

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2023-24

For the attention of:	All Staff
Produced by:	Assistant Principals, Student Services
Approved by:	SLT
Date of publication:	July 2023
Date of review:	July 2026





Vision, Purpose & Values

Our Vision

Our students will be recognised locally & nationally for their positive impact on the communities and industries in which they choose to work.

Our Purpose

To inspire our students to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be resilient and thrive in an ever-changing world.

Our Values

Excellence: A culture of creativity, high expectations, ambition and aspiration

Respect: Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect to each other and our environment

Integrity: Honesty, openness and trust at the heart of College life

Diversity: Celebrating diversity and inclusivity as a key to our success

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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1. The Windsor Forest Colleges Group (hereafter WFCG or the College) values the rich diversity of not only its local community but also the wider area from which people are recruited to the College Group. It is committed to equality and diversity for all who learn, work or use our services and provide high quality services fairly and equitably to the whole community. The contribution of our staff is critical to achieving this and the Group recognises the importance of having a diverse and representative workforce able to meet the needs of all communities.
 - We are a learner focused organisation with values based on respect, inclusion and diversity.
 - We seek to provide a working environment free from harassment, discrimination and victimisation.
 - We will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against actual or potential learners, visitors or employees.
- 1.2. The College aims to actively promote equality of opportunity and challenge discriminatory attitudes. Equality and diversity affects everyone as we all work in diverse teams with people of different genders, ethnic origins, sexual orientation, ability, beliefs, values and working styles.
- 1.3. It is important to understand what we mean by equality and diversity, how it impacts on everyday life, and the reasons for and benefits of promoting it.
- 1.4. We are committed to creating an inclusive College, where people are treated with dignity and respect and where we anticipate and respond positively to different needs and circumstances so that everyone can achieve their potential.
- 1.5. The College uses a range of events and activities including training and workshops for staff and students to raise understanding and awareness with the aim of developing diversity and inclusion skills.
- 1.6. The College takes any allegation of hate, bullying, victimisation or harassment extremely seriously and will take disciplinary action in the event of any substantiated claim.

2. The Legal Framework for Equality & Diversity

- 2.1. The Equality Act 2010 places a general duty on public sector organisations (including further and higher education colleges) to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who do and do not share a protected characteristic*
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 2.2. WFCG must meet this general duty both as a n employer and as a provider of further and higher education and show due regard to the duty across all of our functions.

*The nine protected characteristics are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation

2.3. The specific duties require public bodies to:

- Publish relevant, proportionate information demonstrating their compliance with the Equality Duty.
- Set themselves specific, measurable equality objectives.

2.4. At least every three years, the College will publish equality objectives setting how the requirements of the Equality Act will be met.

The Equality Objectives are:

- Ensure our student application profile is reflective of our communities.
- Identify and narrow any achievement gaps between different groups of learners.
- Develop confidence so all staff embed inclusive practices in all aspects of their work.

3. Meeting our Commitments

3.1. Students

TWFCG has a wide range of policies, procedures and initiatives in place to ensure that learners from all protected characteristic groups are encouraged to attend the College, are effectively supported and are successful in their education.

The college achieves this by ensuring that:

- Staff attend Prevent related training sessions.
- Students are made aware of the Prevent Agenda as part of tutorials and induction.
- British Values posters are displayed around the organisation.
- British Values are embedded into lessons wherever possible.
- Equality and Diversity provided to all students at induction.
- College website has clear guidance on the College's stance on Equality and Diversity, its practices and procedures.
- Publicity material in different formats and different forums that encourages all learners to apply and celebrates achievement regardless of ability.
- Ensuring wherever reasonably possible that we offer sites that are accessible.
- A flexible Student Services provision that is responsive to and supports all learners' needs..
- A website that provides information on the College's focus on the promotion of equality.
- Posters and displays around College premises advertising equality and providing supportive information such as anti-bullying campaigns.

- Effective learner support arrangements covering the assessment of learner needs and educational and emotional support.
- A programme of tutorials for all learners focusing on aspects of equality.
- Learner feedback is gathered and analysed each academic year with equality and diversity issues highlighted and dealt with as necessary.
- The provision of support from specific groups and sessions such as the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBTQ+) group.
- College safeguarding procedures in place and available to all learners.
- Wide ranging curriculum offer to suit all learners for example English as a second language (EAL).
- College Equality and Diversity Strategic Group reviewing and improving equality arrangements.
- Processes in place to support vulnerable and at risk learners, through information sharing with internal and external parties.
- The promotion of equality via lesson planning, schemes of work, student newsletters, student Google sites, diversity calendars and Equality and Diversity events.
- Strong external links providing the College and students the opportunity to engage with and explore equality advice and guidance.

