learning resources supplied through learning centres and the intranet are non-discriminatory and reflect the protected characteristics.
- Curriculum teaching, learning and assessment to reflect and promote EED&I and to encourage the development and supply of specialist learning materials and resources to meet the identified needs of particular Colleges or individuals.
- Students on placement or on work-based programmes to be supported to challenge practices and behaviours in the workplace which they feel contravene the College's policy in relation to EED&I. EED&I will be raised in visits to employers and with students on work-based learning.

5.2. The College is committed to an organisational approach that demonstrates good practice and includes activities such as:

- Monitoring the composition of staff and job applicants across the College and in each department/service by the nine protected characteristics and address identified imbalances and under representation.
- Undertaking Equality Impact Analysis to support Services and Functions to consider and remove potential barriers that may prevent current or future staff and students from reaching their full potential while studying or working for the College.
- Reasonable adjustments provided for staff, students and service users who may be experiencing barriers due to disability, such as the accessibility to buildings.
- Working towards employing a workforce and membership of the Governing Body that is representative of the diversity of the communities from which the College recruits and the student population, through targeted recruitment campaigns and staff development programmes where appropriate.

- Consulting with appropriate staff to identify any potential barriers to recruitment, promotion, and retention; students and other stakeholders to enable the College to better meet and serve the needs of all existing and potential service users.

6. Training and Development

6.1. All new staff and Governors will be required to complete a mandatory online EED&I module as part of their induction and will be required to undergo refresher training every two years as a minimum; while students as part of their Induction will receive knowledge of equality legislation, British values and clear guidelines on the behaviours expected.

6.2. In addition to the mandatory online and refresher training to be offered, bespoke EED&I development activities will be provided to support the operational roles of staff, managers, and Governors. Through this support the aim is to:

- Raise knowledge and understanding of equality legislation
- To understand discriminatory practices and behaviours
- Develop equality, diversity, and inclusion competencies

Training and development will also be used to support the career development of under-represented colleagues within the workforce

7. Communications and awareness

7.1. The College is committed to using a number of different ways in which to communicate this Policy to ensure all our stakeholders such as staff, governors, students, and employers:

- understand our commitment to EED&I
- understand their responsibilities and role in the process
- know where to seek advice and guidance
- know how to make complaints and are confident that they will be managed effectively.

These methods may include equality diversity and inclusion being covered via:

- EED&I Champions
- Student induction material
- HR Business Partners who can guide employees through the policy and procedures
- Articles on the internet, intranet, and staff newsletters.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

8.1. The College has in place a structure to monitor the implementation and impact of the policy and related procedures. These include the:

- Board of Governors and the respective Committees.
- Executive Leadership Team, Senior Management Teams, and College Management Team.
- College Inclusion Committee.
- Student and Staff Focus groups.

8.2. Key information will be produced and presented in a timely to the most appropriate committee or forum including:

- Student enrolment, retention, and achievement, student surveys and complaints. The findings will be used to inform operational plans and the Self-Assessment Review process and to address any negative equality diversity and inclusion impact where identified.
- All aspects of the employment process from recruitment, grievances, disciplinaries, and redundancies through to employment tribunal applications and Learning and Development opportunities. The findings will be shared with Managers and Governors and used to inform employment and development strategies and to address any negative equality diversity and inclusion impact where identified.

9. Review

9.1. This policy will be reviewed annually

10. Related Policies

All college policies for students and staff (including Governors).

Appendix 1

The Legal Context: The Equality Act 2010

The Equality Act 2010, which became law in October 2010, represents the culmination of years of debate about how to improve British equality law. It offers individuals stronger protection against discrimination. It gives employers and businesses greater clarity about their responsibilities. In addition, it sets a new expectation that public services must treat everyone with dignity and respect. The Equality Act 2010 has consolidated and streamlined previous anti-discrimination legislation.

The Equality Act recognises the nine 'protected characteristics':

- Age
- Disability (including physical or sensory impairments, mental health difficulties, long term medical conditions such as epilepsy, sickle cell, HIV/AIDs, and neuro-diverse conditions such as dyslexia and ADHD)
- Sex
- Gender reassignment (including gender identity and expression)
- Race (which includes, ethnic or national origins and caste)
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Marital or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity

In addition, the College also acknowledges the discrimination, bullying, victimisation, or harassment on the grounds of a person's socio-economic status.

The Equality Act places duties on education providers in relation to employment but also provision of education and access to benefits, facilities or services. These cover all of the services, facilities and benefits, both educational and non-educational, that an education provider provides or offers to provide.

Below is a table that identifies the Protected Characteristic and the issues that are covered by the Equality Act.

Issue Covered by the Equality Act	Protected Characteristic								
	Age	Disability	Gender Reassignment	Marriage civil partnership	Pregnancy and maternity	Race	Religion or belief	Sex	Sexual orientation
Discrimination in employment	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Discrimination in provision of services	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Discrimination in the delivery of further education	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
The general statutory duty to promote equality	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
The work of general qualifications bodies	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Positive action provisions of the act	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dual Discrimination	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Discrimination or harassment linked to perceived Characteristic	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Discrimination or harassment by association	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Duty to make adjustments for disabled people	N/A	N/A	Y	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

As part of the Act, the College has a “general public duty” to give due regard to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity. This includes the need to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantage experienced by persons who share a protected characteristic
 - take steps to meet the needs of people who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share the protected characteristic. This includes taking steps to treat a person with a disability more favourably or using positive action to achieve this duty
 - encourage persons with a protected characteristic to participate in public life or any other activities where participation is disproportionately low
 - Foster good relations – which can include tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people of different Colleges.

The College also has the specific Public Sector Duty to:

- Publish equality objectives every four years.
- Publish information to demonstrate compliance with the general duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty including information relating to our employees and others affected by our policies and practices.
- Collaborate with partner organisations who deliver on our behalf, to ensure they take due regard of the general and specific equality duty.

In putting this policy into practice, the College will also work to meet other statutory duties introduced under the following laws or regulations such as:

- Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Act
- Whistleblowing
- General Procedures for Data Protection 2018
- Gender Pay
- The Children and Family Act 2014
- Equal Pay