3.2. Staff

The College values the diversity of its workforce and supports all individual needs in order for all staff to reach their full potential regardless of barriers. The college works hard to provide a comprehensive and effective approach to equality and the promotion of the elimination of all types of discrimination. This is achieved by ensuring that:

- Prevent training is in place for all staff and is mandatory.
- Prevent Duty information is provided within the induction process.
- Prevent Duty and British Values information is displayed around the sites.
- Regular publicity items showing its diverse range of learners and staff.
- Recruitment advertising in a number of publications and media to ensure coverage to all groups.
- Robust recruitment and selection processes are in place that are transparent and eliminate discrimination.
- A comprehensive induction process is in place that promotes the College's approach and arrangements for equality.
- It is a mandatory requirement for the completion, by all staff, of online training packages covering equality and diversity and safeguarding.
- There is promotion of equality via staff communications, staff briefings and that there is information available on the Intranet and College website.
- Robust monitoring of outcomes exists, reports and action plans by the Safeguarding Strategic team to ensure that procedures are in place to support and protect all staff.
- Posters and displays around College premises promote the inclusion of all individuals regardless of race, religion, gender etc.
- The Equality and Diversity Strategic Group publishes minutes to provide transparency about the colleges actions and progress against these.
- Training and development opportunities are available to all and will be reviewed based on individual need.

- A staff EDI calendar is in place of activities that the college is committing to that will improve awareness of key themes and create an inclusive community.
- Effective Line Manager structures exist to provide support to all staff.
- Access to occupational health provision including mental health first aiders, counselling services and support.
- Grievance and Harassment procedures are in place to provide a final mechanism for the dealing of unacceptable behaviour.

3.3. Governors

The College's Governor profile is diverse and monitored throughout the year, with an annual return provided to the Department for Education.

To understand the equality culture of the organisation and advocate for the College's equality approach governors:

- Follow a recruitment process which provides early information on the College's equality culture.
- Are provided with updates and training through meetings and workshops, including up to date training on the Prevent Day.
- Have an appointed link Governor who is invited to attend the Equality and Diversity Forum meetings during the course of the year.
- Have an appointed SEND link governor.

Equality and Diversity is addressed across all governance committees, including:

- Analysis of Student recruitment, retention and achievement.
- Review of employment arrangements around equality and diversity.
- Reflection on the profile of the College's staff but overall responsibility for review of policy, strategy and performance remains with the Corporation.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1. WFCG believes that Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is everyone's responsibility (students, staff, employers, partners, stakeholders and visitors) and that everyone has a role to play in the successful implementation of our strategy across the group.
- 4.2. The CEO, Principals and Chair of Governors have overall responsibility for achievement of the organisations equality obligations and this will be supported by the cross college EDI Strategic Group.
- 4.3. **The Governing Body will ensure that:**
 - WFCG complies with the law and meets all its duties, including the general and the specific duties.
 - The College's commitment to equality is promoted.
 - The College's Strategic Plan includes a commitment to equality and fosters a positive ethos with regard to diversity and the elimination of discrimination.
 - The Corporation receives and responds to reports on recruitment, retention, achievement and success rates for students from different backgrounds and to information regarding staff, equality objectives and priorities.
 - Governors are properly trained in their duties under the legislation.

4.4. The College Leadership Team will ensure that:

- Overall implementation of our equality commitments and the promotion of equality is achieved.
- The lead in creating a positive, inclusive environment in which everybody is treated with respect and dignity.
- They assess the impact of any current and future policies in relation to equality.
- They ensure that information relating to EDI issues is collected, analysed and regularly reported.
- They ensure that the procedures for the recruitment and promotion of staff follow best practice in equal opportunities.
- Equality and diversity is embedded into all Quality assurance processes and mechanisms.
- There is an effective system in place to deal with incidents of discrimination or harassment effectively, and taking action against staff or students who discriminate for any reason.
- There is promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion through curriculum planning, learning and teaching methods, classroom organisation, assessment procedures.
- Educational visits, student induction and Study Programmes are inclusive and offer equal opportunities for all students.
- Staff, students, parents and employers are consulted in relation to equality and diversity issues.
- All premises and facilities are wherever reasonably practical accessible.
- Heads of Department, Directors and Course Team Leaders are responsible for promoting and implementing equality, diversity and inclusion within their areas of responsibility.
- Ensure that Equality and Diversity is embedded within all quality improvement activities such as observations of teaching and learning, course reviews, Area Reviews, self-assessment reports and any other quality improvement activities.

The Assistant Principals (Student Services), Further Education and Sixth Form have responsibility for the Equality and Diversity, monitoring and reporting on the recruitment and outcomes (retention, achievement, success rates, progress and destination) of different groups of students and will:

- Gather a Diversity agenda from students that will as part of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Group.
- Student quantitative and qualitative information is shared with senior managers / leaders to ensure this information is used effectively to improve equality and identify areas of development.
- Ensure that students are made aware of the colleges Equality and Diversity policies and for ensuring that students understand Equality and Diversity issues, in addition to their rights and responsibilities and Fundamental British Values, through an effective induction, tutorial and enrichment programme.
- Give a consistent and high-profile lead on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Oversee the implementation, monitoring and reviewing of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan alongside the Strategic Group.

- Coordinate the promotion of Equality, diversity and inclusion across the organisation with other departments such as School Liaison, Marketing, Admissions and Careers.
- Work with relevant staff to ensure that EDI are effectively embedded in teaching, learning and assessment.
- Work with the relevant staff to ensure that EDI are part of the student journey (induction, tutorials, enrichment).
- Oversee the planning and coordination of awareness raising events.

The Group Executive Director of People (HR) will oversee the Equality and Diversity agenda for the workforce and will:

- Have responsibility for the development, implementation and monitoring of staff development opportunities, staff consultation and guidance and support on all matters relating to equality.
- Take steps to have a staffing profile which is reflective of sector averages and the local population and approve the use of positive action in recruitment where appropriate.
- Compile regular reports on staffing in terms of equality indicators for the EDI Forum and produce reports detailing staffing information relating to demographics, pay gaps, grievances and disciplinary action.
- Organise events and activities to raise awareness of EDI and ensure that all staff understand Equality and Diversity issues.
- Ensure that development events are open and accessible and that wherever possible they meet the needs of all the individuals.
- Ensure that complaints of discrimination, harassment and bullying among staff are investigated in line with the organisation's procedures.
- Gather the range of staff quantitative and qualitative information and ensure that this information is used effectively to improve equality.
- The publication of a staff annual report.

Head of Estates is responsible for communicating the strategy to all contractors WFCG works with and for ensuring that all the facilities are accessible.

The Group Director (Finance) is responsible for communicating the policy to all contractors with whom WFCG partners with and for ensuring that all the procurement processes comply with the organisation's legal obligations in relation to equality and diversity.

The Head of Marketing is responsible for ensuring the College's publicity materials present appropriate positive and non – stereotypical messages about people from different groups. The College regularly reviews its marketing approaches to ensure full utilisation of differentiated marketing methods to engage and retain all students.

4.5. Staff will ensure that:

- They understand, uphold and engage with this policy by acting as a positive role model of the behaviours detailed and the college values.
- They consistently challenge inappropriate behaviour and language ensuring that it is reported and dealt with in line with the student management policy.
- They actively take part in relevant equality, diversity and inclusion training.

- If they are delivering taught lessons, that they provide pedagogical approaches that meet the individual needs of students and of students and colleagues.

4.6. Students will ensure that:

- They adhere to the Group's core values and treat all members of the Colleges' community with respect.
- They actively adhere to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy through the Student Contract and Code of Conduct.
- They work alongside the staff to create an environment that promotes inclusion, challenges bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

4.7. The Equality & Diversity Forum will meet half termly and is responsible for:

- Reviewing College Mission, Vision and Strategic Plan to promote and clarify commitment to the effective management of diversity.
- Analysing participation and success rate trends by gender, ethnicity, learning difficulty and disability.
- Overseeing the implementation of legislation relating to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all aspects of the College's activity.
- Ensuring that the College has a comprehensive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in place which will embrace all aspects of the College's operations.
- Actively promoting equality, diversity and Inclusion among staff, students and all other stakeholders to promote the College's equality and diversity agenda.
- Ensuring that the College has policies and working practices to promote equality of opportunity and prevent harassment, bullying and discrimination and to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, including Prevent.
- Identifying training needs and appropriate training to ensure all staff understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to EDI.
- Monitoring all key Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data in relation to staff and students, identify issues to be addressed and agree actions as necessary.
- Ensuring that issues relating specifically to protected characteristics are identified and appropriate actions to rectify are proposed as part of the action plan.
- Developing links with appropriate external agencies.

4.8. All students and staff at WFCG will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff, students and visitors are treated with respect and feel safe at WFCG.
- Celebrating and embracing differences so everyone at WFCG can feel proud about their heritage, identity and background without any fear or discrimination.